

Passover and the Calendar

One of the most divisive issues facing most Messianic and Hebrew Roots believers is the controversy over the calendar. Which calendar do you use to observe the biblical Feasts of YHWH? When does the New Year begin and when is the New moon?

I have spent considerable time studying these issues and often find myself in disagreement with many of my close brethren and most Messianic believers as to the timing of Passover, beginning of the month and the New Year.

Most Messianic believers look to unbelievers for guidance in regards to the calendar. They look to the Karaites, who do not believe in Yahshua, to find a handful of barley around Jerusalem to signal the start of the New Year. Then they look for the closest New Moon, regardless of whether it falls before or after the Vernal Equinox. Beginning the year before the vernal equinox can lead to the Feasts being out of their seasons. About 3 years ago I received some pictures from Jerusalem showing unripe fruit on many fruit trees during the time most Jews and Messianic believers were celebrating Sukkot. Sukkot is a harvest festival in which the harvest is supposed to be reaped so that you can then enjoy the fruits of your labor during the Feast. The green fruit still remaining on the trees proved that they had begun the New Year a month too early.

On another occasion, before I began to look into the calendar issue, I found that we had observed 2 Passovers in the same year. Even the Jews make sure that doesn't happen.

So where do we start? Let's begin with scripture to tell us what determines the days, years and seasons.

Gen 1:14 And Elohim said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:

If you go by the barley and the sighted sliver of the moon to determine the New Year, what roll does the sun play in it? Where is barley mentioned above? I maintain that the barley has nothing to do with when the New Year begins.

The New Year only begins in the month in which the barley ripens, that's all. The word "Abiv" means "ripening, completing development" according to the Etymological Dictionary of Biblical Hebrew. The first crop to be harvested was flax in March and April, then barley and wheat in April and May (The Lion Ency. of the Bible p.221). This shows various stages of Abiv (grain crops ripening) lasting over a period of 2-3 months.

Also, when the commandment was given, that this time was the beginning of months and the first month of the year to Israel, they were in Egypt which has a ripening season of up to two months earlier than in Israel. Was Israel to use the presence of ripe barley in Egypt to begin the New Year? Obviously not! YHWH knew He would lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land where the harvest was later than in Egypt. He was just stating a principle to them that the New Year would begin during the time of the year when grain ripened. But it does not specifically say barley. Only because Barley ripened first, was it used for the wave sheaf offering of the first fruits of their harvest.

We are also told that Israel observed at least one Passover one year after they had left Egypt (Num 9:5). Did Moses carry around a little cart of barley in order to know when it was Abiv and when to start the New Year? No, Moses was educated in the house of Pharaoh and would have been well acquainted with how to determine the equinoxes and the solstices. The equinoxes occur when the sun passes over the equatorial plane. The two solstices occur when the sun reaches its position farthest from the equator. Each solstice lies halfway between the two equinoxes. Some will argue that the word for equinox or solstice does not exist in the bible, but there is a word that is used which means a turning or a revolution. That word is Tekufah and its root (naqaf) means a circle or cycle. This word is found 4 times in scripture and pertains to the calendar all of those times. The tekufot (pl) mark the seasons of the year.

The Hebrew word for year comes from the idea of change or repeated action. Thus the year expresses the concept of “a complete cycle of change” (Nelson’s Illustrated Bible Dictionary p. 200)

Herb Solinsky in his article “The Hail Plague and the First Biblical Month states” The moon determines the months, but not which month is the first. Only the sun remains to be considered. The only repeatable time points involving the sun are the two equinoxes and the two solstices. Considering that the barley and wheat in Yisrael are harvested in the spring, the vernal equinox is the only logical candidate to consider that involves the lights in the heavens on the direct basis on Gen 1:14.”

The four intermediate cycles (equinoxes and solstices) determine the seasons of the year.

Exo 34:22 And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end.

Here the word ‘end’ is the word tekufah. The phrase “At years end” are the words “tekufat Ha shanah,” which indicates a revolution in time. This can only refer to the “equinox”. This ‘turning cycle’ would be autumnal equinox which marks the end of the summer and the beginning of fall.

Frank Nelte expresses it this way:

Jewish encyclopaedias, the Talmud and many other Jewish reference works will freely acknowledge that this word "tekufah" has exactly TWO meanings. Firstly, it refers to the only FOUR "TURNING DAYS" in the solar year that can be predicted in advance, the two equinoxes and the two solstices. Secondly, it refers to THE FOUR SEASONS which start on those four "turning days". It has no other meanings, and certainly not the meaning "end".

He goes on to say:

It is well-known that in Exodus 34:22 the expression "tekufat ha-shanah" is a specific reference to the autumn equinox (on September 23), and therefore this Scripture makes quite clear that the Feast of Tabernacles can NEVER start before the autumn equinox.(F. Nelte)

The Feast of tabernacles is a fall Feast and must never start in the summer just as the New Year must never start in the winter of the old year before the vernal or spring equinox.

The other 3 scriptures that use the word "tekufah" are:

1Sa 1:20 Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of YHWH.

The words translated 'was come' is tekufah. This could also be translated "Wherefore it came to pass when the day had come around, after Hannah had conceived..."

Young translated it this way:

And it cometh to pass, at the revolution of the days, that Hannah conceiveth, and beareth a son, and calleth his name Samuel, `for, from Jehovah I have asked him.'

Here again we are presented with the idea of a revolution (cycle) of days or seasons. The next verse that contains the word "tekufah" is:

2Ch 24:23 And it came to pass at the end of the year, that the host of Syria came up against him: and they came to Judah and Jerusalem, and destroyed all the princes of the people from among the people, and sent all the spoil of them unto the king of Damascus.

Kings would go out to wage war in the spring of the year according to 2 Sam 11:1, so this is likely after the vernal equinox or the beginning of spring.

The last reference to tekufah is found in Psalms 19:6.

Psa 19:6 His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

The word tekufah here is translated as "circuit" and the language implies that it is talking about the sun by referring to nothing being hidden from its heat. This would be the sun's passage through the equinoxes and solstices to make a yearly circuit.

I think I have presented sufficient evidence that the word "tekufah" means the 4 turning points of the year, the equinoxes and solstices. Most Messianic believers would agree with this, but the real problem is that they have no problem beginning the New Year while still in the old one. Most follow the Karaites barley

hunt and when found, use the closest New Moon to the vernal equinox to begin the New Year. Many times they select the New Moon before the equinox which causes them to begin the year in the old one. Common logic dictates that this is wrong.

Another problem with the Karaite barley hunt is that it is only for barley around the Jordan valley. There is up to a month's difference between the barley harvest in the highlands and the lowlands of Israel. Scripture is clear that each man is to bring in the first fruits of his harvest to the priest at the temple to be waved before YHWH.

*Lev. 23:10 Speak to the sons of Israel, and you shall say to them, When you come in to the land which I am giving to you, and **have reaped** its harvest, and **have brought in** the sheaf, of the beginning of your harvest, to the priest,
Lev. 23:11 and (then) he shall wave the sheaf before Jehovah for your acceptance; on the morrow of the sabbath the priest shall wave it (Greens literal translation).*

Notice, when you have reaped the harvest, **THEN** you bring a sheaf of the first fruits. You don't scour the country side looking for a handful of ripe barley. Each of the sons of Israel had to bring in a sheaf (omer) of his harvest. The barley has to be ripe all over the land, not just around Jerusalem. The reply given by the Karaites to this problem is that they are offering the omer of first fruits of the harvest for all of Israel. This shows a lack of understanding the scriptures from a Messianic perspective. Don Esposito explains it this way:

*Each person had to cut his own sheaf, as each one of us need to have the wave sheaf (a type of Messiah's sacrifice for our sins) accepted by Yahweh, and the people could not bring the offering themselves, only the priest (type of Yahshua) could bring the sacrifice on behalf of the people and then wave the sheaf up to heaven. The wave sheaf could not be issued on behalf of one or two fields, or even one area, of only one tribe, because Yahshua is the wave-sheaf of "**all 12 tribes of Israel**".*

Also, since the wave sheaf represented Yahshua as the first-fruit of those born from the dead, then, it would have to be completely mature, as Yahshua was not an immature or imperfect sacrifice (Esposito).

Another problem with the finding of a handful of Jerusalem barley is that if the year is started based upon barley being ripe in the Jordan valley, the time when the wave sheaf offering is to be presented might be before the harvest in the highlands. The highlanders would be forbidden, according to scripture, to eat of their harvest.

The solution to this problem is to do away with the barley hunt altogether; there is nothing in scripture that instructs us to start the New Year in this way. If the New Year is always started on the first New Moon AFTER the equinox, the barley will always be ripe when needed in all areas. Those harvesting first would store their omer of first fruits and continue to eat their old grain until the offering could be made. No one is going to starve because they can't eat the new grain until it is harvested all over. They simply continue to eat the stored grain of the previous year as they were doing up until this time.

Conjunction vs Sighted Sliver of the Moon.

Here is another area of controversy. When the Jews were in Babylon, they adopted many of the practices of the Babylonians including the lunar-solar calendar, naming their months after pagan gods, and their method of sighting the first sliver of the moon to determine the New Moon.

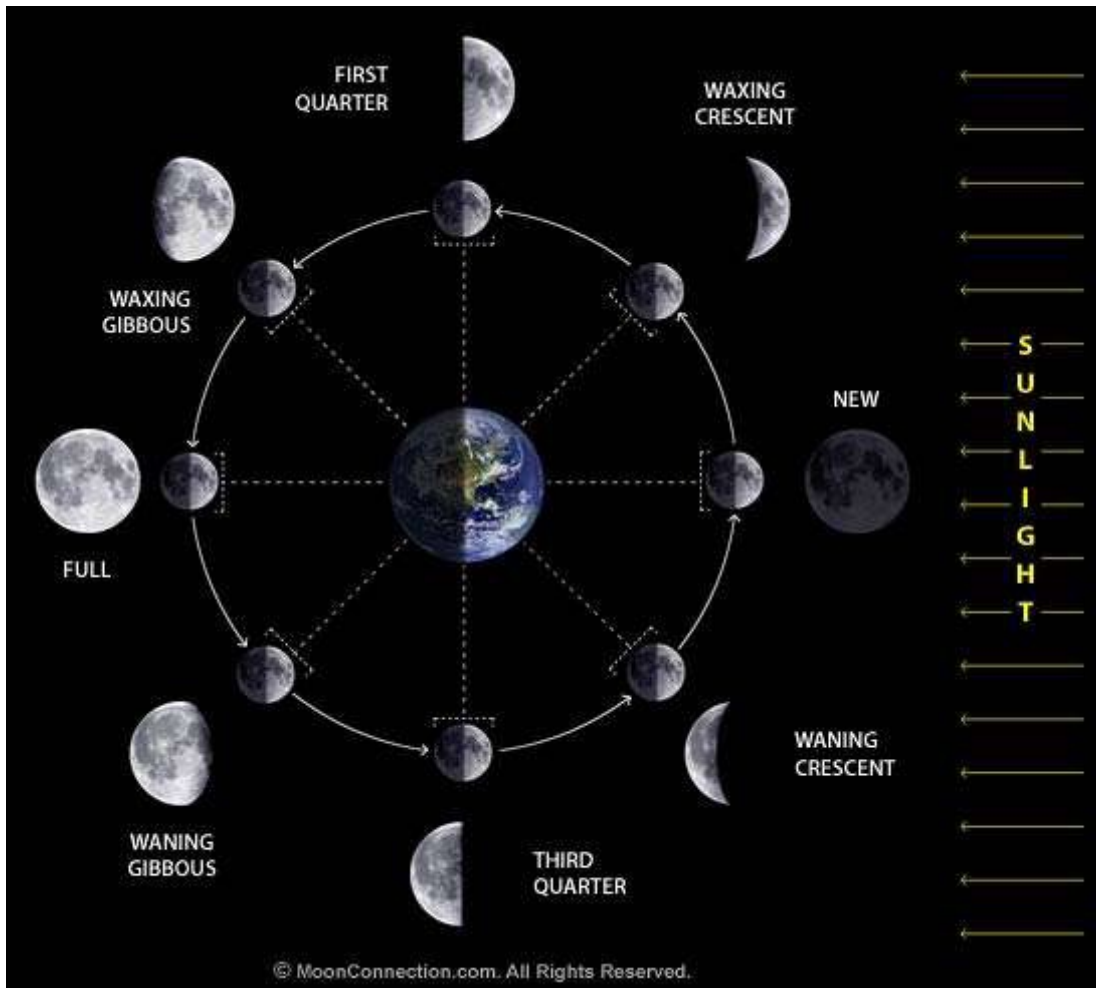


Chart used by permission of <http://www.moonconnection.com/>

The above chart should help one to visualize what occurs during a New Moon. It is YHWH's reset button for the New Month. It occurs in a moment of time when the sun, moon and earth are in a straight line, with the moon being between the earth and sun. The New Moon will be invisible to the inhabitants of the earth at this time. No where in scripture are we told to "sight" the New Moon.

You can readily see that the New Moon is the direct opposite of a Full Moon.

There are two Full Moon Feasts, the first day of Unleavened Bread and the first day of Sukkot. If the New Moon is determined by the first sighted sliver of the

waxing moon, these two full moon Feasts will never occur on a Full Moon, but will always be slightly off.

The Hebrew word for “moon” (yerach) is used only 4 times in the Law or Torah of Moses. The first occurrence is in Gen. 37:9 where Joseph had a dream in which the sun represented his father, the moon represented his mother and the stars were his brothers.

The next two times we find this word in the Torah of Moses is where we’re told not to worship it.

Deu 4:19 And lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, which YHWH thy Elohim hath divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.

Deu 17:3 And hath gone and served other elohim, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded;

The last occurrence is in Deut. 33:14, which is dealing with a blessing of Joseph by Moses. The only reference to the moon in the Torah is the warning against worshipping it.

The word that was translated “month/monthly” 221 times in scripture is the word חֹדֶשׁ “Chodesh” Strong’s # 2320. Another 20 times it was translated “New Moon”. Strong’s concordance gives the meaning of this word as “new moon, month, monthly.” However, he also gives the exact word another number #2318” and gives the meaning as “to be new, renew or repair”. Clearly, this is Mr. Strong’s personally biased interpretation as the two Hebrew words are identical. This is why most people think the meaning of Chodesh is “New”. A look at the “Etymological Dictionary of Biblical Hebrew” by Clark gives the primary definition of the word “chodesh/Chadash” as to “renew”. You don’t have a brand new moon each month, but a renewal of the old one. This renewal begins at the time when the moon is dark to our view. When the crescent is sighted, the renewed, or we’ll continue to use the terminology most are familiar with, the New moon is already from 16 to 42 hours old. This doesn’t seem to be the precision with which YHWH operates. Common sense in the absence of any scripture to the contrary will tell you that a 16 to 42 hour old crescent moon is not the New Moon. And as I mentioned above, all the Feast dates will be off by at least a day.

Rav Samuel Thompson in his article “When is Rosh Chodesh” demonstrates that there is a perfectly good Hebrew word that does mean “crescent” that was not used anywhere to refer to determining the New Moon. That word is “saharon”. This word is used to describe crescent shaped ornaments in Isa. 3:18; and Jdg 8:21, 26. The Hebrew word “yarech saharon” was not used at all to describe the New Moon.

Is there evidence in scripture that Israel did not use a sighted crescent after the conjunction to determine the New moon? Yes, there is. How did David know that the following day was to be a New Moon?

1Sa 20:5 *And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, to morrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third day at even.*

And

1Sa 20:18 *Then Jonathan said to David, To morrow is the new moon: and thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty.*

How did David and Jonathan know that the next day was to be the New Moon? They simply could have observed the last sliver of the waning moon and knew the following day there would be no visible moon at all and hence, the New moon.

There is evidence that ancient Israel did not use a lunar-solar calendar at all, but we will leave that for another time. It is certain that there were two calendars in use at the time of Yahshua. A calculated lunar-solar calendar was used primarily by rabbinic Judaism and a solar calendar was commonly used by others. The discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls gives us the information that the Essenes Community at Qumran used a solar calendar as did the Sadducees, the priestly authority of the day, and the Jews at Masada.

The Encyclopedia of Religion And Ethics records that even into the 9th Century C.E. remaining Zaddikim observed Solar months of 30 days, similar to this Egyptian Solar Calendar. The Zaddikim (called the Sadducees in the English Bible) were a sect formed of Priests, merchants, and aristocrats. Their name derives from Zadok, the high priest in the days of King David.

The Qumran community began the month when the new moon was invisible (conjunction).

According to The Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol 5 C-DH: "The present Jewish calendar (Hillel II – 358-59 AD) is lunarsolar, the months being reckoned according to the moon and the years according to the sun. A month is the period of time between one conjunction of the moon with the sun and the next conjunction. The conjunction of the moon with the sun is the point in time at which the moon is directly between the earth and the sun (but not on the same plane) and is thus invisible.

In the Book of Jubilees, we find a prophecy and warning that addresses the observing of the moon.

Jub. 6:34 *And there will be those who will make observations of the moon, for this one (the moon) corrupts the stated times and comes out earlier each year by ten days.*

Jub 6:35 *And in this way they will corrupt the years and will observe a wrong day as the day of testimony and a corrupted festival day, and everyone will mix holy days with unclean ones and unclean with holy; for they will err as to months and Sabbaths and festivals and jubilees.*

New Testament evidence shows us that Yahshua observed Passover a full day before the Pharisees did. He was operating on the solar calendar that was also used at Qumran. It is also a fact that Hillel the Elder re-instituted the conjunction to start the month in 10 B.C. right before Yahshua's birth.

Don Esposito points out that in 30 A.D., the conjunction occurred on the vernal equinox. And Passover occurred on a Wednesday 14 days later. Yahshua was crucified on a Wednesday afternoon and rose from the dead at the end of the Sabbath, exactly 3 days and 3 nights later. The closest you could get to a Wednesday crucifixion by sighting a “crescent” was in 34 A.D., but that is only provided you could see it 10 hours after the conjunction, which is almost impossible.

Some try to prove that Yahshua did not eat a Passover meal with his disciples by trying to resolve the discrepancies in the New Testament. Let’s examine those:

Mat 26:17 *Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Yahushua , saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?*

Mat 26:18 *And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Rabbi saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.*

Mat 26:19 *And the disciples did as Yahushua had appointed them; **and they made ready the passover.***

This is a mistranslation as we see in the Aramaic. The Aramaic has “Now the first day of unleavened bread drew near.” The word “protos”, that is translated in almost every translation as “first” can also be translated more correctly here as “prior or before”. It would correctly read “Now prior to the Feast of Unleavened Bread...” The word “day” is not in the Greek text.

This next verse in Mark’s gospel is also in error.

Mar 14:12 *And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?*

The Passover lamb is never killed on the first day of Unleavened Bread. Again, this should read “And prior to the Feast of Unleavened Bread....”

Mar 14:14 *And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Rabbi saith, Where is the guestchamber, where **I shall eat the passover** with my disciples?*

Mar 14:18 *And as they sat **and did eat**, Yahushua said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me.*

Clearly, Yahshua did observe the Passover. Some try to use the following scripture to indicate that Yahshua didn’t really eat the Passover, but just said he desired to.

Luk 22:13 *And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and **they made ready the passover.***

Luk 22:14 *And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.*

Luk 22:15 *And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat **this** passover with you before I suffer:*

Luk 22:16 *For I say unto you, I will not **any more** eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of YHWH.*

Luk 22:17 *And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:*

Luk 22:18 *For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of YHWH shall come.*

Luk 22:19 *And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.*

Luk 22:20 *Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.*

Only someone with an agenda to prove that the Rabbinic Passover is on the correct day would try to read into this something that is not there. They even say this wasn't really a Passover that Yahshua observed, but a graduation ceremony for his disciples. I wouldn't have personally been able to come up with a more stupid answer.

The reality is that Yahshua did observe Passover with his disciples on the correct day or he would be in violation of Torah. He plainly said it was a Passover he was eating with his disciples as per the portions I have underlined and bolded in the scriptures above. If he didn't eat the Passover as he said, then he lied about it.

Others, ignoring the accounts in the other 3 gospels, argue that the account in John shows that Yahshua did not have a Passover with his disciples, but a plain reading of the text in John 13 shows this to be in error for the following reasons. Passover is not called a "Feast". John is referring to the Feast of Unleavened Bread which the Jews had been calling Passover since the Babylonian captivity. Yahshua was crucified the following day. The Jews had not yet observed their Passover on the first day of Unleavened Bread. Yahshua was taken down from the cross before sundown which began the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a high Sabbath. Passover is the 14th of Abiv and the Feast of Unleavened Bread is the 15th. Yahshua kept Passover on the correct date; the Jews did not.

When is the Correct Day for Passover?

The Pharisees and Sadducees had a dispute as to the time when the slaughtering of the lamb should take place. The FORMER held it should be in the last 3 hours before sunset (and therefore at the end of the 14th day), the LATTER, between sunset and nightfall (and therefore AT THE BEGINNING of the 14th day!) – Universal Jewish Encyclopedia.

Apparently, Yahshua agreed with the Sadducees and the solar calendar. He observed Passover on Abiv 14 whereas the Jews observed theirs in the month of Nissan during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Yahshua did have a dispute with the Pharisees over their oral traditions. He said they had made the law of none effect with their oral traditions. He told us to beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees which was their false doctrine. Yet, today many blindly follow unbelieving Jews in their observance of Passover.

To determine the correct date for Passover, let's go to the original Passover account. The lamb was taken from the flock on the 10th of Abiv and kept 4 days while each family inspected their lamb to make sure it was free of blemishes.

Exo 12:6 *And ye 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.*

The Hebrew word translated “evening” is Ha Arbayim, which means “between the evenings”. This is what is disputed by the Rabbinic (Pharisee) Jews and the Sadducees as described in the paragraph from the Universal Jewish Encyclopedia above. It is obvious that Yahshua agreed with the Sadducees and also the Samaritans as he conducted his Passover at the beginning of the 14th of Abiv whereas as the Jews did theirs at the end of it.

The Book of Jubilees also seems to agree when it says “ And it is not permissible to slay it during any period of the light, but during the period bordering on the evening, and let them eat it at the time of the evening, until the third part of the night, and whatever is left over of all its flesh from the third part of the night and onwards, let them burn it with fire.” (Jubilees 49:12)

The Targum of Onkelos also rendered “between the evenings” in Exo. 12:6 as “between the two suns” and explained this was the time between sunset and the coming out of the stars.

Let’s continue with the original account.

Exo 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, wherein they shall eat it.*

Exo 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.*

Exo 12:9 *Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.*

Exo 12:10 *And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.*

We see that the blood was put on the door posts of the houses that night. They were to eat the Passover lamb that night and any that remained until morning shall be burned with fire. Also see Exo 34:25.

Exo 12:12 *For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the elohim of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am YHWH.*

Exo 12:13 *And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.*

We are told that the death angel would pass through the land and kill the first born of every household that did not have the blood on the door posts. Now notice what the next verse said’ “When I see the blood, I WILL **PASS OVER** you. Do you suppose that this act is where the term “Passover” comes from? Clearly, it was on the 14th of Abiv that this took place and the only night time portion of the 14th was at the beginning of it. Passover is on the 14th of Abiv, not the 15th. (Lev 23:5; Num 9:5; 28:16).

Israel was also cautioned to stay indoors all night and only go out in the morning to burn the remainder of the Passover lamb.

Exo 12:22 *And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the*

bason; **and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.**

So if they couldn't even go out of their houses until morning, how could they leave that same night? The truth is they didn't. We are told when they left in the following scripture:

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

The Hebrew word translated "morrow" is the word "mochorath" which means "the next day or the day after". They left on the 15th of Abiv, the day after Passover which was on the 14th.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is clearly the day AFTER Passover.

Exo 12:17 *And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this **selfsame day** have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever.*

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

The word translated "evening" here is B'ereb which is correctly translated. It is not "between the evenings" as we saw earlier. This simply means to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread beginning at sundown on the 14th of Abiv, which is the beginning of the 15th. Remember, the Hebrew day begins at sundown and ends at sundown of the following day. You begin eating Unleavened Bread on the 15th and eat it until the evening of the 21st, a period of 7 days.

This "selfsame" day is the 15th of Abiv, not the Passover on the 14th.

Another thing to consider too is the logistics of moving such a large number of people. Obviously, Moses rehearsed the plan with them before hand. There were about 3 to 4 million of them scattered out all over Goshen. It would have been sometime after midnight on the 14th that Pharaoh became aware of the deaths of the first born of Egypt, including his own firstborn. He had to send a chariot for Moses about 10 miles away, bring him to Pharaoh and then take him back again. It would likely have been around dawn when Moses was returned. They most likely blew the shofar with a pre-arranged signal to move out. They then had to round up their herds and flocks, take down their tents, pack up their belongings, borrow from the Egyptians, who would have given them anything to get rid of them, and then they had to walk to the meeting place at Rameses. There is no way that the Passover could have occurred on the night of the 15th as the Jews allege. This flatly contradicts scripture. Besides, scripture tells us the came out at noon.

Exo 12:17 *And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this "**b'eZTeM haYom haZeH**" (selfsame day) have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever.*

"Selfsame day" literally translates as "bone or essence of the day" which would be the middle of the day or at noon. However, Deut 16:1 says it was at night that YHWH brought them out of Egypt. I think with such a large number of people,

they began leaving Egypt at night (15th) and continuing on into the following daytime portion of the 15th.

There has been a lot of tampering with scripture which makes it hard to unravel all these traditions. It was the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) in 1947 that allowed us to see where some of the changes to scripture were made by the Masoretic scribes. Many of the changes were made in an attempt to obliterate any possible reference that would point to Yahshua as the promised Messiah. Thankfully, we have two witnesses that show us some of the alterations in the Masoretic text, the DSS and the Septuagint.

There are other scriptures that I believe have been forged, but will not address these at this time even though they do have a bearing on the timing of the Passover, which contradicts other scripture. Analyze carefully Deut 16:1-7. These verses are actually referring to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, not Passover. Remember, the Jews while in Babylon began calling the combined 8 day observance of Passover and Unleavened bread, by the term Passover. You see that reflected in the confusion over Passover in the Brit Chadashah.

The correct determination of the date for Passover is to start the Abiv 1 count on the first new moon after the vernal equinox and then count 14 days from that point. Passover will be at the beginning of the 14th of Abiv rather than at its end as observed by the Pharisees, the Karaites and most Messianic believers. The barley will be ripe when needed for the wave sheaf offering as per historical evidence. The first day of Unleavened Bread will be on a full moon as will the first day of Sukkot. Otherwise, they will not.

Herd Mentality Thinking

It is hard for us to break out of the common mold in our thinking if we hear something often enough. We had been taught all our lives that Sunday was the Sabbath and never questioned it. We celebrated Easter and Xmas without ever questioning that either. And when these sacred cows were challenged, we bowed up and got stubborn. It was only when solid evidence was shown to us that these were false that we began to break out of the common mold. This is the same problem we're having today. Just because the majority believes something does not make it true.

This is the same problem we have with the calendar and the timing of Passover. The herd mentality is in full operation in this calendar controversy. Most simply observe Passover when the Karaites tell them to. And on some occasions, they are a month off. The ancient Israelites did not use the sighted sliver of the moon prior to going into the Babylonian captivity. They may have used the ancient Egyptian solar calendar of 30 days each month with 5 supplementary days added at the end of the year. Or the months may have corresponded to the Mazzaroth (Zodiac). There are 12 signs of the Zodiac and there are 360 degrees in a circle. Each 30 degrees roughly corresponds to each of the 12 signs of the Zodiac. If the

month began each time the earth entered a new sign of the Mazzaroth, you would have months of varying lengths of 29 to 31 days each. The ancients would know what month they were in by simply looking up at the stars at night. Why use a lunar-solar calendar each month and then correct it by adding a 13th month to get it to agree with the solar calendar? Why not just use the solar calendar instead?

I have decided to use a bit of logic along with the scriptures in determining these calendar issues. If things don't make sense, it is usually because they are wrong. One thing is sure, the Passover did not occur on Abiv 15th, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread..... Else what was Passover on the 14th for?

Brick Parrish