

Lesson 5 – Passover (פסח, *pesach*) – Part 3

Passover in the New Testament

Josephus (late first century AD) - Mentions Passover frequently, summarizing biblical material but also discussing later observances (e.g., *Antiquities* 2.311–314; 3.248–251; 14.18–28; 17.212–223). According to Josephus:

- The Passover feast drew great crowds of Jews to Jerusalem (*Jewish War* 6.420–27)
- These large gatherings made the Roman authorities nervous (*Antiquities* 20.105–107)
- This description is consistent with the New Testament presentation of Passover as a well-attended festival (Luke 2:41; John 11:55).

The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) – All three record Jesus going to Jerusalem for Passover during His final week (Matt 26:2, 17–30; Mark 14:1–2, 12–26; Luke 22:1–2, 7–23). Luke additionally notes him travelling to Jerusalem for Passover with his family in Luke 2:41-51.

The Gospel of John - John's gospel mentions three different Passovers:

- The first two during Jesus' ministry (John 2:13, 23; 6:4)
- The last during His final week (John 11:55; 12:1, 13:1–5; 18:28, 39; 19:14).
- John describes Jesus traveling to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover for the first and third Passovers (John 2:13, 23; 12:1, 12; 13:1).
- The second is possibly the setting for the bread of life discourse (John 6:4, 22–71). The unleavened bread of the festival, celebrated year after year, is sharply contrasted with Jesus, the eternal bread of life (John 6:35).

Passover and the Lord's Supper

All four gospels give an account of the "Last Supper" Jesus shares with His disciples before He is arrested (Matt 26:17–25; Mark 14:12–21; Luke 22:7–13; John 13:1–30).

Possible Timeline

Thursday, Nisan 13th / 14th - Preparations (Matt 26:17); **The Last Supper** (Matt 26:20); Foot washing (John 13:2); Departure of Judas; Institution of the Lord's Supper (Matt 26:26); Farewell discourses, the true vine, Comforter promised, intercessory prayer (John 13:31 through John 17); Gethsemane (Matt 26:27; Mark 14:87).

Friday, Nisan 14th / 15th - Midnight arrest (Matt 26:47); Before Annas (John 18:18); Peter's denials about 3:00 A.M (John 18:27); Before Caiphas (John 18:24); Before Sanhedrin about 4:00am (Matt 27:1); Sent to Pilate at 6:00am (Matt 27:2); From Pilate to Herod, and back to Pilate (Luke 28:7,11); Delivered to be crucified (John 19:16); Crucified at 9:00am (Mark 15:25); Darkness from 12:00 to 3:00pm (Matt 27:45), death of Jesus at 3:00pm (Matt 27:50);

The Passover lambs were being sacrificed at this hour (John 19:36); Jesus was buried about sundown; The Passover meal; Burial of Jesus (Matthew 27:57).

Saturday, Nisan 15th / 16th ... Jesus was in the tomb.

Sunday, Nisan 16th / 17th ... Jesus rose from the dead.

Was the “Last Supper” a Passover meal?

In the Synoptic Gospels, this meal is explicitly connected with Jesus celebrating the Passover with His disciples (He tells his disciples to prepare to “eat the Passover”).

John does not explicitly connect the Last Supper with a Passover observance, and John 13 even begins with the phrase “Now before the Feast of the Passover...”

How do we explain this?

- It is possible that that two calendars were in simultaneous use and one national group, using one calendar, ate the Passover on Thursday night whereas the other group, using the other calendar, ate the Passover on Friday night.
- It is possible that Jesus, having been repudiated by the priesthood, would not have been allowed to obtain a lamb for sacrifice and would have been compelled to celebrate the feast at a different time.

All the Synoptic Gospels record Jesus’ institution of the “Lord’s Supper” during this “Last Supper” (Matt 26:26–29; Mark 14:12–25; Luke 22:14–23).

Christ as the Passover Lamb

- John explicitly links the crucifixion of Christ with the symbolism of Passover, presenting the fact that Jesus’ legs were not broken as a fulfillment of Exod 12:46 (John 19:31–36).
- The symbolism of the Lord’s Supper also substitutes Christ himself for the Passover elements as the symbol of redemption.
- Paul uses Passover and the observances associated with the Feast of Unleavened Bread as a metaphor for Christian moral purity in 1 Cor 5:6–8. In referring to Christ as “our Passover lamb” who “has been sacrificed,” he represents the Christian life as a period of permanent festival observance where all leaven (representing sexual immorality) must be removed.
- Other New Testament texts also associate Jesus with the Passover lamb (1 Pet 1:19; Rev 5:6, 9, 12). This imagery points to an understanding of the sacrifices of the Passover lamb as the remembrance of God’s past act of redemption that foreshadowed the sacrifice of the Lamb of God as God’s ultimate act of redemption.

Background Passages

Synoptic Gospels

Matthew 26:2 (ESV)

² “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.”

Matthew 26:17–30 (ESV)

¹⁷ Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover?” ¹⁸ He said, “Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, ‘The Teacher says, My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.’” ¹⁹ And the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover.

²⁰ When it was evening, he reclined at table with the twelve. ²¹ And as they were eating, he said, “Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.” ²² And they were very sorrowful and began to say to him one after another, “Is it I, Lord?” ²³ He answered, “He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me. ²⁴ The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.” ²⁵ Judas, who would betray him, answered, “Is it I, Rabbi?” He said to him, “You have said so.”

²⁶ Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” ²⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you, ²⁸ for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹ I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

³⁰ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Mark 14:1–2 (ESV)

¹ It was now two days before the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to arrest him by stealth and kill him, ² for they said, “Not during the feast, lest there be an uproar from the people.”

Mark 14:12–26 (ESV)

¹² And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, “Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?” ¹³ And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him, ¹⁴ and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’” ¹⁵ And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us.” ¹⁶ And the disciples set out and went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

¹⁷ And when it was evening, he came with the twelve. ¹⁸ And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with

me.”¹⁹ They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, “Is it I?”²⁰ He said to them, “It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me.”²¹ For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.”

²² And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them, and said, “Take; this is my body.”²³ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it.²⁴ And he said to them, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.”²⁵ Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

²⁶ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Luke 2:41–51 (ESV)

⁴¹ Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover.⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom.⁴³ And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it,⁴⁴ but supposing him to be in the group they went a day’s journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances,⁴⁵ and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him.⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers.⁴⁸ And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress.”⁴⁹ And he said to them, “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?”⁵⁰ And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them.⁵¹ And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

Luke 22:1–2 (ESV)

¹ Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called the Passover.² And the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how to put him to death, for they feared the people.

Luke 22:7–23 (ESV)

⁷ Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.⁸ So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it.”⁹ They said to him, “Where will you have us prepare it?”¹⁰ He said to them, “Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters¹¹ and tell the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’¹² And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there.”¹³ And they went and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

¹⁴ And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him.¹⁵ And he said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.¹⁶ For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”¹⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves.”¹⁸ For I tell you that from now

on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”¹⁹ And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”²⁰ And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.”²¹ But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table.²² For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!”²³ And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.

Gospel of John

John 2:13 (ESV)

¹³ The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

John 2:23 (ESV)

²³ Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing.

John 6:4 (ESV)

⁴ Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand.

John 6:22–71 (ESV)

²² On the next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone.²³ Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks.²⁴ So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.

²⁵ When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, “Rabbi, when did you come here?”²⁶ Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves.”²⁷ Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.”²⁸ Then they said to him, “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?”²⁹ Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.”³⁰ So they said to him, “Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform?”³¹ Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’”³² Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven.³³ For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”³⁴ They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.”

³⁵ Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.³⁶ But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe.³⁷ All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.⁴⁰ For this is the will of my Father, that everyone

who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

⁴¹ So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” ⁴² They said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven?’” ⁴³ Jesus answered them, “Do not grumble among yourselves. ⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me— ⁴⁶ not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

⁵² The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” ⁵³ So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.” ⁵⁹ Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum.

⁶⁰ When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” ⁶¹ But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at this? ⁶² Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³ It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴ But there are some of you who do not believe.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) ⁶⁵ And he said, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.”

⁶⁶ After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. ⁶⁷ So Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, ⁶⁹ and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.” ⁷⁰ Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil.” ⁷¹ He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray him.

John 11:55 (ESV)

⁵⁵ Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves.

John 12:1 (ESV)

¹ Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.

John 12:12 (ESV)

¹² The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.

John 13:1–5 (ESV)

¹ Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ² During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, ⁴ rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

John 18:28 (ESV)

²⁸ Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover.

John 18:39 (ESV)

³⁹ But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?"

John 19:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!"

The Last Supper

Matthew 26:17–25 (ESV)

¹⁷ Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover?" ¹⁸ He said, "Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, 'The Teacher says, My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" ¹⁹ And the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover.

²⁰ When it was evening, he reclined at table with the twelve. ²¹ And as they were eating, he said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me." ²² And they were very sorrowful and began to say to him one after another, "Is it I, Lord?" ²³ He answered, "He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me." ²⁴ The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not

been born.”²⁵ Judas, who would betray him, answered, “Is it I, Rabbi?” He said to him, “You have said so.”

Mark 14:12–21 (ESV)

¹² And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, his disciples said to him, “Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?”¹³ And he sent two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him,¹⁴ and wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says, Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’¹⁵ And he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready; there prepare for us.”¹⁶ And the disciples set out and went to the city and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

¹⁷ And when it was evening, he came with the twelve.¹⁸ And as they were reclining at table and eating, Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.”¹⁹ They began to be sorrowful and to say to him one after another, “Is it I?”²⁰ He said to them, “It is one of the twelve, one who is dipping bread into the dish with me.”²¹ For the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.”

Luke 22:7–13 (ESV)

⁷ Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.⁸ So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it.”⁹ They said to him, “Where will you have us prepare it?”¹⁰ He said to them, “Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters¹¹ and tell the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’¹² And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there.”¹³ And they went and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

John 13:1–30 (ESV)

¹ Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.² During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him,³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God,⁴ rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist.⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, do you wash my feet?”⁷ Jesus answered him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.”⁸ Peter said to him, “You shall never wash my feet.” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.”⁹ Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!”¹⁰ Jesus said to him, “The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.”¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

¹² When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, “Do you understand what I have done to you?” ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. ¹⁸ I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled, ‘He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.’ ¹⁹ I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he. ²⁰ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.”

²¹ After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, “Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.” ²² The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke. ²³ One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table at Jesus’ side, ²⁴ so Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. ²⁵ So that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, “Lord, who is it?” ²⁶ Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.” So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. ²⁷ Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, “What you are going to do, do quickly.” ²⁸ Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. ²⁹ Some thought that, because Judas had the moneybag, Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we need for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor. ³⁰ So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

Timeline

Thursday, Nisan 13th / 14th

Matthew 26:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover?”

Matthew 26:20 (ESV)

²⁰ When it was evening, he reclined at table with the twelve.

John 13:2 (ESV)

² During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him,

Matthew 26:26 (ESV)

²⁶ Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.”

John 13:31–John 17 (ESV)

³¹ When he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in him. ³² If God is glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and glorify him at once. ³³

Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, 'Where I am going you cannot come.'³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

³⁶ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward."³⁷ Peter said to him, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."³⁸ Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.

¹ "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.² In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.⁴ And you know the way to where I am going."⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?"⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.⁷ If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

⁸ Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

¹² "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

¹⁵ "If you love me, you will keep my commandments.¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

¹⁸ "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.¹⁹ Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.²⁰ In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.²¹ Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."²² Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?"²³ Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.²⁴ Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

²⁵ "These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you.²⁶ But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

²⁸ You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I will come to you.' If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe. ³⁰ I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, ³¹ but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.

¹ "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

¹² "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

¹⁸ "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. ²¹ But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. ²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³ Whoever hates me hates my Father also. ²⁴ If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. ²⁵ But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: 'They hated me without a cause.'

²⁶ "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. ²⁷ And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.

¹ "I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. ² They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. ³ And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. ⁴ But I

have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.

“I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you.⁵ But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’⁶ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.⁷ Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.⁸ And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment:⁹ concerning sin, because they do not believe in me;¹⁰ concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer;¹¹ concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

¹² “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

¹⁶ “A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me.”¹⁷ So some of his disciples said to one another, “What is this that he says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me’; and, ‘because I am going to the Father’?”¹⁸ So they were saying, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’? We do not know what he is talking about.”¹⁹ Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, “Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, ‘A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me’?”²⁰ Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy.²¹ When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.²² So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.²³ In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you.²⁴ Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

²⁵ “I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father.²⁶ In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf;²⁷ for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.²⁸ I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”

²⁹ His disciples said, “Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech!³⁰ Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God.”³¹ Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe?³² Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.³³ I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

¹ When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, ² since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. ⁴ I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. ⁵ And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

⁶ “I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷ Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. ⁸ For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹ I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰ All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. ¹¹ And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. ¹² While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. ¹³ But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. ¹⁴ I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

²⁰ “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. ²⁴ Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

Matthew 26:27 (ESV)

²⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you,

Mark 14:72 (ESV)

⁷² And immediately the rooster crowed a second time. And Peter remembered how Jesus had said to him, “Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny me three times.” And he broke down and wept.

Friday, Nisan 14th / 15th

Matthew 26:47 (ESV)

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people.

John 18:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ Now the servants and officers had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves. Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.

John 18:27 (ESV)

²⁷ Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed.

John 18:24 (ESV)

²⁴ Annas then sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Matthew 27:1 (ESV)

¹ When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death.

Matthew 27:2 (ESV)

² And they bound him and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor.

Luke 24 (ESV)

¹ But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. ² And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. ⁵ And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, ⁷ that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise." ⁸ And they remembered his words, ⁹ and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, ¹¹ but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. ¹² But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

¹³ That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened.

¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" ¹⁹ And he said to

them, **“What things?”** And they said to him, **“Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,** ²⁰ **and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him.** ²¹ **But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened.** ²² **Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning,** ²³ **and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive.** ²⁴ **Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.”** ²⁵ **And he said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!** ²⁶ **Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?”** ²⁷ **And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.**

²⁸ **So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther,** ²⁹ **but they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them.** ³⁰ **When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them.** ³¹ **And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight.** ³² **They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”** ³³ **And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,** ³⁴ **saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!”** ³⁵ **Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.**

³⁶ **As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, “Peace to you!”** ³⁷ **But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit.** ³⁸ **And he said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”** ⁴⁰ **And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet.** ⁴¹ **And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, “Have you anything here to eat?”** ⁴² **They gave him a piece of broiled fish,** ⁴³ **and he took it and ate before them.**

⁴⁴ **Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”** ⁴⁵ **Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,** ⁴⁶ **and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,** ⁴⁷ **and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.** ⁴⁸ **You are witnesses of these things.** ⁴⁹ **And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”**

⁵⁰ **And he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them.** ⁵¹ **While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven.** ⁵² **And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,** ⁵³ **and were continually in the temple blessing God.**

Luke 11 (ESV)

¹ Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” ² And he said to them, “When you pray, say:

“Father, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come.

³ Give us each day our daily bread,

⁴ and forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

And lead us not into temptation.”

⁵ And he said to them, “Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves,’ ⁶ for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him’; ⁷ and he will answer from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything’? ⁸ I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs. ⁹ And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. ¹¹ What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; ¹² or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”

¹⁴ Now he was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the people marveled. ¹⁵ But some of them said, “He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons,” ¹⁶ while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven. ¹⁷ But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. ¹⁸ And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. ¹⁹ And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. ²⁰ But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²¹ When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe; ²² but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his spoil. ²³ Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

²⁴ “When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and finding none it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ ²⁵ And when it comes, it finds the house swept and put in order. ²⁶ Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that person is worse than the first.”

²⁷ As he said these things, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, “Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts at which you nursed!” ²⁸ But he said, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”

²⁹ When the crowds were increasing, he began to say, “This generation is an evil generation. It seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah.” ³⁰ For as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so will the Son of Man be to this generation. ³¹ The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. ³² The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

³³ “No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket, but on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light. ³⁴ Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light, but when it is bad, your body is full of darkness. ³⁵ Therefore be careful lest the light in you be darkness. ³⁶ If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, it will be wholly bright, as when a lamp with its rays gives you light.”

³⁷ While Jesus was speaking, a Pharisee asked him to dine with him, so he went in and reclined at table. ³⁸ The Pharisee was astonished to see that he did not first wash before dinner. ³⁹ And the Lord said to him, “Now you Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. ⁴⁰ You fools! Did not he who made the outside make the inside also? ⁴¹ But give as alms those things that are within, and behold, everything is clean for you.

⁴² “But woe to you Pharisees! For you tithe mint and rue and every herb, and neglect justice and the love of God. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. ⁴³ Woe to you Pharisees! For you love the best seat in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplaces. ⁴⁴ Woe to you! For you are like unmarked graves, and people walk over them without knowing it.”

⁴⁵ One of the lawyers answered him, “Teacher, in saying these things you insult us also.” ⁴⁶ And he said, “Woe to you lawyers also! For you load people with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. ⁴⁷ Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers killed. ⁴⁸ So you are witnesses and you consent to the deeds of your fathers, for they killed them, and you build their tombs. ⁴⁹ Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,’ ⁵⁰ so that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation, ⁵¹ from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be required of this generation. ⁵² Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering.”

⁵³ As he went away from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard and to provoke him to speak about many things, ⁵⁴ lying in wait for him, to catch him in something he might say.

John 19:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ So he delivered him over to them to be crucified.
So they took Jesus,

Mark 15:25 (ESV)

²⁵ And it was the third hour when they crucified him.

Matthew 27:45 (ESV)

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour.

Matthew 27:50 (ESV)

⁵⁰ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

John 19:36 (ESV)

³⁶ For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken.”

Matthew 27:57 (ESV)

⁵⁷ When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus.

Christ as the Passover Lamb

Exodus 12:46 (ESV)

⁴⁶ It shall be eaten in one house; you shall not take any of the flesh outside the house, and you shall not break any of its bones.

John 19:31–36 (ESV)

³¹ Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away. ³² So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him. ³³ But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. ³⁵ He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe. ³⁶ For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken.”

1 Corinthians 5:6–8 (ESV)

⁶ Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? ⁷ Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸ Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

1 Peter 1:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Revelation 5:6 (ESV)

⁶ And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Revelation 5:9 (ESV)

⁹ And they sang a new song, saying,

“Worthy are you to take the scroll
and to open its seals,
for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation,

Revelation 5:12 (ESV)

¹² saying with a loud voice,

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might
and honor and glory and blessing!”

Passover

(כּוֹסֵף, *pischa'*; פּוֹסַחַ, *pesach*; Πάσχα, *Pascha*). A sacred observance in Judaism that commemorates the climactic 10th plague in the book of Exodus, when Yahweh punishes Egypt by killing all the firstborn but “passes over” (פּוֹסַחַ, *pasach*) the firstborn of Israel (Exod 12:12–13), resulting in the Israelites’ deliverance from slavery in Egypt (Exod 12:14–17).

The Institution of Passover

Passover is celebrated on the 14th day of the first month Abib (later called Nisan). The observance is instituted within the narrative framework of the exodus story where Yahweh brought plagues of increasing severity against Egypt to demonstrate his power and bring about the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian slavery (Exod 1–12).

The 10th and final plague was the death of all the firstborn—human and animal—in Egypt (Exod 11:4–6). God punished Egypt but spared the firstborn of Israel, as long as the Israelites properly followed Moses’ instructions. On the night of the plague, the Israelites were instructed to stay in their homes after slaughtering a lamb and placing its blood on the lintel and doorposts of their houses (Exod 12:7, 21–22). The blood was to be a sign that distinguished the Israelites and separated them from the intended victims of the plague (Exod 12:13, 23). Since the people were to be ready to depart Egypt at a moment’s notice, they were to eat the lamb quickly, dressed to travel and with staff in hand (Exod 12:11).

The Israelites followed Moses’ instructions, and at midnight that night, Yahweh struck down the firstborn of Egypt (Exod 12:28–29). Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron in the middle of the night and ordered them to take all the Israelites and depart Egypt (Exod 12:31–32). The Israelites left hastily, taking their bread dough before it was leavened (Exod 12:34), so on the journey they had to bake unleavened cakes because they had not had time to prepare any other provisions (Exod 12:39). The Israelites were instructed to observe the Passover on the 14th of the first month every year to commemorate that night when God delivered them from Egypt (Exod 12:14, 24–27).

Old Testament Observances of Passover

Apart from the foundational narrative instituting Passover (Exod 12) and the legal passages regulating the observance (see “Passover Regulations”), the formal ritual observance of the Passover is mentioned only a few times in the Old Testament (e.g., Num 9; Josh 5:10–12; 2 Kgs 23:21–23; 2 Chr 30:1–27; 35:1–19; Ezra 6:19–22). Despite the stated importance for Israel to observe Passover “as a lasting statute” for all future generations (e.g., Exod 12:14; compare Lev 23:5; Num 9:1–5; 28:16), the biblical narrative makes a point of emphasizing how *unusual* observance of the Passover actually was throughout Israel’s history (2 Kgs 23:22; 2 Chr 30:26; 35:18; compare Neh 8:17).

Numbers 9:1–5 records that the Israelites observed the Passover one year after leaving Egypt. This was the first official Passover that functioned as a commemoration of the exodus event. The narrative itself is very brief. Yahweh reminds Moses that Israel should observe the Passover on the 14th day of the first month as prescribed, Moses tells the people to observe the Passover, and the people comply (Num 9:2–5). Because a few people were unclean on

Passover and unable to participate, Yahweh allowed a “make-up” observance on the 14th of the second month (Num 9:6–14).

Joshua 5:10 simply reports that Israel observed the Passover on the 14th of the month. After Joshua, the only times Israel is depicted as keeping the Passover are during the reforms of Hezekiah (2 Chr 30) and Josiah (2 Kgs 23:21–23; 2 Chr 35:1–19). When Josiah (r. 640–609 BC) commands the people to keep the Passover, the narrator adds that it had not been kept “from the days of the judges who had judged over Israel or during the days of the kings of Israel and the kings of Judah” (2 Kgs 23:22 LEB). However, the narrator provides no details on *how* the Passover was kept. The writer of 2 Chronicles elaborates on Josiah’s Passover (2 Chr 35) and records a Passover initiated by Hezekiah (r. 726–697 BC) that is not mentioned in 2 Kings (2 Chr 30).

Hezekiah’s Passover was celebrated on the 14th day of the second month (2 Chr 30:2), in line with the allowance in Num 9:6–12, likely because Hezekiah’s reforms had begun in the first month, and the Israelites did not finish cleansing the temple until the 16th day of the first month (2 Chr 29:17–18). Because of this, the people, the temple, and the priests were either not sanctified in time to observe it in the first month or they were not yet assembled (making them either unclean or traveling; 2 Chr 30:3). Echoing the sentiment of 2 Kgs 23:22, the Chronicler states that Israel “had not kept it [i.e., the Passover] as often as prescribed” (2 Chr 30:5 LEB). Their observance of Passover under Hezekiah is recorded in 2 Chr 30:13–22. This festival also clearly combines the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Passover since the account begins stating they held “the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the second month” (2 Chr 30:13), but the exception in Num 9 is only made for observing Passover in the second month. The narrative does little to shed light on how Passover was observed since the only detail it reports is the slaughter of the Passover lamb on the 14th. However, the story does make it clear that there was confusion over *how* to celebrate the Passover. Apparently, some of the Israelites had not properly consecrated themselves and so were unclean when they ate the sacrifice (2 Chr 30:18). These people did not eat “as it was written” (בכתוב, *kktwb*), suggesting there were written instructions that were not widely known. Hezekiah prayed to Yahweh to accept those whose hearts were in the right place in seeking God, even if they had outwardly failed to complete the proper purification (2 Chr 30:19).

The account of Josiah’s Passover in 2 Chr 35 is longer than the brief notice in 2 Kgs 23:21–23, explaining how they slaughtered the Passover lamb on the 14th of the first month (2 Chr 35:1, 6, 11; compare 2 Chr 30:15; Ezra 6:20) and describing how Josiah and his officials donated many animals to provide Passover sacrifices for all the people (2 Chr 35:7–9). The mix of animals for sacrifice included sheep, lambs, young goats, and bulls (see Deut 16:2). The priests then slaughtered the animals for the people, roasting the Passover sacrifice in fire, boiling the “holy things,” and serving the people (2 Chr 35:11–13). The people kept the Passover and then observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread (2 Chr 35:17). The narrator ends by praising Josiah’s Passover, noting “there was no Passover like it kept in Israel since the days of Samuel the prophet” (2 Chr 35:18).

The last mention of a Passover observance in the Old Testament is the celebration of Passover that followed the dedication of the second temple after the Jews returned from exile in Babylon (Ezra 6:19–22).

Passover Regulations

As a sacred day, Passover is inaugurated in Exodus 12 in connection with Yahweh's deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage. The instructions for Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread are primarily given in Exod 12–13 with various reiterations found elsewhere throughout the Pentateuch (e.g., Exod 23:10–18; 34:18–25; Lev 23:4–8; Num 9:1–14; 28:16–25; Deut 16:1–8).

Exodus 12–13

The guidelines for the Passover observance are explicitly laid out in Exod 12 during the story of the first Passover and God's final plague against Egypt. The instructions immediately follow the scene where Moses warns Pharaoh about the coming 10th plague and the death of the firstborn (Exod 11). The story and the instructions are intertwined in Exod 12 because the instructions indicate both what Israel must do *right then* to protect against the deaths of their firstborn (Exod 12:1–14, 21–23) and what Israel must do *in the future* in commemoration of Yahweh's act of deliverance (Exod 12:14–20, 24–28). The instructions in Exod 12 also shift from Passover-specific instructions to details related to the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The instructions immediately relevant for Israel's survival of the 10th plague included:

- selecting a lamb (שֶׁה, *seh*), an unblemished male, for sacrifice—typically one per family—on the 10th of the month (Exod 12:3–5);
- sacrificing the lamb at twilight on the 14th of the month (Exod 12:6);
- putting the blood of the lamb on the doorposts and lintel of the house (Exod 12:7);
- roasting the lamb with fire, not eating it raw or boiling it (Exod 12:8–9);
- eating the roasted lamb with unleavened bread (מַצּוֹת, *matstsoth*) on bitter herbs (מֵרִירִים, *merorim*) (Exod 12:8);
- eating all of the lamb that night and burning any leftovers (Exod 12:10);
- eating the meal in haste, ready to leave home at a moment's notice (Exod 12:11).

The blood on the doorposts and lintel was a sign that the people living in that house were trusting in Yahweh for deliverance (Stuart, *Exodus*, 278). In Exodus 12:13 Yahweh says, “And the blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are, and I will see the blood, and I will pass over you, and there will not be a destructive plague among you when I strike the land of Egypt” (LEB). Later, Moses warns the elders of Israel that no one should go out of their houses that night and that when Yahweh sees the blood on the doorway, He will “pass over” and “not allow the destroyer” to enter their houses (Exod 12:23).

Exodus 12 ends with a few more explicit stipulations related to the Passover observance:

- Outsiders—including foreigners, temporary residents, or non-Israelite hired workers—are not allowed to eat the Passover meal (Exod 12:43, 45).
- Slaves or foreigners living among the Israelites had to be circumcised before they could participate in Passover (Exod 12:44, 48).
- The Passover meal had to be eaten in one house and could not be taken out of that house (Exod 12:46).
- No bones of the Passover lamb were to be broken (Exod 12:46).

Instructions concerning future observances of the Feast of Unleavened Bread are found in Exod 12:14–20, interrupting the story of the first Passover and linking Passover with the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Passover proper took place on one night—the 14th of the month. The Israelites left Egypt that very night, provisioned mainly with unleavened bread (Exod 12:30–32, 39). The future commemoration of their departure, therefore, centered around unleavened bread (Exod 12:17–20; for more details on the instructions specific to unleavened bread, see this article: Feast of Unleavened Bread).

Exodus 13 continues instructions relevant to the Feast of Unleavened Bread but also offers further instructions about dedicating all firstborn to Yahweh (Exod 13:1–2, 11–16). The rationale for both sets of instructions is explicitly grounded in memorializing the exodus event (Exod 13:3–8, 14–16).

Although Exodus 12–13 presents Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread as a single integrated festival commemorating the exodus from Egypt, it is possible that the two were originally distinct celebrations (Sarna, *Exodus*, 57). Sarna explains: “Since the two festivals occurred in close propinquity to each other, and both coincided with the time of the Exodus, all three elements merged and were fused into a unified entity. The pre-Israelite ingredients were stripped of their former content and were invested with completely new associations and meanings connected with the events of the Exodus” (*Exodus*, 57).

However, the linking of the Feast of Unleavened Bread with the redemption of the firstborn in Exod 13 and Exod 34 provides another connection back to Exod 12, where the significance of Passover is linked to God’s deliverance of the firstborn of Israel when he struck down the firstborn of Egypt (Exod 12:12–13; compare Exod 13:15). Whether the holidays were actually distinct and eventually merged is a matter of debate as is the possible reason for such a merger (see McConville, “Deuteronomy’s Unification”; Levinson, “Hermeneutics of Tradition”).

Exodus 23 and 34

As noted, the Covenant Code’s laws about sacred time omit Passover (Exod 23:10–17), though the command of Exod 23:18 to not “leave the fat of my festival until morning” (**וְלֹא יָלִין חֶלֶב** **וְלֹא יִשָּׂר חֶלֶב**, *wl' ylyn chlb chgy 'd bqr*) could be an allusion to the Passover sacrifice (Sarna, *Exodus*, 146; McConville, “Deuteronomy’s Unification,” 47). Similarly, further instructions about the pilgrimage feasts in Exod 34:18–24 include the Feast of Unleavened Bread and connect it again with the redemption of the firstborn and the deliverance from Egypt (Exod 34:18–20; compare Exod 13). The text then mentions the Sabbath and the other two feasts briefly (Exod 34:21–24). Only in Exod 34:25 is Passover explicitly mentioned in a way that directly links the ambiguous command of Exod 23:18 with the Passover sacrifice. The two verses are nearly identical except for two lexical substitutions and a syntactic shift, but the significant difference is in the explicit identification of “my festival” (**אֲנִי**, *chgy*) as “festival of the Passover” (**אֲנִי חֶלֶב**, *chg hpsch*).

Comparison of Exod 23:18 and 34:25:

23:18

34:25

Do not sacrifice (זבַח, *zbch*) with leaven the blood of my sacrifice

Do not slaughter (שחַט, *shcht*) with leaven the blood of my sacrifice

and do not leave the fat (חלב, *chlb*) of my festival (אֵיגֶרֶת, *chgy*) until morning

and do not leave til morning the sacrifice (זבַח, *zbch*) of the festival of the Passover (אֵיגֶרֶת הַפֶּסַח, *chg hpsch*)

Leviticus and Numbers

The longest legal discussions of sacred times in the Pentateuch come in Leviticus 23 and Numbers 28–29. Despite their near-exhaustive coverage of “appointed times,” both passages allot only one verse to Passover, noting it falls on the 14th day of the first month (Lev 23:5; Num 28:16), before moving on to the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lev 23:6–8; Num 28:17–25).

In Numbers, Yahweh reminds Moses that Israel should observe the Passover on the 14th day of the first month “according to all its decrees; and according to all its stipulations” (Num 9:3 LEB). The text does not expand on what those decrees and stipulations included, though Num 9:11–12 offer a summary of the basic requirements: eat the sacrifice along with unleavened bread and bitter plants, leave none of it until morning, and break no bones of the sacrifice.

The main addition that Num 9 makes to the instructions concerning Passover is the allowance for *another* Passover that could be observed on the 14th of the *second* month for anyone who had been unclean or traveling and unable to participate in the first Passover (Num 9:6–12). In making this allowance, Yahweh emphasizes that the *only* people eligible for the make-up Passover are those who had been unclean or away on a journey; all others who neglect the Passover have sinned and should be “cut off” (Num 9:13).

Deuteronomy 16

Deuteronomy 16:1–8 is the only legal text that noticeably modifies the regulations from Exod 12. For example, according to Exodus 12, the sacrificial animal must be a lamb (שֶׁה, *seh*) from the flock (צֹאן, *tson*), either from the sheep (כִּבְשִׁים, *kevasim*) or goats (עִזִּים, *izzim*; Exod 12:3, 5, 21). Deuteronomy extends the regulation to allow for the sacrifice to come from the herd (בָּקָר, *baqar*) as well as the flock (צֹאן, *tson*; Deut 16:2). In keeping with Deuteronomy’s focus on centralizing Israelite worship at one official sanctuary, the Passover sacrifice is to be offered at the central sanctuary, and the people are prohibited from offering it locally (Deut 16:5–6). In Exodus 12, the observance is centered on the home with the people eating the meal in their homes, sacrificing the lamb at their homes, and placing the blood on the door of their homes (Exod 12:3–4, 7, 22–23). In moving the Passover to the central sanctuary, Deuteronomy takes away “its old character of a domestic rite” (Driver, *Deuteronomy*, 192). The prohibition against leaven in the home (Exod 12:15) is also extended in Deuteronomy to a prohibition against leaven in the entire territory of Israel (Deut 16:4).

The most noted difference between the instructions of Exod 12 and those of Deut 16 concerns the proper method for cooking the sacrifice (see McConville, “Deuteronomy’s Unification,” 47; Levinson, *Right Chorale*, 258n7, 266). In Exod 12:8–9, the sacrifice is to be “fire-roasted” (צָלוּ אֵשׁ, *tsly 'sh*), and the text explicitly *forbids* eating (אָכַל, *'kl*) the meat raw or boiled in water (בִּשַׁל בַּמַּיִם, *bshl bmyim*). By contrast, Deuteronomy 16:7 commands that the sacrifice *should* be boiled (בִּשַׁל, *bshl*) and eaten (אָכַל, *'kl*).

The Hebrew verb בָּשַׁל (*bashal*) often indicates cooking food by boiling it in liquid (Exod 23:19; 34:26; Deut 14:21; 1 Sam 2:13–14; 2 Kgs 4:38; Ezek 24:3–5), but if this is the meaning of *bashal* in Deut 16:7, then the command completely contradicts the prohibition of Exod 12:9 (see Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 155). This oft-cited inconsistency relies on cooking by boiling in liquid to be the basic meaning of *bashal* (see Craigie, *Deuteronomy*, 244n9). However, the basic meaning of *bashal* could simply be “cook” since the word is used regularly in contexts where the precise method of cooking is unspecified (Exod 29:31; 1 Sam 2:15; 2 Sam 13:8; Ezek 46:20, 24; Zech 14:21). In fact, the biblical writers seem to need to make it explicit when they mean “boil.” For example, the well-known prohibition against “boiling a kid in its mothers’ milk” specifically mentions the liquid to be boiled (Exod 23:19; 34:26; Deut 14:21). Similarly, the prohibition in Exod 12:9 explicitly states that boiling *in water* is forbidden: אַל-תֹּאכְלוּ מִמֶּנּוּ: וְבִשַׁל מִבְּשַׁל בַּמַּיִם (al-tokhelu mimmennu na' uvashel mevushshal bammayim, “Do not eat from it raw or boiled, that is, boiled in water”).

The Akkadian cognate *bašālu* has a broad range of meaning and is used for various types of cooking as well as other processes that involve heating substances—boiling something in liquid, melting something, burning something, firing or baking clay or bricks, roasting meat, or cooking a meal (see *CAD*, s.v. “bašālu”). The Old Testament usage of *bashal* suggests “it may well have had an equally broad meaning in Hebrew” (Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 155). Notably, the Chronicler’s account of Josiah’s Passover appears to be cognizant of the tension between the commands in Exod 12:9 and Deut 16:7 since he states, “They cooked [or boiled] the Passover offering *with fire* according to the commandment” (וַיִּבְשַׁלוּ הַפֶּסַח בְּאֵשׁ כַּמִּשְׁפָּט, *wayvashshelu happensach ba'esh kammishpat*; Second Chronicles 35:13; emphasis added). Taking *bashal* to specifically mean “boiled,” the Chronicler’s statement is a bizarre and incoherent attempt at harmonization, producing a compromise between the two requirements that “conforms to neither” (so Levinson, *Right Chorale*, 258n7). On the other hand, taking *bashal* to just mean “cooked,” the Chronicler’s usage could be understood as a clarification intended to show that *bashal* may “refer to any kind of cooking, so the command does *not* conflict with Exod 12 (so Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 155).

Even if Deuteronomy does not present a challenge to Exodus’ regulation about cooking the Passover sacrifice, the combined adjustments in Deut 16:1–8 fundamentally transform the Passover observance into a large-scale event at the central sanctuary. As a ritual centered in the home, a lamb was likely the extent of what a single household could eat in one night, but with a combined feast, plenty of people were around to share the meat, allowing the sacrifices to include cattle (Deut 16:2). Furthermore, Deuteronomy provides the most integrated presentation of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread as a single festival (McConville,

Law and Theology, 113–14). Levinson summarizes how Deuteronomy modifies the Exodus Passover regulations: “The authors of Deuteronomy radically transform the paschal slaughter, originally an apotropaic slaughter of sheep or goats in the doorway (Exod 12:21–23, JE), into all but a normative sacrifice of cattle or sheep at the centralized altar (Deut 16:1–8). Not only do they void the original blood ritual, they *textually* rework the older protocol as well, in effect fusing it with the quite dissimilar norms proper to Unleavened Bread as a pilgrimage festival” (Levinson, *Right Chorale*, 219; emphasis original).

Passover and the Pilgrimage Festivals

The Passover was followed immediately by the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the combined observance became one of the three seven-day pilgrimage festivals along with the Feast of Weeks (also called “Shavuot” from the Hebrew **תִּשְׁבֻּעַת**, *shavu'oth*, meaning “weeks,” or “Pentecost” from the Greek **πεντηκοστή**, *pentēkostē*, meaning “fiftieth”) and the Feast of Booths (also called “Sukkoth” from the Hebrew **סֻכּוֹת**, *sukkoth*, meaning “booths”).

Agricultural and Historical Significance

These festivals have both agricultural and historical significance for biblical Israel and later Judaism. Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread fall in the spring, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread likely began as a celebration of the spring barley harvest. The Feast of Weeks is associated with firstfruits (Exod 34:22), and the Feast of Booths is an autumn harvest festival (Lev 23:39–43). While Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread commemorated the exodus event itself—Israel’s departure from Egypt (Deut 16:1–8), the Feast of Weeks, which was celebrated seven weeks or 50 days after Passover, was later associated with the events at Sinai (approximately 7 weeks into the Israelites’ journey; Exod 19:1–3) and involved covenant renewal (*Jubilees* 6:17–22). The Feast of Booths came to be linked to Israel’s time of wandering in the wilderness (Lev 23:42–43).

Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread

Many scholars working on the Pentateuch have considered the biblical rationale for Passover to be a late retrospective explanation that took advantage of “the coincidence of the spring festival with the exodus, already accepted by the older tradition” (Wellhausen, *Prolegomena*, 88). In other words, Passover was originally a different sort of ritual observance that was combined with the Feast of Unleavened Bread because they happened to fall at around the same time. This conception of the biblical account as offering a *post facto* rationale for the observance led to the advancement of many speculative theories placing the “true” origin of Passover in various primitive sacrificial rituals of pre-Israelite nomads (see Hess, *Israelite Religions*, 181–82).

Wellhausen believed all the festivals of ancient Israel originated in agriculture—“the basis at once of life and religion” (*Prolegomena*, 91–92). But the Passover itself had no connection to agriculture at all; Wellhausen put its origin and preservation among pastoralists who maintained a connection to the wandering wilderness lifestyle common before Israel settled in Canaan (*Prolegomena*, 93). Passover came to be observed more widely under the influence of Josiah’s reforms after it was connected with the Feast of Unleavened Bread through the legal revisions of Deut 16:1–8 (Levinson, *Right Chorale*, 219).

Further, the absence of Passover in the list of festivals from the Covenant Code (Exod 23:14–17) suggests the observance was initially separate from the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Other biblical passages related to Israel’s sacred days present the two as separate but sequential observances (e.g., Lev 23:5–8; Ezek 45:21; Ezra 6:19–22).

The hypothesis that the cult centralization program of Deuteronomy was the impetus for the combination of Passover and Unleavened Bread is grounded in a “broad consensus of scholarship over the last two centuries,” building on the conclusion of W. M. L. de Wette that the book of Deuteronomy should be connected with Josiah’s reforms (2 Kgs 22–23; Levinson, *Right Chorale*, 256). Josiah’s reforms emphasized the centralization of worship—also the main innovation or modification that Deuteronomy makes to previous law codes (see Levinson, *Deuteronomy and the Hermeneutics of Legal Innovation*). Following the centralization hypothesis, Passover was transformed from a local observance centered on the family and the home to a pilgrimage festival centered on the temple; in the process, Passover came to be merged with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which was already a pilgrimage festival (Prosic, *Development*, 36).

However, this reconstruction of events has not gone unchallenged (see McConville, *Law and Theology*, 99–110; Prosic, *Development*, 35–71). Prosic argues that centralization resulted in a division, not a combination: “If we posit the opposite hypothesis about Passover’s origin from the usual one, namely, that it is not a combination of two originally independent feasts, the request to observe only the first day in the central temple points to a quite different direction of the festival’s development from what is usually assumed. It is an indication that the centralization ‘splintered’ the festival because of the division forced upon its spatial organization. The division would explain the duality of its designation and the Bible’s indistinct and alternative use of both Passover sacrifice and Unleavened Bread as its names” (Prosic, *Development*, 42). She concludes that the biblical texts present a single festival throughout and do not reflect the combination of two distinct festivals (Prosic, *Development*, 69).

McConville also rejects centralization as the impetus for the unification of the two events, primarily because of the possibility that they may have been linked prior to Deuteronomy (“Deuteronomy’s Unification,” 50–53). In his monograph on Deuteronomy, McConville argues, “The amalgamation could have occurred at an early stage ... prior to Deuteronomy” and that the writer of Deuteronomy inherited “an already amalgamated feast” (*Law and Theology*, 103). He sees Exod 23:18 and 34:25 as evidence that Passover was a pilgrimage festival prior to Deuteronomy and asserts that the “very juxtaposition of regulations regarding Passover and Massot” (e.g., Exod 12:21–27; 13:3–10) suggests an already combined feast (McConville, *Law and Theology*, 104–05).

Passover in the New Testament

Passover appears to have been kept more consistently and regularly in Second Temple Judaism. The Jewish historian Josephus, writing in the late first century AD, mentions Passover frequently, summarizing biblical material but also discussing later observances (e.g., *Antiquities* 2.311–314; 3.248–251; 14.18–28; 17.212–223). According to Josephus, the Passover feast drew great crowds of Jews to Jerusalem (*Jewish War* 6.420–27), and these large gatherings made the Roman authorities nervous (*Antiquities* 20.105–107; compare Mark 15:6–15). This description is

consistent with the New Testament presentation of Passover as a well-attended festival (e.g., Luke 2:41; John 11:55).

The Synoptic Gospels only record Jesus traveling to Jerusalem once to celebrate Passover, a journey that coincides with narratives of the passion week (see Matt 26:2, 17–30; Mark 14:1–2, 12–26; Luke 22:1–2, 7–23).

John’s gospel mentions three different Passovers, two during Jesus’ ministry and the last that coincided with the passion week (John 2:13, 23; 6:4; 11:55; 12:1, 13:1–5; 18:28, 39; 19:14). John describes Jesus traveling to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover for the first and third Passovers (John 2:13, 23; 12:1, 12; 13:1). The second Passover is likely the temporal setting for the bread of life discourse (John 6:4, 22–71) and manna is part of the discussion (John 6:31, 49). In the rich symbolism of John’s gospel, the unleavened bread of the festival, celebrated year after year, is sharply contrasted with Jesus, the eternal bread of life (John 6:35).

Even though all three Synoptic Gospels present the Last Supper as a Passover meal, the details of the meal are incidental to their narratives. We learn only that they “reclined at table” (Matt 26:20), drank wine (Matt 26:29), and dipped bread (Mark 14:20; see more below). Only Luke mentions the sacrifice of the Passover lamb in connection with the Last Supper (Luke 22:7).

Passover and the Lord’s Supper

All four gospels give an account of the “Last Supper” Jesus shares with His disciples before He is arrested (Matt 26:17–25; Mark 14:12–21; Luke 22:7–13; John 13:1–30). In the Synoptic Gospels, this meal is explicitly identified as Jesus celebrating the Passover with His disciples, and it is the only Passover mentioned in the Synoptics. John does not explicitly connect the Last Supper with a Passover observance due to his symbolic chronology that has Jesus’ crucifixion coincide with the slaughter of the Passover lambs (John 19:14, 36).

All the Synoptic Gospels record Jesus’ institution of the “Lord’s Supper” during this Last Supper (Matt 26:26–29; Mark 14:12–25; Luke 22:14–23). While there is debate over whether this Last Supper actually coincided with the Passover and whether the Last Supper was even a Passover meal, Routledge has demonstrated that the Passover celebration provides the best context for understanding the significance of the Last Supper (Routledge, “Passover and Last Supper,” 203–22; on the debate, see bibliography at 205n7).

The question of whether the Last Supper was a Passover observance arises in part because the Gospel writers only mention the bread and wine, not the “other traditional elements such as the lamb and bitter herbs” (Routledge, “Passover and Last Supper,” 204). However, this absence of detail should not be emphasized against the explicit statements that Jesus and His disciples were preparing to “eat the Passover” (Matt 26:17; Mark 14:12, 14; Luke 22:8, 11, 15). While the Lord’s Supper was instituted at Passover, the observance of the Lord’s Supper was not linked to ongoing observance of Passover. For example, Paul points to “the theological significance of Christ as the Passover lamb, but he does not link this with his instructions about the Lord’s Supper” (Routledge, “Passover and Last Supper,” 204; 1 Cor 5:6–8).

Christ as Passover Lamb

The Gospel of John explicitly links the crucifixion of Christ with the symbolism of Passover, presenting the fact that Jesus’ legs were not broken as a fulfillment of Exod 12:46 (John 19:31–36). The symbolism of the Lord’s Supper also substitutes Christ himself for the Passover

elements as the symbol of redemption (for the link between unleavened bread and redemption, see Routledge, “Passover and Last Supper,” 216).

The Apostle Paul uses Passover and the observances associated with the Feast of Unleavened Bread as a metaphor for Christian moral purity in 1 Cor 5:6–8. In referring to Christ as “our Passover lamb” who “has been sacrificed,” he represents the Christian life as a period of permanent festival observance where all leaven (representing sexual immorality) must be removed (Hays, *1 Corinthians*, 83–87).

Other New Testament texts also associate Jesus with the Passover lamb, though the allusion is more subtle than with 1 Cor 5 or the Gospel of John (e.g., 1 Pet 1:19; Rev 5:6, 9, 12). The adoption of this imagery points to an understanding of the sacrifices of the Passover lamb as the remembrance of God’s past act of redemption that foreshadowed the sacrifice of the Lamb of God as God’s ultimate act of redemption.

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¹ Mangum, D. (2016). [Passover](#). In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

Unleavened Bread, Feast of

(חַמַּטְסוֹת לַחֶמֶד, *chag hammatstsoth*). The springtime festival that the Israelites celebrated annually in conjunction with the Passover (פֶּסַח, *pesach*).

The Feast of Unleavened Bread in the Old Testament

Unleavened bread (חֶמֶד, *matstzah*) is a flat, round, quick-baking bread made from flour and water with no leavening agent. The Israelites ate unleavened bread as part of the Passover meal and the week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread that followed (Exod 12:1–20; 13:6–7; 23:15; 34:18; Lev 23:5–8; Num 28:16–25; Deut 16:1–8). This annual festival, which began with Passover (on the 14th day of Abib, later called Nisan), served as a reminder of God’s rescue of His people from slavery in Egypt (Exod 12:17, 26–27; 13:3–16; Deut 16:3). Stuart proposes that commemorating the exodus helped sustain the Israelite community by prompting them to remember their common history and the foundations of their common beliefs (Stuart, *Exodus*, 282).

Several biblical passages offer different details for when and where the Israelites were to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Despite these differences, each account indicates that the festival originated in ancient times and was held annually in the springtime (Prosic, *Development*, 32). As Prosic points out, “In the sacred history of the Israelites almost every important stage includes a Passover celebration” (Prosic, *Development*, 75).

The Feast of Unleavened Bread in Premonarchic Israel

Exodus. In Exodus 12, when the Israelites were still in Egypt, God gave the following instructions for the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Exod 12):

- At sundown on the 14th of Abib, the Israelites were to sacrifice the Passover lamb and spread its blood upon the doorposts of their homes (Exod 12:1–7).
- The Israelites were to roast the lamb—not boil it—and eat it in haste (Exod 12:8–11).
- The Passover feast was a permanent ordinance (Exod 12:14).
- The Israelites were to remove leaven from their homes (Exod 12:15), eat unleavened bread for seven days, and observe a holy assembly on the first and seventh days (Exod 12:15–16, 19–20). Anyone who ate leaven during this period was to be cut off from the congregation of Israel (Exod 12:15, 19).
- The Feast of Unleavened Bread was a permanent ordinance (Exod 12:17).
- The unleavened bread signified that the Israelites were to leave Egypt in haste, with no time to wait for bread to rise (Exod 12:39).
- No foreigners or hired help were to eat the Passover meal, but a circumcised sojourner or slave could eat of it (Exod 12:43–49).

Vogt argues that Exod 12 may preserve “material written by Moses” and was “directed toward the exodus generation itself” (Vogt, “Passover,” 36–37). As support he notes that Exod 12 contains unique elements that were not part of celebrations after the exodus, such as the spreading of blood on the doorposts (Exod 12:7) and eating hastily in preparation for travel (Exod 12:11; Vogt, “Passover,” 37). In contrast, de Vaux argues that the Feast of Unleavened

Bread is based on an early Canaanite agricultural festival and was not celebrated until Israel was in Canaan (de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 491).

In Exodus 13, which is set shortly after the Israelites' departure from Egypt, God instructed the people to continue to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread when they took up residence in the promised land. He offered the following instructions:

- The Israelites were to eat unleavened bread for seven days and observe a feast to the Lord on the seventh day (Exod 13:6).
- No Israelites within the borders of the land were to possess leaven for the duration of the festival (Exod 13:7).
- As part of the festival, the Israelites were to remind their children of how God had rescued them from slavery in Egypt (Exod 13:6–8).
- The Israelites were to dedicate their firstborn sons and animals to the Lord, sacrificing their beasts and redeeming their sons (Exod 13:1–2, 11–16; 34:18–19).

The instructions regarding the redemption of the firstborn here recall the redemption of Israel's firstborn sons in Egypt and emphasizes dedication to the Lord. Fretheim notes, "It is the firstborn theme that is the decisive focus of passover night, from which the consecration of the firstborn naturally follows" (Fretheim, *Exodus*, 148).

Later, when the Israelites were at Sinai and received the law, the Lord commanded them to observe three annual feasts at the chosen place "before the Lord" (Exod 23:14–19; 34:18–20; Deut 16:16):

1. the Feast of Unleavened Bread
2. the Feast of Firstfruits (or Weeks)
3. the Feast of Ingathering (also called Booths or Tabernacles)

Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy 16 instructs the Israelites on how to celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread while living in the promised land. The instructions generally resemble those of earlier accounts, calling for the Passover to be celebrated in the month of Abib (Deut 16:1) and for leaven to be removed from the community for the duration of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Deut 16:4). However, the account is unique in its description of the unleavened bread as "the bread of affliction" (Deut 16:3). It is also unique in its emphasis that the Israelites were to sacrifice the Passover lamb and eat the feast only "in the place where the Lord chooses"—a command repeated five times in the passage (Deut 16:2, 6, 7, 15, 16). In contrast, earlier accounts seem to indicate that the Israelites celebrated the Passover feast in their homes (e.g., Exod 12:1–7).

The differences between this account and earlier accounts have given rise to various views on the unity and observance of the feasts. De Vaux and Butler view the differences as indicating that the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread were originally two separate festivals that were later combined (de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 488; Butler, *Joshua*, 60–61). Alternatively, Prosic, Tigay, and McConville support the idea that two cohesive festivals were divided by the requirement to celebrate the Passover at the temple in Jerusalem. Prosic proposes that the command to celebrate the Passover at the chosen place arose during the reign of Josiah and "splintered" these originally cohesive festivals (Prosic, *Development*, 42). Tigay suggests that

after the Israelites celebrated the Passover sacrifice at the chosen place, they traveled home for the Feast of Unleavened Bread and held a local assembly on the final day. In his view, “Such local gatherings may well have been the earliest forerunners of the synagogue” (Tigay, *Deuteronomy*, 156). McConville agrees on the order of the celebration and emphasizes that the whole land of Israel served as the location of the combined festival, since it was celebrated both at the chosen place and within homes and communities (McConville, *Deuteronomy*, 272–73).

Joshua. Joshua 5 records that, upon crossing the Jordan River, the Israelites celebrated the first Passover within the promised land. According to this account, all of the Israelite males underwent circumcision while camped at Gilgal. The Israelites then celebrated Passover on the 14th of Abib. Although this account does not specifically state that the Israelites also celebrated the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Josh 5:10 records that “on the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate some of the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain” (Josh 5:10–12 NASB). This feast served as an important symbol of a new beginning for the Israelites in the new land. Howard notes, “The Passover celebration in Joshua would now mark Israel’s entrance into Canaan just as it had earlier marked Israel’s exodus from Egypt” (Howard, *Joshua*, 153).

1 Samuel. First Samuel 1:3 records that Elkanah, the father of the prophet Samuel, traveled with his family to Shiloh each year to celebrate a “feast to the Lord.” It is possible that the “feast to the Lord” in this passage refers to Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, though this interpretation is debated. Support for viewing the feast in 1 Sam 1:3 as the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread includes:

- Both 1 Samuel 1:3 and Judg 21:19 use the phrase translated as either “from days to days” or “year after year” (מִיָּמִים וּמִיָּמִים, *miyyamim yamimah*) to describe a feast in Shiloh (McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 58). This phrase first appears in the Bible in Exod 13:10 in the instructions for the Feast of Unleavened Bread and, in Hengstenberg’s view, may be a reference to or title for the feasts (Hengstenberg, *Dissertations*, 65–70).
- Second Chronicles 35:18 compares the Passover under King Josiah to the celebration of the Passover in Samuel’s time, stating, “No passover like it had been kept in Israel since the days of the prophet Samuel” (NASB).
- The story of Hannah dedicating her firstborn son, Samuel, to the Lord in 1 Sam 1–2 seems to be thematically linked to the Passover in its emphasis on the dedication of every firstborn son (compare Exod 13:1–2, 11–15).

Klein cites Driver’s proposal that Elkanah’s sacrifice may have taken place at the new year, which aligns with the month of Abib, when the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were celebrated (Exod 12:1–2; Klein, *1 Samuel*, 10). However, Klein also suggests that Elkanah’s annual pilgrimage may have been “a private, personal pilgrimage distinct from the requirement for males to appear three times a year before Yahweh as part of a national festival” (Klein, *1 Samuel*, 6).

The Feast of Unleavened Bread during the Monarchy and Exilic Period

Recorded celebrations of the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread during the monarchy and postexilic period include:

- King Solomon declared his intention to observe the three annual pilgrimage feasts—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Festival of Weeks, and the Festival of Booths (2 Chr 2:4; 8:12–13).
- King Hezekiah held a great celebration of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread in Jerusalem where people from Judah and Israel were so filled with joy that they celebrated for two weeks (2 Chr 30:20–23).
- King Josiah renewed celebrations of the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread as part of his religious reforms (2 Kgs 23:21–23; 2 Chr 35:17–19).
- Ezra records that the exiles who returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple joyfully celebrated the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread (Ezra 6:19–22).
- Ezekiel’s vision of the new temple includes the celebration of the annual feasts, including Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Ezek 45:17–25).

The Feast of Unleavened Bread in the New Testament

The Gospels provide several examples of Jesus celebrating the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread in Jerusalem:

- Luke 2:41–52 records that at age 12 Jesus joined His parents on their annual trip to Jerusalem for the Passover.
- The book of John records Jesus celebrating three separate Passovers in Jerusalem during His ministry (John 2:13–25; 6:4; 11:55–19:42).
- Each of the Gospels portrays Jesus’ final meal with His disciples as a celebration of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Matt 26:17–19; Mark 14:1, 12–16; Luke 22:1, 7–13; John 13).

Scholars debate whether Jesus’ last meal was actually held on the night designated for the Passover feast. Rosen proposes that the Synoptic Gospels viewed Passover as beginning on the morning of Nisan 14, while the Gospel of John viewed Passover as beginning at sunset on Nisan 14. Thus, the Synoptic Gospels portray Jesus’ crucifixion as occurring the afternoon of Nisan 15, but by John’s reckoning it was still Nisan 14 until sundown, so Jesus was crucified that day. Therefore, all of the Gospels would portray the Passover meal taking place on Nisan 14, but they record Jesus being crucified on different days (Rosen and Rosen, *Christ in the Passover*, 156). Alternatively, France suggests that if Jesus’ last supper was held the night before Passover, it would not have included a lamb, which would have been slaughtered the next day, the day of Jesus’ death (France, *Matthew*, 984).

During Jesus’ final celebration of the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread, He equated the bread with His body and the wine with His blood (Matt 26:26–29; Mark 14:23–25; Luke 22:19–20; see also John 6:30–58). Because this commemorative meal was meant to recall the first Passover, Jesus was identifying His blood with that of the Passover lamb, whose blood saved the firstborn of Israel, and His body with the unleavened bread that sustained the people as they escaped from slavery (see Stein, *Luke*, 540). The next day, Jesus died on the cross as the

lambs were slaughtered for the Passover sacrifice, leading to the interpretation that “Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed” (1 Cor 5:7 NIV).

The Feast of Unleavened Bread Today

Today, the term “Passover” refers to both the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Passover is the most widely celebrated feast among Jewish people around the world. Traditionally, Jewish families carefully remove leaven from their homes and gather at sunset for a Passover seder service and meal. Many Jewish families continue to eat unleavened bread for the next seven days.

The seder observance recalls God’s rescue of His people from Egypt by incorporating wine, unleavened bread, and other symbolic foods. Participants in the seder service often read from a haggadah guide and, traditionally, recite or sing the hallel psalms (Pss 113–118) on the first day of the festival (Silber and Furst, *A Passover Haggadah*, 4). Since the Roman destruction of the Jerusalem temple in AD 70, the Jewish people have not sacrificed Passover lambs.

Strassfeld explains that the symbolism of Passover teaches Jews that their history is a timeless present, “an event in which we participated and in which we continue to participate. We are meant to re-experience the slavery and the redemption that occurs in each day of our lives. It is our own story, not just some ancient history that we retell at Passover” (Strassfeld, *Jewish Holidays*, 7). Christians also remember the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread during the traditional Maundy Thursday communion service held before the Easter weekend. The Christian communion rite is a more frequent reenactment of Jesus’ last meal with His disciples, a continual remembrance of Jesus’ body and blood being sacrificed for His people (Luke 22:19–20; 1 Cor 11:24–25).

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Did Jesus Eat the Passover Meal with His Disciples?

James Burton Coffman's Commentary on Mark 14

WAS THE LAST SUPPER ON THE PASSOVER?

The answer to this question must be in the negative for the following reasons:

- (1) Christ was taken down from the cross and buried before sundown on the day the Passover officially began, that being the purpose of the breaking of the legs of the thieves and of the order that Jesus should have received the same treatment.
- (2) Note that it was not Christ, but the disciples, who mentioned eating the passover, and that Christ referred rather to "keeping" it, a far different thing (Matthew 26:18). Christ kept it by the solemn observance of the Last Supper, a full 24 hours before the actual passover.
- (3) All of the gospels represent Jesus and his disciples as "reclining" for the meal; and, if it was indeed the passover supper, their actions would have been contrary to the commandment of God that it should be eaten "standing up" (Exodus 12:11). It is true, of course, that the chief priests of Israel had changed God's ordinance and that in the times of Christ it was customary to eat the passover lying down, or reclining; but how can a child of God believe that the Son of God consented to such a categorical contradiction of sacred law? Would Jesus have been any more inclined to accept their traditions in this matter than he was to allow their traditions in regard to the sabbath? This student cannot believe that the Christ accepted any such change by the Pharisees in God's law. The unanimous record of the gospels to the effect that the Last Supper was eaten in a reclining position was their way of saying that it was not the passover at all.
- (4) There was no lamb eaten at the Last Supper, at least none being mentioned; and, if there had been, it is inconceivable that the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world would not have mentioned it.
- (5) Mark's statement here that the meal was "on the first day of unleavened bread" is not the same as saying it was on the Passover. As Dummelow said:

In strict usage "the first day of unleavened bread" meant the first day of the Passover festival, which began with the paschal supper. But it is possible that the day before this, when the paschal lambs were sacrificed, and all leaven was expelled from the houses, was popularly spoken of as "the first day of the unleavened bread."

It is the conviction here that this popular usage of the expression was made in Mark's record here. Only by contradicting the Gospel of John can anything else be maintained.
- (6) Christ's death at 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon before the Passover began with the paschal supper after sundown that same day corresponded with the time of sacrificing the paschal lambs, as required of the anti-type fulfilling the type.

(7) The fact of the temple guard, accompanied by the priests and soldiers supplied by Pilate, bearing arms on the night Jesus was betrayed (after the Last Supper), proves that it was not Passover. They would never have engaged in such a mission, bearing arms, on such a holy day as the Passover.

(8) Joseph of Arimathea and others would not have prepared spices and have taken the body of Jesus to the tomb on Passover.

(9) There is no way that an apostle could have referred to the day Jesus was crucified as "The Preparation" (John 19:31), if it had been actually the Passover.

From these and many other considerations, it is evident that the day spoken of by Mark in verse 12 was after sundown of Nisan 13, counted the 14th.³

James Burton Coffman's Commentary on Luke 22

Sabbath, Nisan 9th ... Jesus arrived at Bethany (John 12:1), supper in the evening (John 12:2-8; Matthew 26:6-13).

Sunday, Nisan 10th ... triumphal entry (Matthew 21:1), children's Hosannas, healings in temple (Matthew 21:14-16), return to Bethany (Matthew 21:17).

Monday, Nisan 11th ... return from Bethany (Matthew 21:18), withering fig tree (Matthew 21:19), cleansing temple (Matthew 21:12), retires to Bethany (Mark 11:19), conspiracy of his enemies (Luke 19:47).

Tuesday, Nisan 12th ... they find fig tree withered (Mark 11:20), his authority challenged, tribute to Caesar, brother's wife, first commandment of all, and "What think ye of Christ?" (Matthew 21-22). Woes on Pharisees (Matthew 23), Jesus in treasury, the widow's mite (Mark 12:41), visit of Greeks (John 12:20), final rejection (John 12:37), triple prophecy of fall of Jerusalem, Second Advent and final judgment (Matthew 24-25), Counsel of Caiaphas (Matthew 26:3).

Wednesday, Nisan 13th ... in the afternoon preparations for the last supper (Matthew 26:17), that night (technically the 14th of Nisan), the last supper with the Twelve in the upper room (Matthew 26:20), the foot washing (John 13:2), departure of Judas, institution of the Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:26), farewell discourses, the true vine, Comforter promised, intercessory prayer (John 13:31 through John 17), Gethsemane and the one-hour agony (Matthew 26:27; Mark 14:87).

Thursday, Nisan 14th ... midnight arrest (Matthew 26:47), before Annas (John 18:18), Peter's denials about 3:00 A.M. (John 18:27), before Caiaphas (John 18:24), before Sanhedrin about 4:00 A.M. (Matthew 27:1), sent to Pilate at 6:00 A.M. (Matthew 27:2), from Pilate to Herod, and back to Pilate (Luke 23:7,11), delivered to be crucified (John 19:16) Jesus crucified at 9:00 A.M.

³ Coffman, James Burton. "Commentary on Mark 14:12". "Coffman Commentaries on the Old and New Testament". <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/bcc/mark-14.html>. Abilene Christian University Press, Abilene, Texas, USA. 1983-1999.

(Mark 15:25), darkness from 12:00 to 3:00 P.M. (Matthew 27:45), death of Jesus at 3:00 P.M. (Matthew 27:50).

The paschal lambs were being sacrificed at this hour (John 19:36). Jesus was buried about sundown. That night was the Jewish Passover meal, Jesus having eaten it by anticipation 24 hours earlier. Burial of Jesus (Matthew 27:57).

Friday, Nisan 15th ... Jesus was in the tomb.

Saturday, Nisan 16th ... Jesus was in the tomb.

Sunday, Nisan 17th ... Jesus rose from the dead.⁴

James Burton Coffman's Commentary on John 13:1 - *Before the feast of the passover* ... We take these words in their simplest and most obvious sense as declaring that the supper about to be narrated occurred in advance of the Jewish Passover; and, although it resembled the passover in so many details, it was nevertheless not technically the passover. Jesus was crucified on the Preparation (John 19:31), and the passover was eaten after sundown the day Jesus died. There is no way the Passover itself could have been called the Preparation. The synoptics are in perfect harmony with this, Matthew making it clear that Jesus ate this meal reclining (Matthew 26:20), which he would not have done had it been the passover. See my Commentary on Matthew, Matthew 26:19.⁵

Expositor's Commentary – John 13:2 Whether this meal was the actual Passover or not has been warmly debated. Yet it seems that it occurred on the same night as the arrest and betrayal. If so, it was presumably Thursday night; and the Crucifixion occurred on Friday, the day before the Passover, which would have begun on Friday evening. Luke states that when the day came on which the Passover lamb was to be sacrificed, Peter and John were sent to arrange the meal that the Lord and his disciples ate that evening (Luke 22:7–14). Matthew (Mt 26:17–20) and Mark (Mk 14:12–17) agree that the meal was on the day on which the Passover lamb was killed, which preceded the Passover itself. John stated later (Jn 18:28) that the Jewish delegates could not enter Pilate's hall on Friday morning because they would be defiled and unable to eat the Passover. In that case, the Last Supper must have preceded the Passover by twenty-four hours. If, then, the Passover began on Friday night, the meal could have taken place on Thursday night but would not have been the standard Passover Feast. The question is complicated by the fact that the Synoptics imply that Jesus did intend to eat the Passover with his disciples (Matt 26:18; Mark 14:14; Luke 22:11). No mention is made of the Passover lamb, however.

Several solutions for this impasse have been suggested, two of which may be plausible. One is that two calendars were in simultaneous use and one national group, using one calendar, ate

⁴ Coffman, James Burton. "Commentary on Luke 22:1". "Coffman Commentaries on the Old and New Testament". <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/luke-22.html>. Abilene Christian University Press, Abilene, Texas, USA. 1983-1999.

⁵ Coffman, James Burton. "Commentary on John 13:1". "Coffman Commentaries on the Old and New Testament". <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/john-13.html>. Abilene Christian University Press, Abilene, Texas, USA. 1983-1999.

the Passover on Thursday night whereas the other group, using the other calendar, ate the Passover on Friday night. There have been several variants of this theory: (1) one calendar was figured by the solar year, the other by the lunar year; (2) there was a difference between the time prescribed by the temple and that by the Qumran Essenes; or (3) Jesus, having been repudiated by the priesthood and consequently considered apostate, would not have been allowed to obtain a lamb for sacrifice and would have been compelled to celebrate the feast at a different time (see Stauffer, pp. 113–18). Whatever solution may be accepted, there seems to be no other conclusion than that Jesus did celebrate the meal with his disciples on Thursday night, that the hearing before Pilate and the Crucifixion took place on Friday, and that his body was placed in the tomb before sunset late that afternoon.⁶

⁶ Tenney, M. C. (1981). [John](#). In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: John and Acts* (Vol. 9, pp. 135–136). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.