

THE PASSEVER, HIGH SABBATHS

and THE SABBATH

by Elder Bob Allgood

On Friday, March 29, 2002 millions and millions of well intended professing believers in the gospel of Christ will observe what the religious world calls “Good Friday”. They will do this because of man’s misunderstanding of what the Bible teaches about the Passover, the Lamb that was to be slain on the Passover, the high Sabbaths connected with the Feast of Unleavened Bread that followed the Passover, and the regular seventh day Sabbath that was observed three days after the Passover.

According to Scripture the first Jewish Passover (Pessach) took place on the 14th day of the first month of their calendar year. The Passover was to be a memorial in remembrance of their deliverance (redemption) from bondage in Egypt. In Exodus 12 we read, “And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.”

The Evening of the “fourteenth day” (14th) would have begun after 6 PM. Jewish Days are counted from 6 PM to 6 PM whereas our Gentile days are from 12 midnight to 12 midnight. This is in keeping with the counting of days established by God in creation where it says, “And God called the light Day,

and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day”. A Biblical twenty four (24) hour day starts in the evening.

The killing of the first Passover Lamb (a type of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God foreordained before the foundation of the world to die for the sins of his people) took place in the evening of the 14th day of the first month of the Jewish year. The blood of that Lamb was applied to the door post of the Hebrew homes, and God himself passed through the land “that night” – slaying the firstborn of every house where there was NO blood applied. In Exodus 12 we read where God said, “For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.”

The Passover was to be a perpetual memorial observed by the Hebrews for ever. God himself set the date and the pattern the Passover was to be observed. Natural man never had a right to change the pattern or the date. In Exodus 12:14 we read, “And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.” Only the Lamb of God had a right to ever change it, when He became OUR PASSOVER sacrificed for us (I Cor. 5:7-8).

Immediately following the Passover the Hebrews were to observe The Seven Day Feast of Unleavened Bread as specified in Exodus 12:15-19, “Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. And in the first day (of the seven day feast- ba) there shall be an holy convocation (high Sabbath – ba) , and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation (high Sabbath – ba) to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you. And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land.”

The details of the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread and High Sabbaths are set out in Leviticus 23:4-8 where we read, “These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD’S passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work

therein.” Note that the Passover was to be followed by TWO holy convocations or High Sabbaths. Thus it is important to know what day the Passover was observed each year according to the Jewish Lunar Calendar because that day was not always on a Friday. An examination of one hundred prior Jewish years shows that the 14th of Nisan fell on a Wednesday or Thursday about 60 percent of the time, and on a Friday only about 13 percent of the time.

There are many High Holy Days or High Sabbaths in Judaism, such as the High Holy Days of Rosh Hashana (on Tishri 1 and 2) and Yom Kippur (on Tishri 10), in September or October. The Talmud establishes Tishri as the first month of the Jewish year and links these two major festivals. Consequently, these High Sabbaths are used by Jews to designate the first 10 days of their religious year. The three High Holy Days, properly so-called, and also the days between, makeup the 10-day period which is more accurately called Aseret Yeme Teshuva (Ten Days of Penitence). One can easily see from this, that there are at least three (3) and possibly four (4) Sabbaths in this 10 day period of time. Likewise, when the Passover day of the 14th of Nisan comes on a Wednesday or Thursday there would be three (3) Sabbaths in the seven (7) day celebration of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

According to the Bible (not the Talmud) the first month of the Jewish year (Calendar) is called Abib. In Exodus 14:3 we read, “And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten. This day came ye out in the month Abib.” During the Babylonian captivity we find this same first month referred to as Nisan. In Esther 3:7 we read, “In the first month, that is, the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast Pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, to the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar.” Here we also note that the twelfth (12th) month of the Jewish year (Calendar) was called Adar. HOWEVER, some where along the way MAN has been at work to change things and bring in confusion. In the modern day Jewish calendar Nisan has been adopted as the name for the month Abib. Nisan (or Abib) corresponds to the Gregorian calendar month of March or April. The beginning of the Jewish year has been changed to Tishri which corresponds to September or October, and Nisan comes about half way through the Jewish year – not at the first of it.

A Calendar is a system to measure and record the passage of time. All Calendars either reconcile this measurement of time to the Lunar and Solar system established by God to control the “seasons, days and years” (Gen. 1:14) or else the Calendar becomes useless, with winter coming in the summer months, etc. Historically some Calendars have been arbitrarily adjusted from time to time, by adding or subtracting days, to bring them into conformity with the Astronomical Solar Year which has 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 46 seconds. The study of Calendars and the many that have been used in the history of man is vast, and not the subject under consideration, but a few observations are needed.

The Chaldeans and Babylonians are among the first to use Astronomy (the scientific study of the stars, moon and sun) to measure time. Their Calendar Years represented their limited understanding that the Earth revolved around the Sun in a Solar year. Some calendars would have 12 months while others would have 13 months. The Babylonians found that they had to add an extra month three times every eight years to keep their calendar in sync with the Lunar and Solar year. The Egyptians (from whom Moses led the Hebrews to freedom on the Passover night) were the first to adopt a calendar based mainly on a solar year. They recognized a year of 365 days made up of twelve 30 day months, and then added an extra five days at the end of the year. They did not allow for the extra fourth of a day in the exact solar year. However they dated the beginning of man's history at 4,236 BC in terms of the Gregorian calendar we use today. That date corresponds more closely to the Chronology found in the Bible that fixes the history of man from 4,036 BC than does the Jewish calendar of 3,760 BC.

The modern day Hebrew calendar begins with this estimated date of creation before the birth of Christ. However the birth of Christ is not recognized in their measurement of time. Thus the year 2002 AD (after the birth of Christ) is the Jewish year 5,762. IMO, they could not have followed the dated events recorded by Moses in Scripture and arrived at this number of years, which falls short of Biblical Chronology by about 281 years. Furthermore the modern day Hebrew calendar shows the beginning of their year as September or October depending on which year it is. The Bible clearly tells us that the first month of the Hebrew year was to be Abib (or Nisan as Abib is called).

The Hebrew calendar is primarily based on a Lunar measurement of time and consist of twelve (12) months of 30 and 29 days each. The months are Tishri, Heshvan, Kislev, Tebet, Shebat, Adar, Nisan, Iyar, Sivan, Tammuz, Ab, and Elul. However in order to bring the Jewish calendar into harmony with the Solar year, seven times during every 19-year period they add an extra 29-day month, called Veadar. This extra month is inserted between Adar and Nisan. At the same time, Adar is given 30 days instead of 29. So now that we have all that figured out, let's move on with the Passover.

According to two Jewish calendars I examined the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread in the year 2002 AD, will begin on Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan. This date corresponds to March 27th according to the Gregorian calendar that we Gentiles go by. In the year 30 AD (Jewish year 3790), the year our Lord was crucified as the Lamb of God, the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread also began on Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan. This evidence gives further proof to our previous study that showed Christ was crucified on Wednesday, the Passover Day, and was placed in the borrowed tomb just before 6 PM because the next day was to be a Holy Convocation or HIGH SABBATH according to the Feast of Unleavened Bread. That "High Sabbath" came on a Thursday and was followed by a regular seventh day Sabbath on Saturday.

The High Sabbath is mentioned in John 19:31, "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought

Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.” Thus Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus asked for the body of Christ and buried him in a tomb that was near by. We read in John 19:38-42, “And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews’ preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.”

Christ himself said he would be in the grave three (3) days and three (3) nights or seventy two (72) hours. This reconciles with the burial time of near 6 PM Wednesday and when Mary found the tomb empty right after the regular Seventh Day Sabbath. Matthew 28:1 reads, “In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.” The 72 hours Christ was in the grave covered two Sabbaths and a Friday. The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread which immediately followed the Passover on the 15th Day of the first month, was a Holy Convocation or “High Sabbath”. Lev. 23:7 reads, “In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.” Since the Jewish calendars show that the Passover was on Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan, the Holy Convocation or “High Sabbath” had to be on a Thursday. Friday was used by the sisters to buy and prepare the spices. Then they had to wait until after the regular Sabbath on a Saturday to go to the tomb to anoint the body of Christ, when they found HE had already risen.

When the Bibles says in Matthew 28:1 “In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.” – the Sabbath under consideration here is the regular seventh day Sabbath which followed the “high Sabbath” or Holy Convocation on Thursday, which is clearly referred to in John 19:31. Therefore we must conclude that Christ was crucified on Wednesday, the 14th of Nisan, the Passover Day – that he was buried just before 6 PM and that he arose from the grave at the end of the regular seventh day Sabbath or shortly after in order to be in the grave three days and three nights. There is therefore, no such thing as a “Good Friday” or a “Sun Rise Resurrection” taught in the Scriptures. The Gospel message is “that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures”. I am glad that the gospel is not according to man’s traditions.