



April 5, 2024

Why do we DO certain things this time of year?

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

As we come up to this beginning of the plan of God (laid out in His Holy Days by way of reminder every year) might we examine closely some of the things we “do” during this time?

Why do we emphasize having a gathering of members in various groups and locations to enjoy a meal and fellowship together the evening that begins the Feast of Unleavened Bread? This is the beginning of Abib 15 on the Hebrew calendar, with Bible days beginning at sunset.

The name many use - Night to Be Much Observed - is derived from the King James translation of Exodus 12:42 *"It is a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt . . ."*

We reviewed last time that the Israelites remained in their homes during the whole night of Abib 14 and were not to leave their homes until dawn. They did not leave Egypt during the night that they ate the roasted lamb and awaited being "passed over". We are told when they left Egypt. *"They departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the day after the Passover the children of Israel went out with boldness in the sight of all the Egyptians."* (Numbers 33:3) They left Egypt on Abib 15, the day following the Abib 14 Passover observance.

Lets' look closely at this event as recorded in Deuteronomy 16. This chapter confuses some because of the use of the term "Passover" there. Deuteronomy 16

focuses on the 3 "chag" feast seasons or celebrations: 1. Passover (Unleavened Bread) 2. Weeks (Pentecost) 3. Ingathering (Tabernacles). *"Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses..."* (Deuteronomy 16:16) You will notice that Trumpets and Atonement are not mentioned and the chapter actually does not address the Abib 14 Passover ceremony either. The term "Passover" is used at times in Scripture to refer to the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

"Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread drew near, which is called Passover." (Luke 22:1) *"And because he [Herod] saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread. So when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison...intending to bring him before the people after Passover."* (Acts 12:3, 4) To be during Unleavened Bread when Peter was seized and then have Herod doing certain actions after "Passover," the term Passover here must refer to the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Let's examine Deuteronomy 16.

"Observe the month of Abib, and keep the Passover to the LORD your God, for in the month of Abib the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night." (Deuteronomy 16:1) This reinforces what we read in Exodus 12:42. It was during the night that God led the Israelites from Goshen out of Egypt to Succoth. This "passover" celebration was accompanied by the sacrifice of both sheep and cattle. *"Therefore you shall sacrifice the Passover to the Lord your God, from the flock and the herd, in the place where the Lord chooses to put His name."* (v.2) The word herd refers to cattle, not sheep. This is clearly a different instruction from that relating to the lamb selected on Abib 10 and sacrificed on Abib 14 by the head of household at the individual houses of the families observing the Abib 14 commemoration. Unleavened bread was to be eaten with these "passover sacrifices" for seven days and there was an emphasis on *"the day in which you came out of the land of Egypt."* (v.3) *"And no leaven shall be seen among you in all your territory for seven days, nor shall any of the meat which you sacrifice the first day at twilight remain overnight until morning."* (v.4) The "first day" is the first day of the seven days of unleavened bread. These passover offerings were to be

killed during twilight of Abib 15 and this is emphasized again in verse 6. *"but at the place where the Lord your God chooses to make His name abide, there you shall sacrifice the Passover at twilight, at the going down of the sun, at the time you came out of Egypt."* (v.6)

Here above is a further description of the events involving the departure of the Israelites from Egypt on the night of Abib 15 beginning at the going down of the sun that initiated the period of twilight. The Israelites were released from their slavery to Pharaoh and his kingdom. They went out with boldness or "a high hand" (Numbers 33:3 KJV) They left in darkness and proceeded toward the land of promise and were guided by the fiery pillar and light of the Lord (Exodus 13:21-22).

We under the New Covenant celebrate our departure from allegiance to the god of this world and his kingdom. (2 Corinthians 4:4 - *In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them*).

We rejoice and celebrate our victory over sin through the deliverance and guidance of our Savior and king! We leave the darkness of this world of sin and idolatry and look to the light of God's Spirit and word to lead and guide us.

Friends, rather than panic over all the "news" we are bombarded with, whether a fall in the stock market, political intrigue, cosmic happenings, or whatever catastrophe comes up next, I hope we will keep our focus, and reflect on our new beginning at baptism when we began our journey to the promised Kingdom of God!

This opening night of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is a night to be observed and celebrated in light of the significant history and present spiritual application of the meaning of this *"night to be much observed unto the Lord."*

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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