

## The Passover Controversy – Part 2

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Last time, we began a two-part series on what's oftentimes referred to as the "Passover Controversy". As I explained last time, the Passover Controversy is primarily a debate around the exact timing of the original Passover in Exodus 12 and also the exact timing of the point where the Israelites began their exodus out of Egypt.

Now, as we discovered last time when we went through this subject, the key to solving this whole debate is defining two important terms from the Bible. Well, one of the important terms is the word "Passover" itself. As I mentioned last time, unfortunately, in our current Church of God culture, we have defined and kind of synonymized the term "Passover" with Nisan the 14th. In other words, we defined it as a calendar day and as a 24-hour period from sunset to sunset.

Now, while that's true of most of the Holy Days that are listed in Leviticus 23 -- as we noted last time -- Leviticus 23 doesn't define Passover as a 24-hour day. It defines it as what occurs in a specific window of time on the 14th of Nisan. Again, it's not a calendar day. What we discovered is it's a sacrifice. It's a sacrifice that's performed on the 14th, but in a specific window of time on the 14th. As we saw, particularly in the Old Testament, when the Bible refers to the term Passover, it's referring to a sacrifice. To a lamb that was sacrificed at the tabernacle or the temple, depending upon the timeframe, according to Biblical instructions, and it's sacrificed on the 14th.

Now, we also discovered last time that the other term that's important to define is the term ben ha'arbayim. Now, that's a Hebrew term that in English means "between the two evenings". Now, it's a hotly debated term, but we discovered last time that the key to understanding this term -- and defining it from the Bible -- is looking at the scriptures that refer to the evening sacrifice. Because the Bible instructs us that the evening sacrifice had to take place at ben ha'arbayim -- "between the two evenings".

But when we look at those scriptures, it's in the context of the daily sacrifices that the Israelites had to perform every single day. And that came in two parts. There was a morning sacrifice and an evening sacrifice that happened every single day. But the morning sacrifice always came before the evening sacrifice on the same calendar day. Well, that means the evening sacrifice has to be in the afternoon. If it's after sunset, it's going to be on the following day.

We also saw last time that Josephus records that the evening sacrifice took place around the "ninth hour" as he describes it. Now today, we would call that about three o'clock in the afternoon. We also saw that if we look at Matthew, Mark, and Luke, they all specifically tell us that Christ -- who is our Passover sacrifice -- was killed around the ninth hour. Around three o'clock in the afternoon. Interestingly enough, He fulfilled the Passover sacrifice, and He died at the appointed time of the Passover sacrifice.

So, we put all this together and it kind of solved the Old Testament question. And we saw that the original Passover -- the killing of the lamb -- took place in the afternoon of the 14th. The Israelites actually ate the Passover meal -- they ate the sacrificed lamb -- the evening beginning the 15th. And that's actually when the death of the firstborn took place.

But as I mentioned when we wrapped up last time, knowledge of this correct timing oftentimes creates debates around when we should keep the New Covenant Passover and what's the correct time for that. Well, today, we're going to look into that particular subject. So, if you'd like a title for this sermon, it's:

### The Passover Controversy - Part 2

Now, to begin looking at this subject, the first thing that we really need to start off with is clarifying that what the New Testament institutes -- what Christ started with His disciples the evening before He is killed. What He instituted is the New Covenant Passover. The reason I mention that is oftentimes today -- particularly in the Protestant world -- they look at Passover as, "That's an Old Testament concept". "And the Lord's Supper" -- as they refer to it -- "That's the New Testament concept," and they divorce the two. Now, again, that's primarily in the Protestant world, but I've also seen that terminology slide into Church of God circles as well. So, let's first of all clarify this issue. To do that, turn over to Luke 22. We'll go to Luke's account of when Christ instituted the New Covenant Passover. We'll start reading in verse 14.

**Luke 22:14** *"When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. 15) Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;" (NKJV)*

Now notice, He's referring to this as "eating the Passover". If we just keep reading here, we'll see His definition of this.

*"16) for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." 17) Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; 18) for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." 19) And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 20) Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you." (NKJV)*

Notice here, He is referring to eating unleavened bread and wine as a symbol of His body and His blood. He commands them to do this in remembrance of Him. Now, as I noted when we first started reading this passage, He refers to this as "eating the Passover".

Now, we're going to go into this in more detail later in the sermon but just think about what we covered last time in Part 1. We showed from numerous scriptures, and from the meaning of the term ben ha'arbayim, the timing of Christ's death, and the timing of the evening sacrifice that the Passover sacrifice is killed in the afternoon on the 14th. This is prior to that. It's not even a possibility that what Christ is referring to here is eating a sacrificed lamb. Now again, we're going to go into that in more detail later in this sermon.

But realize Christ has to be referring to eating bread and wine as symbols of Him as our Passover sacrifice as His definition of "eating the Passover". That's why He specifies how He looked forward to eating "this Passover" with them. Because He's instituting a new definition of "eating the Passover". That's why He says "this Passover". Because this is different than what the Apostles were used to.

To see what I'm talking about here, turn over to 1 Corinthians 5. Just to review here, we covered this last time. But let's just also make note of the fact that Paul directly tells us that Christ is our Passover. As I explained last time, He's not our Nisan the 14<sup>th</sup>. He's not our "jumping over" anything. He's our Passover sacrifice. He took on the death penalty for us to enable the forgiveness of sins. He's our atoning sacrifice. Let's notice here in 1 Corinthians 5:7.

**1 Cor 5:7** *"Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us."* (NKJV)

See, this is why eating unleavened bread and wine as symbols of Christ's body and blood is "eating the Passover" because he is our Passover. That's the New Covenant definition of "eating the Passover". Again, a little bit later in this sermon, we're going to go into some more detail to see that it's not even a possibility that He was referring to eating a sacrificed lamb.

I know growing up in the Church of God, one of the things I was taught -- which was incorrectly so -- but one of the things I was taught growing up is that what happened there that night with Christ and the Apostles was they were having a sacrificed lamb and doing the traditional Passover meal that ancient Israel would do. And then Christ also brought in the bread and wine. Like they were doing both. But we're going to see later today that it's not even a possibility that they were having a sacrificed lamb, because they didn't sacrifice the Passover lamb until the following afternoon. And we'll see that directly from the New Testament.

Now, as I mentioned, there's this controversy of saying that "Well, in the New Testament it's not Passover. It's the Lord's Supper". Well, that particular term only shows up one time in the entire Bible. Let's turn over to 1 Corinthians 11. Let's read through this reference and also all the context around it. Now, let's notice that Paul is actually referring to the Passover here. Let's notice when he talks about the Lord's

Supper, he says, "This is not the Lord's Supper". Let's pick up here in Verse 17 of 1 Corinthians 11.

**1 Cor 11:17** *"Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. 18) For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. 19) For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you. 20) Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper."* (NKJV)

Notice, he said, "*This is not the Lord's supper*". Now, as we're going to see as we keep reading through the chapter, he's correcting them for how they were behaving when they came together to eat the Passover. But oftentimes people look at this and go, "Well, it should be called Lord's Supper. He's just correcting how they were conducting the Lord's Supper." Now, let's notice as we keep reading, he's specifically telling them NOT to make this a supper.

Because let's also keep in mind that the Greek word here that is translated as "supper", it can mean "supper" as we oftentimes use the term today. In our modern-day English, we'll refer to having "dinner" or "supper" -- oftentimes depending on what part of the country you live in as to which term you use -- but we're just talking about the meal that we have at the end of the day. Now, for them, this Greek word could have that same meaning of how we use the word supper today. It could also mean a "banquet" or a "party", is what that could mean. Let's pick up here in Verse 21.

*"21) For in eating, each one takes his own supper..."* (NKJV)

That's the same word in Greek, not just in English.

*"...ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk. 22) What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you."* (NKJV)

Notice he just specifically said, "Do you not have houses to eat in at home?" Now, we're going to notice as we read through this, and particularly in verse 34 when this chapter starts to wrap up, what he's going to directly tell them is, "If you're hungry, eat your supper at home." Have that taken care of before you come together as a Church to eat the Passover. He's specifically telling them, "This is NOT a supper. You should NOT make this a supper". So, "Lord's Supper" is not a correct terminology. He's correcting them that this should NOT be a supper. Let's continue in Verse 23.

**1 Cor 11:23** *"For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24) and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' 25) In the same manner*

*He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." 26) For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes." (NKJV)*

Now notice, this is exactly the account that we just read in Luke in the Gospels. This is what Christ called "eating the Passover". Now, continue in verse 27.

*"27) Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28) But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29) For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30) For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 31) For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32) But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. 33) Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. 34) But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come." (NKJV)*

Notice he's specifically saying, "Eat your supper at home and don't be hungry when you show up". This is specifically to "eat the Passover". So, he's telling them it's NOT to have a supper. Notice, we've seen now, we should call it Passover and NOT Lord's Supper. But now let's also notice here the timing that Paul taught the Corinthians. Just notice again verse 23.

**1 Cor 11:23** *"For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;" (NKJV)*

Notice, he's saying it's the night that Christ was betrayed. Now, we know that's the evening beginning the 14th. The reason I make a point of this is a lot of times people will argue -- because if they correctly understand the timing of when the Old Testament Passover meal was done -- that it was eaten the night of the 15<sup>th</sup>. They look at this and they go, "Okay, well, Christ must have meant this as a one-time exception, and He must have meant that going forward they would keep it on the night of the 15th. That must have been what He meant". Christ never said that. And if that was the case, this was the opportunity for Paul to say, "Yes, Christ did it that night, but I taught you to do it the night of the 15th". No, he says, "I passed on to you to do it the night that Christ was betrayed".

What we're about to notice here is more than 100 years after this event here with Paul writing all of this, the New Testament Church is still keeping this on the night of the 14th, and they're calling it Passover. The way that we know that is from a letter that's been preserved through history. This is actually found in Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History. It's a history book by Eusebius Pamphilus. One of the things he has contained in this book is a famous letter that was written by Polycrates, who was the leader of the Church in

Ephesus. This was written approximately around 191 AD. He writes this letter to Victor, who's the leader of the Church in Rome.

Now, this was during a period of time that's oftentimes referred to as the "Quartodeciman Controversy". This was a controversy that went on in the Church for a couple of centuries. It was as the early New Testament Church began to apostatize, and eventually, this controversy got solved by Constantine from the perspective of the Roman Empire. He basically dictated that they should move away from Passover and start keeping Easter Sunday. That was kind of the crux to the controversy. This term "Quartodeciman" roughly translates to "fourteenters". So, they would refer to those who were hanging on to keeping the Passover on the 14th as the Quartodecimans because they referred to them as the "fourteenters".

Well, in the midst of this debate, around approximately 191 AD, Polycrates writes a letter addressing this. He's sending the letter to Rome, because as we know, that's where basically the Church apostatized and became the Catholic Church. Let me just read to you a section of that letter. Notice a couple of things here as we go through this letter. Notice that Polycrates is going to refer to this as "Passover". He never uses the term "Lord's Supper". He refers to Passover. He refers to doing it on the 14th, and he says this is according to the gospel. Now, "gospel" is a New Testament term. You won't find the word "gospel" in the Old Testament. Obviously, he's referring to the New Covenant Passover.

*"Therefore we keep the day undeviatingly, neither adding nor taking away, for in Asia great luminaries sleep, and they will rise on the day of the coming of the Lord, when he shall come with glory from heaven and seek out all the saints. Such were Philip of the twelve apostles, and two of his daughters who grew old as virgins, who sleep in Hierapolis, and another daughter of his, who lived in the Holy Spirit, rests at Ephesus. Moreover, there is also John, who lay on the Lord's breast, who was a priest wearing the breastplate, and a martyr, and teacher. He sleeps at Ephesus. And there is also Polycarp at Smyrna, both bishop and martyr, and Thraseas, both bishop, from Eumeneae, who sleeps in Smyrna. And why should I speak of Sagaris, bishop and martyr, who sleeps at Laodicea, and Papirius, too, the blessed, and Melito the eunuch, who lived entirely in the Holy Spirit, who lies in Sardis, waiting for the visitation from heaven when he will rise from the dead? All these kept the fourteenth day of the Passover according to the gospel, never swerving, but following according to the rule of the faith. And I also, Polycrates, the least of you all, live according to the tradition of my kinsmen, and some of them have I followed. For seven of my family were bishops and I am the eighth, and my kinsmen ever kept the day when the people put away the leaven. Therefore, brethren, I who have lived sixty-five years in the Lord and conversed with brethren from every country, and have studied all holy Scripture, am not afraid of threats, for they have said who were greater than I, 'It is better to obey God rather than men'. And I could mention the bishops who are present whom you required me to summon, and I did so. If I should write their names they would be many multitudes; and they knowing my feeble humanity, agreed with*

*the letter, knowing that not in vain is my head grey, but that I have ever lived in Christ Jesus."*

See, he's writing this, as I mentioned, in approximately 191 AD. Now, the reason I particularly point that out. As we're going to see here in a moment, it was a requirement to take the Passover sacrifice up to the temple and to have the priesthood involved in your sacrifice. Now, the temple was destroyed in 70 AD. So, this letter was written over 100 years after the destruction of the temple. When he refers to the 14th, he's not talking about the timing of when they would sacrifice the lamb. Because he's not sacrificing a lamb.

He says "the Passover according to the gospel". Now, the "gospel" is a New Testament term. He is referring to eating the New Covenant Passover. Bread and wine as symbols of the body and blood of Christ. That's what he's referring to by the term "Passover". And he's referring to the 14th. Obviously, they're keeping it at the same time that Christ instituted and that Paul taught. On the evening that Christ was betrayed, at the beginning of the 14th. Again, he's calling it "Passover" here more than 100 years after Paul writes his epistle and he's not referring to it as "Lord's Supper". He's referring to it as "Passover". Obviously, this is the New Covenant Passover.

As I mentioned, oftentimes there is the idea taught -- and I was taught this as a kid growing up in the Church of God -- that when we read through the Gospel accounts of Christ instituting the New Covenant Passover -- like the account that we just read in Luke earlier -- what's oftentimes argued is that Christ and the Apostles were getting together and having a sacrificed lamb meal, and Christ also added in the bread and wine as well that evening. So, when He says they were "eating the Passover", well, that's what He meant.

Now, as we're about to see here, that can't be the case. Let's, first of all, notice that the book of John specifically tells us when the Jews were eating the Passover meal -- the sacrificed lamb that they had to take to the temple -- it tells us the timing of when they were eating that. And it was the night after Christ died.

Let's turn over to John 18. We're going to pick up here in verse 28. But just to set the context of this, if you read through this chapter, this is after Christ had kept the New Covenant Passover on the night beginning the 14<sup>th</sup> when He instituted the new service and the new symbols. By the time we get to verse 28, Christ has already been betrayed. He's already been arrested and hauled off. He's already now before Pilate, and it's early the next morning when this account is taking place. But let's notice here a reference in verse 28.

**John 18:28** *"Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium, and it was early morning. But they themselves did not go into the Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover."* (NKJV)

Notice, they hadn't had their Passover meal the evening before. They were going to have their Passover meal the night beginning the 15th because they hadn't even killed their lambs yet. Because remember, the killing of the lamb correlates with the timing of Christ's death. The evening sacrifice was around the ninth hour -- about three o'clock in the afternoon -- and as we read last time, Matthew, Mark and Luke all tell us Christ was killed about the ninth hour -- about three o'clock in the afternoon. They all directly correlate. Well, this tells us, obviously, the Jews in Christ's time weren't eating the lamb the same night that Christ and the Apostles were doing bread and wine and foot washing. They were going to eat it the following night, the beginning of the 15th.

Now, a common argument that I've heard all of my life on this particular debate is the idea that, "Well yes, we know the New Testament says that's when the Jews were doing it, but they were doing it at the wrong time. They had it all messed up, and Christ was doing it at the right time". Well, another concept that's put into this to be consistent with this argument is the idea that it was a "domestic Passover". Oftentimes, you even hear that terminology emphasized today -- a "domestic Passover". What they mean by a "domestic Passover" is they're following the example of Exodus 12.

Obviously, at the point of Exodus 12, the tabernacle doesn't exist and the Levitical Priesthood doesn't exist. The instructions in Exodus 12 were each individual family took their lamb and they sacrificed it wherever they happened to live. Then they put the blood on the door and on the doorpost there. There was no Levitical Priesthood involved, and there was no requirement to go to a tabernacle because those concepts did not exist. Well, what's typically argued is that Passover remained that way even after the tabernacle and then the temple came into existence, and of course, the Levitical Priesthood as well.

What we're about to see is that's simply not the case. As you'll see throughout the book of Genesis, there was no requirement for Levitical Priesthood to be involved with sacrificing at that time. There wasn't a Levitical Priesthood. Again, there wasn't a tabernacle. You'll see lots of examples of the Patriarchs throughout the book of Genesis, various individuals sacrificing that you couldn't argue were Levites. And obviously, there's not a tabernacle, because that concept doesn't exist yet.

But once these things came into existence, God changed the rules. He told the Israelites that from that point forward, all sacrificing now had to be done at the tabernacle, which was later replaced by the temple. And the Levitical Priesthood has to be involved. To not do so would be a sin. They're not allowed to do sacrifices their own way and anyone to do them without the Levites being involved. That's now a violation of the rules. We're about to see here if Christ and the Apostles had done their own sacrificing of a lamb, the beginning of the 14th, on their own, without the Levites involved, without going to the temple, they would be violating the Biblical rules. If they had gone to the temple on the wrong time and said, "We want to offer our Passover sacrifice," they'd have been run off and kicked out.

To notice this, let's first of all notice that the rules changed for sacrifices across the board regarding how they should be done. Again, what I mean by that is they couldn't be done just by anybody. And now you had to bring sacrifices to the tabernacle. To see this, turn over to Leviticus 17, and we'll read here where God specifically lays out these rules. Again, Leviticus 17, and we'll start reading in verse 1.

**Lev 17:1** *“And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2) “Speak to Aaron, to his sons, and to all the children of Israel, and say to them, ‘This is the thing which the LORD has commanded, saying: 3) “Whatever man of the house of Israel who kills an ox or lamb or goat in the camp, or who kills it outside the camp, 4) and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting to offer an offering to the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD, the guilt of bloodshed shall be imputed to that man. He has shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people, 5) to the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices which they offer in the open field, that they may bring them to the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, to the priest, and offer them as peace offerings to the LORD. 6) And the priest shall sprinkle the blood on the altar of the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and burn the fat for a sweet aroma to the LORD. 7) They shall no more offer their sacrifices to demons, after whom they have played the harlot. This shall be a statute forever for them throughout their generations.” ’ 8) “Also you shall say to them: ‘Whatever man of the house of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who offers a burnt offering or sacrifice, 9) and does not bring it to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, to offer it to the LORD, that man shall be cut off from among his people.” (NKJV)*

Now, as I mentioned, these are obviously new rules. Because again, if you look through the book of Genesis, you're going to see a number of examples of individuals performing sacrifices who were not Levites. And there is no tabernacle that exists at that point. So obviously, these rules didn't apply. But once God institutes the tabernacle and the Levitical Priesthood, now He changes the rules and says, "These are now the rules going forward for how sacrificing should take place". Turn over to Deuteronomy 12, and we'll see these same rules laid out again. We'll pick up here in verse 5.

**Deu 12:5** *“But you shall seek the place where the LORD your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place; and there you shall go.” (NKJV)*

His habitation, His dwelling place, it was the Most Holy Place, and that's in the tabernacle. In verse 6.

*“6) There you shall take your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, your vowed offerings, your freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks. 7) And there you shall eat before the LORD your God, and you shall rejoice in all to which you have put your hand, you and your households, in which the LORD your God has blessed you. 8) “You shall not*

*at all do as we are doing here today—every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes—” (NKJV)*

In other words, you're not allowed to go independent and do sacrifices wherever you want to, however you want to. *That's not allowed.*

*“9) for as yet you have not come to the rest and the inheritance which the LORD your God is giving you. 10) But when you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies round about, so that you dwell in safety, 11) then there will be the place where the LORD your God chooses to make His name abide. There you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings, your sacrifices, your tithes, the heave offerings of your hand, and all your choice offerings which you vow to the LORD.” (NKJV)*

So, you can see, He's clearly telling them, "If you want to do sacrificing now, now it has to be brought to the tabernacle. That's the rule, and you're not allowed to get independent and start doing it your own way in your own timing and under your own rules. *You don't get to make up your own rules. That's a violation. That's a sin.*"

Well, oftentimes in my lifetime, I've heard people acknowledge this with all the other sacrifices, but they say, "No, the Passover, that was different. That always remained a "domestic Passover"" -- as the terminology is oftentimes stated. In other words, still following the Exodus 12 example, which was prior to the establishment of the Levitical Priesthood and the tabernacle. Let's notice that Passover is included in these rules as well. Turn over to Deuteronomy 16, and we'll pick up in verse 5.

**Deu 16:5** *“You may not sacrifice the Passover within any of your gates which the LORD your God gives you; 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. 7) And you shall roast and eat it in the place which the LORD your God chooses, and in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents.” (NKJV)*

Notice, it's specifically saying you have to go to the tabernacle with your Passover sacrifice. You can't do your own independent thing with it. *That's not allowed.* Now, if we look at the rules for the establishment of the second Passover, we'll see that this is built into one of the reasons for what was a justifiable reason for keeping the second Passover.

Turn over to Numbers 9. You're going to see as we read through this chapter, Moses is contacted by some individuals who had been defiled by touching a dead body. This was one of the rules where you're ceremonially unclean and not allowed to keep the Passover as a result. Well, Moses basically appeals to God, and the answer he gets is to establish the second Passover in the second month. It'll be the 14th day of the second month when you sacrifice the lamb, if you were for some reason not able to do it

in the first month. But notice, one of the reasons that was an acceptable reason for doing the second Passover and why it's established is if you were on a journey. It has nothing to do with being ceremonially unclean. It's based on location. And then, you have to ask, "Why does location matter?" Because you have to be near the tabernacle. Let's notice this in Numbers 9:1.

**Num 9:1** *"Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying: 2) "Let the children of Israel keep the Passover at its appointed time. 3) On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you shall keep it at its appointed time. According to all its rites and ceremonies you shall keep it." 4) So Moses told the children of Israel that they should keep the Passover. 5) And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month, at twilight, in the Wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did. 6) Now there were certain men who were defiled by a human corpse, so that they could not keep the Passover on that day; and they came before Moses and Aaron that day. 7) And those men said to him, "We became defiled by a human corpse. Why are we kept from presenting the offering of the LORD at its appointed time among the children of Israel?" 8) And Moses said to them, "Stand still, that I may hear what the LORD will command concerning you." 9) Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 10) "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If anyone of you or your posterity is unclean because of a corpse, or is far away on a journey, he may still keep the LORD'S Passover.'" (NKJV)*

Notice, location is an issue. In verse 11.

*"11) On the fourteenth day of the second month, at twilight, they may keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. 12) They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break one of its bones. According to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it. 13) But the man who is clean and is not on a journey, and ceases to keep the Passover, that same person shall be cut off from among his people, because he did not bring the offering of the LORD at its appointed time; that man shall bear his sin." (NKJV)*

Now, again, if you compare what's said here to this idea that the Passover always remained a "domestic Passover" as it's oftentimes referred to. In other words, consistent with Exodus 12, where it doesn't matter being near the tabernacle or bringing your sacrifice there. The Levites being involved in the process, that's irrelevant. It's just domestic and individual families do it their own way. Well, if that's the case, if you're on a journey, couldn't you just plan ahead and just make sure that you have a lamb? At the appropriate time, you just kill your lamb and sacrifice it, and then you roast it and you eat it on the appropriate night. Why does it matter if you're on a journey? Well, the reason it matters if you're on a journey is because you're not able to be near the tabernacle and where the Levites are, and those are requirements. That's what would keep someone from keeping the first Passover and require them to keep the second Passover.

To see this directly indicated in the Bible, turn over to 2 Chronicles 30. We'll see here an example where the Israelites keep the second Passover, and it directly states the reason why. It's 2 Chronicles 30. We'll start reading here in verse 1.

**2 Chr 30:1** *“And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the Passover to the LORD God of Israel. 2) For the king and his leaders and all the assembly in Jerusalem had agreed to keep the Passover in the second month. (NKJV)*

Notice that they all agreed to keep this second Passover, but let's notice in the next verse the reasons why they did that. In verse 3.

*“3) For they could not keep it at the regular time, because a sufficient number of priests had not consecrated themselves, nor had the people gathered together at Jerusalem.” (NKJV)*

Notice, the location and the Levitical Priesthood being involved were important issues. They were reasons why the people couldn't keep the first Passover in the normal time, the 14th day of the first month -- killing the lamb. And now they have to do it in the second month. See, this tells us, just like all the other sacrifices, the rules changed. When God told Moses to build the tabernacle and to establish the Levitical Priesthood, the rules changed for Passover just like they did with all other sacrifices. Now, sacrifices had to be done at that location, and the Levites had to be involved.

Now, the reason I point all of this out is we just read a little while ago in John 18 that the Jews in Christ's time, they were all killing the lamb in the afternoon at the time when Christ was being killed. They were going to eat the lamb the night beginning the 15th. Now, we can't even argue that Christ and the Apostles killed their lamb -- just themselves -- they just did it domestically with nobody else involved, and they did it at the beginning of the 14th. They would have been directly violating God's instructions to do that. If they had gone to the temple and said, "This is our Passover sacrifice and we want the priest to kill it and sacrifice it for us," they'd have been thrown out. They'd have been kicked out and run off if they had tried that.

So, see, it's not even a possibility that what Christ was referring to when He said, "I want to eat this Passover with you," that He was talking about a sacrificed lamb. Now, the reason He said "this Passover" is He's referring to exactly what He explains in the following verses, where He's talking about taking bread that's a symbol of His body, and wine, which is a symbol of His blood, and eating that because these are symbolically eating His body and blood, and He is our Passover. *That's what He was referring to.*

As I mentioned in the outset of this sermon, this oftentimes confuses people because they're thinking, "Okay. Well, it makes sense that the timing of the Passover sacrifice when the lamb was killed and when Christ, our Passover Lamb, would be killed would sync up. But why then is "eating the Passover", the services that we were commanded

to do -- ancient Israel was commanded to do it the night beginning the 15th, and we're commanded to do it the night beginning the 14<sup>th</sup> -- why are those different? How do we make sense of that?"

Well, the key to understanding that is realizing that both of these services are memorials of specific events. These services are on different evenings because these events took place on different days. Because realize that the killing of the lamb, the Old Testament Passover, that definitely did foreshadow the death of Jesus Christ. And He is the fulfillment of that. But what they pictured in the service when they "ate the Passover", when ancient Israel ate the lamb, or the New Covenant Church, when we eat bread and wine, it's picturing completely different events. When we get together for the Passover and do foot washing, bread, and wine, it has nothing to do with ancient Israel being saved from the death of the firstborn. It's about Jesus Christ. See, it pictures completely different events.

It's realizing that both of these are memorialized events, and those events take place on different days. That is the key to understanding this subject. To notice this, turn over to Exodus 12, and we'll see here again the explanation of the meaning of the Old Covenant Passover service when they actually ate the Passover lamb. Exodus 12, and we'll start reading in verse 26.

**Ex 12:26** *"And it shall be, when your children say to you, "What do you mean by this service?""* (NKJV)

In other words, this is when they're actually eating the Passover lamb.

*"27) that you shall say, "It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households." So the people bowed their heads and worshiped."* (NKJV)

Now, as I explained last time in the sermon -- and last time I also referred to the study papers that are on my website. If you're watching this sermon on YouTube, there's a link right below this video. If you're watching on Rumble, it's the same. There's a link right below the video. You can just click on it. It'll take you straight to my website. There are study papers on there, addressing the Old Covenant Passover and the New Covenant Passover. They're two separate papers.

The reason I mention that is it goes into the Hebrew words here that are used for "passed over" (two words) in this verse here in verse 27, versus "Passover" (one word) which refers to a sacrifice. Because "passed over" here -- the way this is translated in English -- it sounds like the LORD jumped over the houses of the Israelites. There's also a reference in this chapter of "passing over the door". It makes it sound -- the way it's worded in English -- like He jumped over the door, or He jumped over the house.

As I explained in that paper, the Hebrew word there can also mean "to protect". So, what he's referring to is He's protecting the houses, or He's protecting the door. He's stopping the destroyer from coming in and killing the firstborn. He's not jumping over the house. Let's continue in verse 28.

*"28) Then the children of Israel went away and did so; just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did." (NKJV)*

Notice what we just read here. This is a memorial of what happened when He protected them and the destroyer came to kill the firstborn. Now, let's notice, when does that happen? That happens the night beginning the 15th. Let's continue reading here.

*"29) And it came to pass at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock. 30) So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead. 31) Then he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, "Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the LORD as you have said. 32) Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also." 33) And the Egyptians urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We shall all be dead." (NKJV)*

Now, as I explained last time, we oftentimes look at Deuteronomy 16:1 -- where it says He "brought them out at night" -- and we assume that means the Israelites marched out at nighttime. No, it's He "brought them out at night". And as we looked at last time, there are multiple verses where we can see that same language used, and what He's referring to is the culmination of the plagues. It was the 10 plagues brought upon the Egyptians that finally caused Pharaoh to give in and say, "Okay, fine, I've had enough. Just get out. Get out of here and flee". Well, this culminated that night, and that's when Pharaoh basically kicked them out. The following morning at sunrise the Israelites are allowed to go out, and they begin their journey out. Well, the point I want you to see in all of this, all these events take place the night of the 15th. So, it totally makes sense to memorialize them the night of the 15th.

Let's notice, the New Covenant Passover does not picture this. We don't keep the New Covenant Passover to memorialize these events. Turn back over to 1 Corinthians 11, and this time we'll start reading in verse 23. Because notice here that Paul tells us this is all done as a memorial to what Christ accomplished. His sacrifice and what it does for us. Let's notice that the events that it's specifically picturing here all take place on the 14th. In fact, they begin happening the night of the 14th, not long after He gets done with the service He kept with the Apostles. Again, it correlates with the timing of the service that memorializes these events. Notice here in 1 Corinthians 11:23.

**1 Cor 11:23** *“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24) and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” 25) In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” 26) For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.” (NKJV)*

Now, notice again that this service is not memorializing what took place the night that God protected the Israelites from the death of the firstborn. This is all about what Christ did. See, the symbols that are included in the New Covenant Passover service all point to things that take place on the 14th. None of them occur on the 15th. *That’s why the timing of these services are different.*

Turn over to John 13. What we're going to see here, there's basically three aspects to the New Covenant Passover service. There is foot washing, bread, and wine, and specifically in that order. Now, if you notice when we just read there in 1 Corinthians and also when we started off reading in Luke -- the account where Christ institutes the New Covenant Passover there. You notice neither one of those specifically mentions the foot washing, but they mention the bread and the wine. Notice, they always mention the bread prior to the wine. As we're going to see, there's a very meaningful reason for that. But there's also the foot washing, and that occurs prior to the bread and wine.

Now there's a whole other debate that people often engage in here about the timing in John 13. Now, I'm not going to get into that particular debate today. Again, that is addressed in the “New Covenant Passover” study paper that's on my website. If you're interested in looking at the details of that, I would refer you to my website to sort that out. But just to pick up here at the meaning of the foot washing which, again, comes first in the sequence of the symbols here. Pick up in John 13:12.

**John 13:12** *“So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? 13) You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, 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 should do as I have done to you. 16) Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17) If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.” (NKJV)*

He's telling us the meaning of what He was symbolizing by washing the Apostles' feet. Now, when looking at this we oftentimes focus on just the lesson it teaches us of humility. Of humbly serving one another. Or placing us in a proper attitude to partake of the bread and wine, and those are very valid lessons of the meaning of what this does. But what I want you to also focus on is what this also pictures for Christ, and again, when did this take place?

What I mean by this is this act of humility in regard to Christ. Turn over to Philippians 2. Notice here, we just read the account here of Christ literally not only washing the feet of the carnal human beings who are always arguing about who's going to be the greatest and the biggest and the baddest. He is washing the feet of the guy who's directly going to betray Him and have Him arrested and sent off to His death. This is an extreme act of humility. Let's notice what it says here in Philippians 2:5.

**Phil 2:5** *“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6) who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7) but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8) And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”* (NKJV)

See, it's referring to His act of humility of submitting Himself to God even to the point of being killed. Well, you can see a very powerful example of this that takes place the night beginning the 14th, not long after Christ has this ceremony with the Apostles.

Turn over to Matthew 26. We'll see here the agonizing emotion that Christ is going through, because He's familiar with what's written in the book of Isaiah. He knows in graphic detail the very ugly ordeal He's about to suffer through. Being a physical human being, He is not looking forward to this at all. In fact, He's literally begging for a plan B. Let's notice here, again, His consistent attitude of humility, subjecting Himself to the death of the cross. This is Matthew 26:36.

**Matt 26:36** *“Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, “Sit here while I go and pray over there.” 37) And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. 38) Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.” 39) He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.” 40) Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, “What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? 41) Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” 42) Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, “O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.” 43) And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy. 44) So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. 45) Then He came to His disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46) Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.””* (NKJV)

Notice, He's showing an extreme act of humility, and He is submitting Himself to the death of the cross. And when does this happen? This happens the night of the 14th. It's the night that begins before the daylight period, but the beginning of the calendar day of

the 14th is when this is taking place. This is one of the things symbolized again by Christ's act of humility of washing feet.

Well, the next thing that occurs in this ceremony is eating the bread. And this bread is specifically broken because what it symbolizes is the beating, the torture that Christ went through prior to His death. We're going to see that the wine specifically symbolizes His death. His actual dying to take on the death penalty for our sins. But part of this process, again, is not just dying. It's the torture and the beatings that He went through prior to that. You see, you start off with Him humbly submitting to the Father and being willing to face this even though He does not want to. He goes through the beatings, then He dies. It's all in sequential order.

To notice this, turn back over to 1 Corinthians 11, and let's just notice again in specific detail here. This is 1 Corinthians 11:23.

**1 Cor 11:23** *“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24) and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.””* (NKJV)

If you notice, every year when we keep the Passover service, the minister will take the bread and break it before he passes it around for everyone to take part of it. That's very deliberate because that specifically pictures the beatings of Christ. That His body is broken for us. Again, this is important for our spiritual healing. Isaiah 53 specifically tells us this. Turn over to Isaiah 53:4.

**Is 53:4** *“Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5) But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. 6) All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. 7) He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth.”* (NKJV)

See, He very humbly submitted to this beating and to this torture. Again, as we just read, this is fundamental to our spiritual healing.

Well, the final symbol of this is Christ's blood. It's the wine. But again, oftentimes, we think of this as just the shedding of Christ's blood, but it's important to realize that what that terminology is referring to is His actual death. That's just an expression that refers to being killed. To see this, turn over to Matthew 26, and we'll start reading in verse 26.

**Matt 26:26** *“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” 27) Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of*

*you. 28) For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” (NKJV)*

Notice, this is particularly for the “remission of sins”. Now, you can see that the symbolism of all of this is directly tied with the sacrificial system and what it pictured. When an animal was sacrificed as a symbolic atonement for sin, they would place hands upon the animal's head before it was actually sacrificed. What this was is a symbolic transfer. It was basically a symbolic transfer of the sins of the human being on to the animal. And then the animal is killed. It basically took on the death penalty, and then the blood is used -- poured on the altar -- as a symbolic atonement.

But take note of the fact that they don't just cut the animal and let it bleed and collect some of the blood and put it on the altar and then patch the animal up, and then he goes on and heals. No, the animal was always killed because sin requires the death penalty. Just to notice the symbolism here, turn over to Hebrews 9, and we're going to read verse 22.

**Heb 9:22** *“And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.” (NKJV)*

Now, again, it's important to remember we're not just talking about shedding blood. Just having a bleed and then you patch it up, and the animal's okay. That's not what this is talking about. It's talking about a death because sin requires a death. To see that, turn over to Romans 6:23.

**Rom 6:23** *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (NKJV)*

See, since the wages of sin is death, sin, by definition, requires the death penalty. Well, all of us are sinners. Christ never sinned, but all of us are sinners. And to atone for our sins, He had to live a sinless life and then die. It wasn't just a matter of being tortured and bleeding. He had to die to then take on the death penalty for all of us.

As you can see, when you look at the symbols in the New Covenant Passover, you've got foot washing, which is about humility. Again, yes, it teaches us the lesson of humility, of serving one another. It puts us in the proper attitude to understand our need for the bread and the wine, but it's also an illustration of Christ's humility. Of submitting Himself to the death of the cross. Well, as we just read in Matthew 26, He does that the night of the beginning of the 14th.

Well, then later, He's taken captive, and then He's tortured, and He goes through a brutal ordeal from that point forward, all the way up to his death, the afternoon of the 14th. Well, as we saw from scripture here, the broken bread -- because we always break the bread at Passover -- that symbolically represents the torture and beatings that He went through. The wine, that pictures His actual death. Again, not just the shedding of His blood. The shedding of blood is an expression for death.

But when did all of these events take place? They began playing out not long after Christ institutes the New Covenant Passover with His disciples. It begins playing out that night, and it lasts all the way to the afternoon -- around three o'clock in the afternoon -- when He's actually killed. By the night of the 15th, Christ is dead in the grave. None of these events take place the night of the 15th.

However, the important events that were memorialized by the Old Covenant Passover, the eating of the Passover lamb -- as we read in Exodus -- that was memorializing God protecting them from being killed as part of the death of the firstborn by the destroyer coming through Egypt. Well, those events took place the night beginning the 15th. *That's why these services are on different nights.*

See, the Passover is a sacrifice. It's a sacrifice that has to be killed "between the two evenings" on the 14<sup>th</sup>. And we saw previously that has to be an afternoon time frame. Again, it has to correlate with the timing of Christ's death for Christ to be our Passover sacrifice. Because if the appointed time of Passover -- of killing the lamb -- is between sunset and dark the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup>, and we know Christ died at three o'clock in the afternoon on the 14<sup>th</sup>, then we have a massive problem if that's the correct time of the Passover. *Because if that is the case then Christ didn't fulfill it.* Well, obviously Christ fulfilled it. They're both in the afternoon.

Again, the key to understanding this whole controversy is both the Old Covenant meal of eating the Passover and the New Covenant service of eating the symbols of Christ's blood and body, these memorialize completely different events. And those events took place on different days. *That's why the timing is different.* Brethren, as we go forward from this Sabbath and approaching the Passover here in just a few days, we can look forward to this understanding the correct timing of these events, and again, the important meanings that they both picture.