

Ten Facts About the Passover

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During the breakup of the Worldwide Church of God, and for those of you who were not around at that time, it occurred in the early 1990's. That was when the trinity and other heresies were being introduced into the church. I heard more than once from the pulpit, the following statement: I know this is what the scripture says but that's not what it means. Then the person speaking would go on and completely change what the scripture plainly said. We've all experienced that. There was an agenda and then the scripture was twisted to fit the agenda. All of us know, that if we are going to be honest in establishing doctrine, doctrine has to be established on facts from scripture—absolute fact and not on interpretation, not on inference, not on speculation—but on fact.

With that concept in mind, and as I said, twenty days before Passover, we're going to see today how simple it is to understand why we keep the Passover and how we keep the Passover. It is simple and it is easy to understand. We are going to do that by examining ten facts about the Passover. That's the title of the sermon.

Ten Facts About the Passover

On February 13, James Smyda covered the symbols of the Passover in an excellent sermon, so we're going to look at other facts today. Facts that are so plain you can't argue with them. You can try to twist them, but you can't because they are so simple and so plain and so easy to understand; ten facts.

1. The Old Testament Passover is the sacrifice of a lamb or a goat.

It is common for us to think—and I've thought this way for decades, frankly—it's common to think of the Passover as a twenty-four period. But is it really? Is that what our Father intended? Would it be more accurate to think of Passover as an event that occurs on the 14th of Abib? Would it be more accurate to think in that way? Let's see what the Bible says. Let's go to Exodus 12:5. All the scriptures quoted today will be from the King James version unless otherwise noted. As we go through this, we are going to get an understanding of how the Old Testament Passover—2500 years ago or more—was kept.

Exodus 12:5 *Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: [it could be a goat]*

6) *And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it [meaning the lamb or goat] in the evening.*

7) *And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.*

8) *And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.*

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

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

11) *And thus, shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it [meaning the sacrificial lamb or goat] is the LORD's Passover. (KJV)*

That is in some cases, a revelation. It is Yehovah's Passover; the lamb is Yehovah's Passover.

21) *Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover. (KJV)*

What are they going to kill? They are going to kill the lamb or the goat. This plainly says that the Passover is the sacrifice—the lamb or the goat.

22) *And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. (KJV)*

We are seeing now that Yehovah calls the lamb, the Passover. Let's travel down to 700-800 years later in 2 Chronicles 34. This is talking about Josiah, king of Judah. Let's see the account of them keeping the Passover. This is 700-800 years down the road depending on whose numbers you figure and whose chronology you look at.

2 Chronicles 34:33 *And Josiah [who is king of Judah] took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve, even to serve the LORD their God. And all his days they departed not from following the LORD, the God of their fathers. (KJV)*

What an example he set. 2 Chronicles 35:1.

2 Chronicles 35:1 *Moreover Josiah kept a passover unto the LORD in Jerusalem: and they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month. (KJV)*

That was the lamb, that was the sacrifice that was killed. It is called the Passover. Let's look at a further example in Ezra, just the next chapter over. Ezra 6:20 and we're breaking into the context. This is after the Temple was rebuilt and after the Babylonian captivity. It was destroyed and was now being rebuilt under Ezra's supervision and guidance.

Ezra 6:20 *For the priests and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed [what did they kill?] the passover for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and for themselves. (KJV)*

There are many other scriptures that we could quote, but for sake of time we won't go any further. We see here there is plenty of evidence that the sacrifice of the lamb or goat is Yehovah's Passover. Passover is not a twenty-four-hour period, it's an event that occurs within a certain twenty-four-hour period and it is common for us to say that the Passover is that day, because this event occurred on that day. We have to be careful about the terms that we use.

This first point is, the Passover is a sacrifice of a lamb or a goat and of course that has great meaning for us today, as we will see.

2. The Old Testament Passover sacrifice occurred on the fourteenth of Abib.

Abib is the first month. We see in Numbers 9:4 that this sacrifice was made on the fourteenth. There is ample evidence of that fact and we need to remember, it's a fact that is not arguable or debatable—it is a fact. The memorial of this sacrifice was kept on the fourteenth.

Numbers 9:4 *And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the passover.*

5) [Notice this] *And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: (KJV)*

They had come out of Egypt, they had crossed the Red Sea, they were encamped around Mount Sinai and they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month.

5 continued) *... according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel. (KJV)*

When we go to the same book in chapter 28:16, it is repeated again.

Numbers 28:16 *And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the LORD. (KJV)*

Now we are going to go to the book of Joshua chapter 5 and we're looking at the context here of Moses being dead. Joshua has replaced Moses; Israel has crossed over Jordan and into the Promised Land. Notice in Joshua 5:10 what Israel does under Joshua's direction.

Joshua 5:10 *And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. (KJV)*

We see that God Almighty instituted the Passover to be that sacrifice which was to be made on the fourteenth. Moses obeyed that and we see here that Joshua obeyed that also. Now in Ezra 6, where we were earlier in verse 20, we will now read in verse 19 this time. This is after the Temple had been rebuilt following Judah's captivity in Babylon and they had returned to the Promised Land to rebuild the Temple. What did they do?

Ezra 6:19 *And the children of the captivity kept the passover upon the fourteenth day of the first month. (KJV)*

We could spend the rest of the time going to all the scriptures that show the Passover is to be kept on the fourteenth. It is very plain—absolutely clear and not arguable that the killing of the Passover lamb or the Passover goat occurred on the fourteenth day of the first month. No argument about that, no debate about that at all. That is fact number two.

Now let's go to fact three of the inarguable, clear facts about the Passover.

3. Passover is so important that it is a festival of Yehovah.

Our Father designated Passover as a festival for Israel to keep and for us to keep today. We keep it in a different manner but it is a festival to be kept in perpetuity. In Leviticus 1:1 we get the context of what we are going to discuss here. The fact that it's a festival. Go over to Leviticus 1:1 and let's see when Leviticus was written so that we have an understanding of all of Leviticus.

Leviticus 1:1 *And the LORD called unto Moses ... (KJV)*

There are so many examples of God the Father—Yehovah—speaking to individuals; it's beyond question and here we have it again.

1 continued) *... and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying ... (KJV)*

The point is, Leviticus 1:1 starts off with the Tabernacle being in existence and Yehovah speaking to Moses and giving him instruction, out of the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle had to have been built for this to happen so when did that happen? Leviticus was written after the construction of the Tabernacle and Yehovah gave details of the construction of the Tabernacle in Exodus 25. He gave the details of the construction to Moses. Then, in Exodus 40 we see when the Tabernacle was raised up. Exodus 40:17, we will just go to that one verse just so we cement this in our minds as to when Leviticus was written.

Exodus 40:17 *And it came to pass in the first month [when?] in the second year [not the first year, meaning the second year after they came out of Egypt], on the first day of the month, that the tabernacle was reared up. (KJV)*

So, the Tabernacle was fully constructed, operational and ready to go, a year after Israel came out of Egypt. Therefore, Leviticus was written at least a year after Israel came out of Egypt. So that's the context, anytime we read Leviticus—that is the time frame. With that in mind we can go to Leviticus 23. We are talking a year after coming out of Egypt, after the parting of the Red Sea. We are back on familiar territory regarding the Holy days in Leviticus 23 and we will begin in verse 1. Just read what the Bible says. It's very plain.

Leviticus 23:1 *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2) Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD, [this is the subject] which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are my feasts. (KJV)*

That's the subject, no doubt of what we're talking about. The Hebrew word for *feasts* is Strong's #4150 and let me quote from Strong's. "Properly, an appointment" [a feast is an "appointment"], "that is a fixed time or a fixed season". Then Strong's goes on to say: "It can be an appointed time or a solemn feast".

So, what we derive from that is that the feast is a recognized, appointed time by God Almighty. God Almighty is saying, this time, I am declaring it to be a feast. Then it says, *you shall proclaim them to be holy convocations*. That is Strong's #4744 and the definition is: "something called out, set aside, designated". It's got an interesting secondary definition. It can mean "a rehearsal". So what God Almighty is saying is, I'm going to designate this time so you can rehearse it year by year by year by year so that you don't forget and you understand My plan of salvation. You understand why you are here on the earth and why I have called you—it's a rehearsal, year by year by year.

*4) These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.
5) [The very first one] In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD's passover. (KJV)*

This is a festival of God Almighty. This is the first festival of Yehovah to be held and it's held on the fourteenth. As we learned, it's the killing of the Passover Lamb which resulted in the sparing of the nation of Israel—certainly sparing the firstborn of all the nation of Israel. God Almighty is setting aside the fourteenth so that we rehearse, year by year, the killing of that lamb and the result of it was the people were spared. Going on in verse 6.

*6) And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD:[now we come to the second festival] seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.
7) In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. (KJV)*

Going to the latter part of verse 8.

8) ... *in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.* (KJV)

So, the second appointed time or designated time from God Almighty is the first day of Unleavened Bread. In addition, no work is to be done on this first day of Unleavened Bread and of course on the last day of Unleavened Bread either. Why no prohibition on the fourteenth? Why no prohibition for doing work on the fourteenth? It seems fairly obvious, to me anyway, you were slaughtering a lamb, you were preparing a lamb, you were dressing a lamb and that was work to be done on the fourteenth and God Almighty allowed for that. The next was a holy convocation where you did no work. So, the point we're making in this third fact is that the slaying of the lamb was established as a festival of Yehovah on the fourteenth of Abib—can't argue that fact. The lamb was slain on the fourteenth and our Father designated it as a festival, a rehearsal, for us to keep year by year by year.

The fourth fact is:

4. The Old Testament Passover memorialized what? Its memorialized Israel from being spared from destruction.

As we know, the blood of this sacrificial lamb or goat, saved Israel from the destroyer. The destroyer came down to slaughter the first born of any home that was not protected. The blood of that lamb was put on the lintel and on the side posts and the destroyer passed over that house. We will go over to Exodus 12:23. We know this, but let us just rehearse this as the Father would want us to do.

Exodus 12:23 *For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.* (KJV)

That's a fact. Verse 24.

24) *And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons forever.*

25) *And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service.* (KJV)

That's exactly what Joshua did, we just read that.

26) *And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, what mean ye by this service? [On the fourteenth]* (KJV)

The Hebrew word for *service* is Strong's #5656. Brown, Driver and Briggs defined this—they have several definitions of the word because it is a broad term—but their fourth definition is: “A service of God, the feast of Passover, Exodus 12:25 and 26” (which we just read). So, it’s a service—we would say a ceremony, to our Father and going on in verse 27—this is what you are to tell your children.

27) That ye shall say, it is the sacrifice of the LORD's passover ... (KJV)

So why are we keeping this day? It is the sacrifice of the passover—the lamb or the goat—of Yehovah. As a result, going on in verse 27.

27 continued) ... who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. (KJV)

Because of the deliverance. The Old Testament Passover, memorializes Israel being spared; delivered from the destroyer. From our New Testament perspective today, it obviously foreshadowed our being spared eternal destruction through the death of Jesus Christ. They didn’t have that perspective then. We have that perspective now as we look back over those years. We are spared eternal destruction through the body and the blood of Jesus Christ. So, the fourth fact is, the Old Testament Passover memorialized Israel being spared from destruction.

Now with the fifth fact, we are coming to the New Testament.

5. Christ became our Passover.

Not a physical lamb—Christ became our Passover. In John 1:29 we see this fact. We could spend the rest of the time just on this one fact but we are just going to look at two verses that nail that fact down. This is talking about John the Baptist and he is seeing Christ for the very first time. Think about this from his perspective. He is viewing the Messiah for the very first time. We know John the Baptist had God’s Holy Spirit in him. So, he sees Christ for the first time in John 1:29 and notice what he says.

John 1:29 *The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. (KJV)*

It couldn’t be any clearer. Christ is the Lamb of God. That lamb back then, so many hundreds of years ago, from the New Testament perspective, from our view today, Christ replaced that lamb. We see a further example in 1 Corinthians 5:7. We need to understand that the letter Paul wrote to the Corinthians—the first letter, it’s actually the second letter but the first one wasn’t recorded—was written during the time of the Passover and the days of Unleavened Bread. Talking about Passover and Unleavened Bread, you can see references to it all the way through the book of 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 5:7 *Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. [meaning to the extent that you are unleavened] For even [notice this key sentence] Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: (KJV)*

It couldn't be clearer. Christ is our Passover and He was sacrificed, He suffered, He died, for us.

8) *Therefore, let us keep the feast [what feast?], not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (KJV)*

It is very clear that the context of Passover, days of Unleavened Bread is when it was written. Paul says very clearly—as John the Baptist said very clearly—that Christ is the Passover Lamb. He is the one who is sacrificed for us. Christ, in the New Testament, is the Passover sacrifice. He is our Passover sacrifice. He has replaced the lamb or the goat back there in Exodus and for us who are called, who have been given His Holy Spirit and have an opportunity for eternal life, He has replaced the lamb of Exodus, He is now our Passover sacrifice. It couldn't be any clearer.

Let's go to the sixth fact.

6. The Old Testament Passover and the New Testament Passover services are very different.

Some people like to say they are not, but they are. Just reading the scriptures will tell us that. We've just read about the Old Testament Passover; we've studied the Old Testament Passover for decades. Most of us have kept the New Testament Passover for decades and when you think about it, what we read about regarding the Old Testament Passover and what we have celebrated for decades based on scripture, those two observances are very different—absolutely different. Why are they different? Good question to ask—why are they different? Because Christ ushered in the New Covenant. The New Covenant and Passover are tied together irrevocably and we have to understand that. The services—the Passover observances—are very different because Christ ushered in the New Covenant. Go to Hebrews 8. Sometime before Passover it would be good to read the whole book of Hebrews because it is mentioned over and over and over again. Notice what is happening.

Hebrews 8:1 *Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: [Paul is summarizing the first seven chapters] We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; (KJV)*

That can only refer to Jesus Christ.

2) *A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. (KJV)*

Going to verse 6.

6) *But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of [what?] a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.*

7) *For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. (KJV)*

So, we plainly see here that there are two covenants—there's the first and there's the second. You can't argue with that, it's a fact, it's right here in front of us. Going on in verse 8.

8) *For finding fault with them, he saith, [Paul is quoting Jeremiah 31:31] Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:*

9) *Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, [he's describing the first covenant] and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. (KJV)*

Notice verse 10.

10) *For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; [and what is the difference between this covenant and the first one?] I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:*

11) *And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.*

12) *For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.*

13) *In that he saith, [notice this] A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. (KJV)*

We see the term first, we see the term *new*, that clearly says there are two covenants. How do you get around that? It clearly says there are two covenants. Keeping the theme, go to Chapter 9:8 in the New King James.

Hebrews 9:8 ... *the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All [the Holy of Holies] was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. (NKJV)*

The way to eternal life, they didn't have a clue about—it was not promised back then.

9) *It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience—*

10) *concerned only [the first covenant] with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.*

11) *But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, [and what are those good things?] with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.*

12) *Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. (NKJV)*

Things have changed with this New Covenant.

13) *For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, [first covenant]*

14) *how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself [as the Lamb of God] without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (NKJV)*

How much more is Christ's sacrifice verses the lamb of Exodus?

15) *And for this reason, He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. (NKJV)*

We see here plainly, absolutely clearly, that both a first and a New Covenant are mentioned. Through Christ's death came this New Covenant. With the New Testament Passover, the Son of God sacrificed Himself, making possible the New Covenant and sparing all of us eternal death. That was the difference between the first covenant and the second. We have been promised eternal life and promised to be spared from eternal death. Not just the passing over the houses in Egypt. So, the sixth fact is that the New Testament Passover and the Old Testament Passover—the observances—are very, very different.

Now for the seventh fact. Now we get into the nitty gritty.

7. Christ instituted a new Passover observance.

Why, we might ask. Why was it necessary for Christ to institute a new Passover observance? Based on what we have read, it's pretty obvious. He instituted a new Passover observance because He introduced a New Covenant. They go hand in hand, as we are going to see. Therefore, if He introduced a New Covenant then some things had to change because the covenants changed. The agreements changed between God Almighty and the people, the Israelites back then and us today. In Hebrews 10 the theme continues and Hebrews explains all of this beginning in Hebrews 10:11 from the New King James. We are going to find out that when the New Covenant came through Jesus Christ, some things had to change.

Hebrews 10:11 *And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. (NKJV)*

This is referring to the Old Covenant sacrifices and to the priests under the Old Covenant. Those sacrifices could never remove sin.

12) *But this Man [referring to Christ], after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,*
13) *from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. (NKJV)*

That has not happened yet, that is an event yet future.

14) *For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. (NKJV)*

That is each one of us as we are in the process of being sanctified.

15) *But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before ... (NKJV)*

Now Paul is again quoting Jeremiah 31:33, in verse 16.

16) *This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds, I will write them, (NKJV)*

This tells us that this New Covenant requires a change of heart. A change of how to think, a change of our nature, a change of what's inside of us. Those under the Old Covenant back in Exodus 12, didn't have that. They lacked that because it wasn't available. Remember Yehovah's lament in Deuteronomy 5:29—we won't turn there but we know it by heart—Yehovah said, about the Israelites,

“Oh, that there was such a heart in them that they would fear Me and they would keep my commandments always.”

He knew they didn't have the heart because they didn't have the Holy Spirit because Christ had not yet sacrificed Himself. Going on in verse 17.

17) *then He adds, Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more. (NKJV)*

Referring, from Jeremiah's perspective—to this new Covenant to come.

18) *Now where there is remission of these, [permanent remission, eternal remission of sins] there is no longer an offering for sin. (NKJV)*

Sin offerings are no longer necessary. What we are being told here, is that there is a change and the change is that further offering for sin is not needed. It is not required because Christ is the ultimate sacrifice, the everlasting sacrifice and once He died, there is no more sacrifice for sin. How could there be, when He, a God, came down, became a human being and died for all of us. Christ is the ultimate sacrifice and because of this new Covenant being established at His death, Christ changed the symbols of the keeping of the Passover. The New Covenant required the change in keeping the symbols of the Passover. The focus is not now on killing a lamb or eating a meal, but on the sacrifice of the Son of God. What a change, to go from slitting the throat of a little lamb as a sacrifice, to the sacrifice of the Son of God. Old Covenant, New Covenant—do you think that there might be some changes in the practice and how we observe the sacrifice of the Son of God relative to the sacrifice of a lamb?

Early in Christ's ministry He gave a hint of this and what was to come. In John 6:49 Christ is addressing the Jews. They didn't have a clue about what He's going to talk about. In fact, they were shocked. I am sure some of them were even scandalized that He would say such a thing. Christ is giving us a hint when He is talking to the Jews.

John 6:49 *Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. [Absolute fact]*

50) *This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. (NKJV)*

You have to believe the Jews' brows are furrowed and saying, what on earth is He talking about?

51) *I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eats of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh [My body], which I will give for the life of the world. (NKJV)*

He is obviously referring to Himself as the ultimate sacrificial lamb.

52) *The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, how can this man give us his flesh to eat? (NKJV)*

I am sure they were thinking of cannibalism or something like that.

53) *Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.*

54) *Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. (NKJV)*

This is talking about a resurrection. This is obviously referring to a New Testament Passover as Christ ushers in the New Covenant.

55) *For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.*

56) *He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.*
57) *As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father [I do whatever He wants, He instructs Me]: so, he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.* (NKJV)

By what I'm about to do in My life—at the end of My physical life.

58) *This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever.* (NKJV)

New Covenant offering eternal life—do you think something might change when eternal life is offered in a new agreement as opposed to what was promised in Exodus 12? What Christ did on the night He was betrayed, did not follow what happened in the Old Testament Passover—it didn't follow. What He did was something totally different. Our redemption—Christ is our redemption—instituted a ceremony that was to be kept, incorporating new symbols because He was ushering in the New Covenant at His death. We can see that in scripture and you can't argue with it. Matthew 26:26—this is what scripture says. This isn't open for interpretation; this isn't open for human opinion.

Matthew 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.”* (NKJV)

This is what He was referring to in John 6 that we just read.

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 [what?] the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.* (NKJV)

He's tying His blood into the New Covenant. We see a parallel account in Mark 14:22. Again out of the New King James—different writer but notice the similarities.

Mark 14:22 *And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, Take, eat; this is My body.”*
23) *Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, and they all drank from it.*
24) *And He said to them, This is My blood of [what?] the new covenant, which is shed for many.* (NKJV)

We see here that Christ's sacrifice is being tied into the New Covenant. They are linked together in a way that you can't separate them. Christ's sacrifice and the New Covenant together.

The third gospel account in Luke 22:14 adds a new dimension.

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)

You just can't read over that. What He said was, I have desired greatly to eat this specific Passover with you. Why? Because this Passover was new. This Passover reflected the coming of the New Covenant. There will be a New Covenant in place with His death, resulting in new symbols. He says, I've had this incredible desire to keep this specific Passover with you. In addition, He said, this Passover before I suffer. We know He suffered, starting after this occasion when He was captured, and for most of the rest of the fourteenth. He was beaten, He was slapped, He was scourged, starting at ten, eleven, twelve o'clock that night until three in the afternoon when He died. He was abused, beaten and tortured. He bled most of the rest of the fourteenth. When they put the crown thorns on His head—if you've ever had a scalp cut on your head, you know how much a scalp cut can bleed. He began bleeding at that time and bled until He finally bled out with a spear in His side.

Think about this: A key difference between the Old Testament Passover and the New Testament Passover, is that in the Old Testament there was no suffering pictured. There was no suffering. The sacrificial lamb was not beaten, not flagellated, it was not tortured. It was mercifully killed with a slit in the throat. The New Testament Passover is just the opposite. The New Testament Passover not only involved the shedding of blood—with the Old Testament it was just a one-time event—but Christ bled for hours and hours and hours and was tortured and beaten and was in pain for hours and hours and hours. That was not reflected in the Old Testament Passover observance.

The New Testament Passover observance stresses the suffering of the Lamb. The suffering of our Savior. A huge difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament Passover. Now continuing on in verse 19 of Luke 22.

19) *And He took bread, [this is after He said I am looking forward to spending this Passover with you, before I suffer] gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, This is My body which is given for you; [here comes the command] do this in remembrance of Me.*" (NKJV)

Don't ignore it, don't diminish it, don't put it away; this do 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)

We have it again. So, what do these three gospels plainly, clearly tell us? These three gospels stress the body and the blood of Jesus Christ. These three gospels stress—as each one mentions—the New Covenant. In a ceremony to do in His remembrance is so clear. Stressing the body and blood of Jesus Christ, a New Covenant in a ceremony of remembrance. Three gospels, could not be clearer. Christ's purpose that night was not to eat a meal but for us to symbolically eat His body and drink His blood and that was a concept that was unimaginable to those that kept the Old Testament Passover. The

Israelites couldn't even think about this, it wouldn't even come to their minds. So, we plainly see that Christ did change the symbols and it was obviously done at His Father's instruction and at His Father's wishes.

In addition to that by changing the symbols, Christ also set the time of the New Testament Passover observance with a ceremony, with His disciples, which clearly occurred on the night He was betrayed. There is no debate as to when this happened. On the night He was betrayed, with the disciples and new symbols.

With all that in mind, we can go to 1 Corinthians 11 to see if the New Testament apostles followed Christ's example. Did the New Testament apostles do something else, or did they follow Christ's plain example? Remember, as we talked about before, there is a theme of Passover and the days of Unleavened Bread going throughout all of 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 11:23 *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: (NKJV)*

Paul was not there in the gospel accounts as he was the enemy of Christ. He was killing Christians later on after that. But Paul is saying He received this instruction directly from Christ. This was written twenty to twenty-five years after Christ's death and resurrection. We will see it conforms exactly with the three gospel accounts that we just read.

23 continued) ... *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 [or given] for you; do this in remembrance of Me." (NKJV)*

Don't ignore it, don't sweep it aside—this do 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." (NKJV)*

This is consistent with Matthew, Mark and Luke. The first New Testament Passover—Paul is referring back to that first New Testament Passover—memorialized events before they occurred when Christ was with the disciples. He memorialized them at the beginning of the fourteenth, before they occurred so we today could meditate and consider, during the day of the fourteenth, the suffering that Christ went through, leading to His death. They were memorialized before. If our Father wanted us to observe the New Testament Passover and wanted to change it from the beginning of the fourteenth to some other time, this part here in 1 Corinthians 11 is the perfect time for Him to do that. Paul said he had received this directly from Jesus Christ. So, if Christ and the Father wanted the New Testament Passover observance changed from early on the fourteenth where Christ set the example, twenty to twenty-five years later, this would be the perfect time to set the church straight, right? Remember, Christ said, I can do

nothing of Myself but as My Father taught Me. That is in John 8:28. He said I speak what My Father teaches Me. So whatever Christ did, came from His Father. We see here plainly that Christ, revealing it to Paul, confirms the gospel account. There is not one scripture in the New Testament—not one—that indicates that the New Testament Passover should be kept at any other time other than the time set in the example. There is not one. You cannot find it. It is a giant interpretation to teach anything else. We cannot do that because that's not the record of scripture. The fact is, that all of these scriptures agree—the three gospels plus 1 Corinthians 11, the New Testament Passover involves a ceremony of bread and wine in an observance that occurs early on the fourteenth.

The Old Covenant Passover focuses on the sacrifice of a lamb or a goat that resulted in Israel's being delivered from destruction. The focus of the New Testament Passover—our observance, what we keep—focuses on bread and wine which represent the body and the blood of Jesus Christ. It represents the sacrifice of the One who redeemed each one of us from eternal death. That's why Christ said, with fervent desire, I have desired to eat this Passover with you in Luke 22 which we just read. He is referring to the New Testament Passover observance with a set time to partake of new symbols, reflecting the New Covenant. This Passover—which Christ referred to as *this* Passover—that the Son and the Father instituted, is indeed a different Passover from Exodus. That is a fact.

Let's go to the eighth fact.

8. Passover is the only festival to require a make-up.

Therefore, it is unique and therefore Passover must be very important. In Numbers 9:4 which we read earlier, in verses 4 and 5 they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month. In verse 6, there was a man who was defiled by a dead body. I'm paraphrasing Numbers 9:6. There was a man who couldn't keep the Passover on the day because he was defiled because he had come into contact with a dead body. The man came to Moses and said, what do I do? Moses said, I don't know. Verse 8, he says stand still, I'll hear what Yehovah commands concerning this thing.

In verse 9:

Numbers 9:9 *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,*
10) *Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, if any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto the LORD. (KJV)*

No excuses, no exceptions; very important.

11) *The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it [meaning the Passover lamb] with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. (KJV)*

So, we see here that there is an institution of a second or a make-up Passover. I was going to read this, but for lack of time you can reference 2 Chronicles 30:1 through 4 and then on to verse 15. This is Hezekiah, King of Judah. They kept the Passover in the second month because he was cleaning house and the priests hadn't sanctified themselves and the people hadn't gathered, so they kept the Passover in the second month. That is an example of following the Almighty's instruction. The fact is, Passover is the only festival of God Almighty that must be made up if it's missed. Of all the festivals, it stands alone in that regard. That's why we keep the second Passover today—to this very day—if somebody can't make the first Passover.

There is an argument that Christ had to move the New Testament Passover to the beginning of the fourteenth—as we've read about in the three gospels—because He would be dead later on the fourteenth. There's that argument, and so therefore we, in the New Testament, should keep the Passover not early on the fourteenth, but later on the fourteenth or into the fifteenth because of Christ's death. Think about this, if the New Testament Passover was to be changed from Christ's clear example that we have read, because He would be dead, as some propose, Christ could have administered the second Passover. Think about that. He could have administered the second Passover; that year, the year He died, the second Passover was twenty-six days after His resurrection. Remember we know Christ was with His disciples for forty days. That means He was with them at the time of the second Passover. If Christ wanted the Passover to be changed to a different time because of His death, do you think He might have kept the second Passover with the disciples because He was already there with them and He was a spirit being and He could have said to them, because of My death, I couldn't keep it later on the fourteenth but I want you guys to keep it on the fourteenth. There is no record of that. There is no record that He kept the second Passover with His disciples. Why? I think it's pretty obvious; the way and the time that He kept the New Testament Passover was set as a permanent example for all of us. There is no record in scripture in the New Testament that it was ever changed, even though He was with His disciples on the second Passover and could have changed it; He did not.

Now to fact number nine.

9. Circumcision defined who could keep the Passover.

In Exodus 12:48, we're told—I'll just paraphrase but you can turn there if you have time—it says:

Exodus 12:48 *And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, [guess what he had to do?] let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.*
49) *One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you. (KJV)*

We all know that Israelite males were circumcised on the eighth day after their birth. That is in Leviticus 12. What does circumcision symbolize for us in the New Testament? What do the New Testament writers—Christ and the apostles—have to say about that? I'll read Romans 2:25 out of the New King James.

Romans 2:25 *For circumcision is indeed profitable if you keep the law; but if you are a breaker of the law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision.*

26) *Therefore, if an uncircumcised man keeps the righteous requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be counted as circumcision?* (NKJV)

Good question.

27) *And will not the physically uncircumcised, if he fulfills the law, judge you who, even with your written code and circumcision, are a transgressor of the law?*

28) *For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh;*

29) *but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.* (NKJV)

This is the Pharisee of Pharisees speaking and he is changing our understanding of circumcision. He is changing our understanding. Look at Philippians 3:3. This is another letter Paul wrote.

Philippians 3:3 *For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh ...* (NKJV)

We are the circumcision. Now notice Colossians 2:11—same author—Paul is consistent. This is a New Testament understanding of circumcision.

Colossians 2:11 *In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ ...* (NKJV)

We clearly see that in the New Testament, circumcision is a spiritual matter. The Acts 15 conference confirmed the fact that physical circumcision is not a requirement for salvation. So, the fact is, this ninth fact, no uncircumcised male could keep the Old Testament Passover and from a New Testament perspective, circumcision symbolizes a change of heart through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as a result of baptism. Therefore, it's very clear that no unbaptized person should keep the New Testament Passover.

The tenth and last fact, which we are going to cut a little short for times' sake.

10. On Passover, Christ was in a solemn, somber mood.

The scriptures tell us this. Do you think that Christ, knowing what was going to take place a few hours later, after the bread and the wine with His disciples, would have a flamboyant, back slapping approach to the bread and the wine ceremony on the night He was betrayed? Remember He said, in Luke 22, I have desired to eat this Passover before I suffer. Do you think what lay ahead of Him, might be on His mind when He uttered those words? Of course! Remember He asked that the cup be taken away from Him. In Luke 22:44—you can write it in for a reference—it says,

and being in agony, He began to sweat great drops of blood.

Do you think when He was passing the bread and the wine that this might be on His mind? In Matthew 26:38, Christ told the disciples that His soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. The scriptures tell us that the night Christ was betrayed, in that ceremony, it was not a party time. It was not a laughing, back-slapping matter. Christ was serious, solemn and somber that night and so should we be.

Let's conclude. We must establish doctrine based on facts and not from speculation or inference. We have seen ten facts about the Passover that are absolutely clear, that are not questionable, that are not open to private interpretation. The fact is, the manner in which we have kept the New Testament Passover is not based on the tradition of men but rather on absolute fact from scripture. It is so simple and easy to understand if we just read the scriptures. Therefore, we can keep the New Testament Passover and we are doing our Father's will. We are keeping this most important of all festivals by following the clear, plain instruction given to us by the Father, given to us by His Son when He walked the earth and by the example of the various apostles. So, let's be thankful for the clear understanding we have been given about the Passover in Almighty God's word.