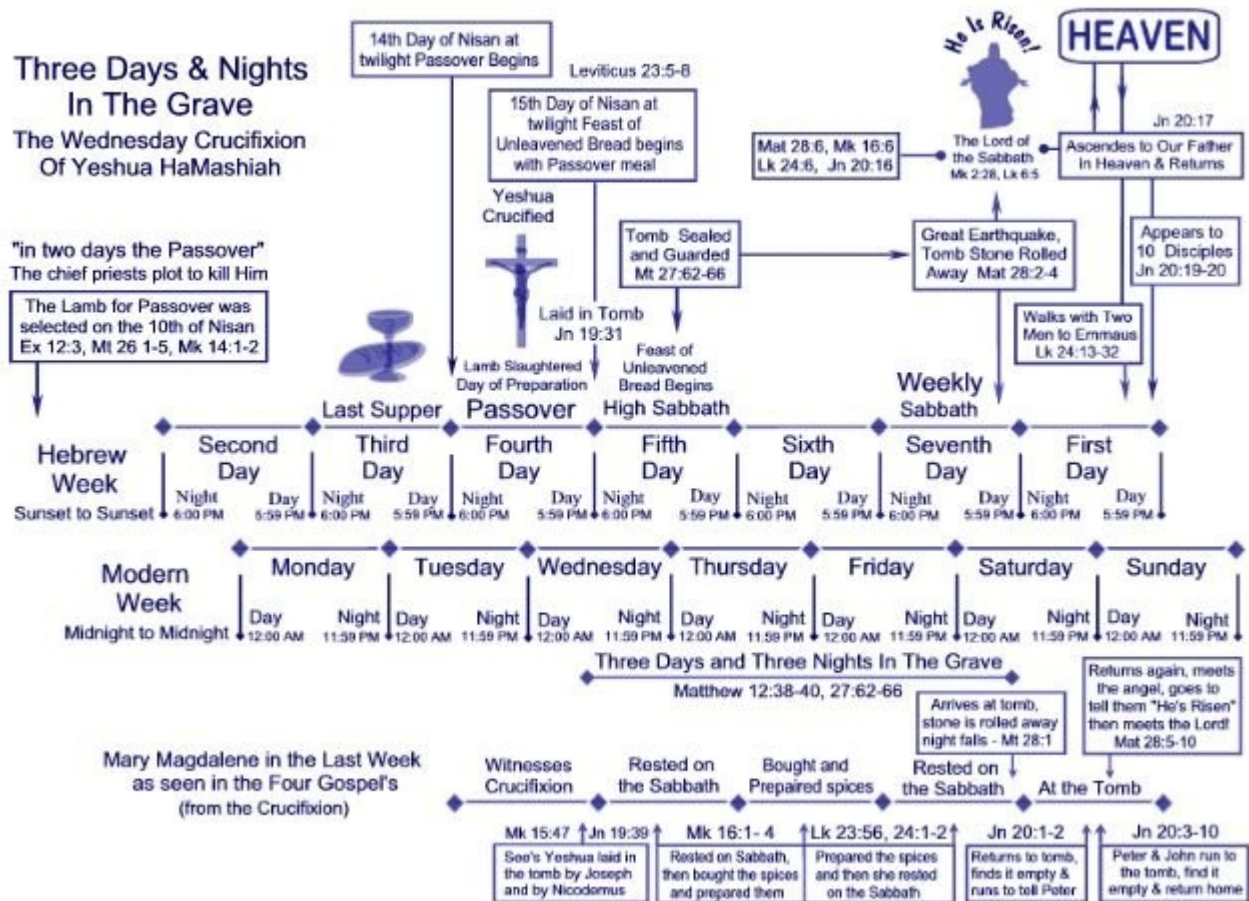


What Day of the Week Did the Original Passover Occur?

by Roy A. Reinhold, July 15, 2010

Many visitors to the Prophecy Truths website over the years have read my 2-part article on the Wednesday Crucifixion, where I show scripturally and logically the clear evidence for Yeshua (Jesus) dying on the cross on a Wednesday afternoon. It's been a very popular article; and it has raised healthy discussions concerning what we as Christians believe. However, I've never written an article on whether the original Passover week for the children of Israel in Egypt at the Exodus occurred on the same days of the week as the Wednesday crucifixion or whether it was on different days of the week. We don't need the days of the week for the original Passover to match those of the Wednesday crucifixion in order to scripturally prove the Wednesday crucifixion; however, if they did match, then it provides additional weight to the Wednesday crucifixion teaching.

Summary of the Wednesday Crucifixion:



graphic by Michael J. Harris

Note: A reminder to all that a day in the Hebrew calendar ran from 30 minutes after sundown, to 30 minutes after sundown on the next day.

1. The Lamb was selected on the 10th of Nisan. This would have been on a Saturday.
2. The Last Supper was on Tuesday evening, when the 14th of Nisan was beginning. The Last Supper occurred 24 hours before the Passover Seder meal. The scriptural record in all 4 Gospels

is consistent in that unleavened bread was not eaten at the Last Supper.

3. Yeshua (Jesus) died on the cross on Wednesday afternoon about 3pm. This was when the national Passover lamb was being ritually killed at the Temple by the High Priest for the entire nation. Yeshua was the Passover Lamb for all eternity.

4. Yeshua (Jesus) was laid in the grave at twilight as the 14th of Nisan was ending. The Passover Seder was eaten at that time as the 14th was ending and the 15th was beginning. The Passover seder meal used unleavened bread, since the Feast of Unleavened Bread was beginning.

5. The 15th of Nisan was the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and was an annual Sabbath or High Sabbath. The 15th of Nisan was Thursday of that week.

6. Saturday or the weekly Sabbath of that week was the 17th of Nisan.

Thesis:

If the original Passover matches the Wednesday Crucifixion teaching, then we should have evidence in the Torah (1st 5 books of the Bible) that the lambs were chosen on the 10th day of the first month on a Saturday; the lambs were killed on the 14th day of the 1st month in the afternoon on a Wednesday; and Saturday of that week is on the 17th day of the first month.

Chapter 12 of the book of Exodus lays out the instruction by Moses to the children of Israel concerning the original Passover week in Egypt. It included the final plague to strike Egypt in order to force Pharaoh to let the children of Israel leave Egypt. The children of Israel would put the blood of the lambs on their doorposts and the Angel of Death would pass by their dwelling when striking down all the firstborn in Egypt.

Exodus 12:2-3 This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year for you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel saying, "**On the tenth day of this month, each man is to take a lamb for his family, a lamb for a house.**"

Exodus 12:6-7 And **you shall keep it (the lamb or kid) until the fourteenth day of this same month**; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall **slaughter it towards evening**. And they shall take some of the blood and they shall put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel on top, at the entrance of the houses, in which they shall eat it.

[note: later it was instituted to kill the national lamb by the High Priest for all the nation at 3pm, and then the priests and levites commenced slaughtering the lambs for everyone else].

Exodus 12:8 And **they shall eat the meat in that night**; roasted with fire, they are to eat it with matzah (unleavened bread) and maror (bitter herbs).

[note: the lambs were slaughtered on the 14th day of the first month before dark; and that evening, as the 15th day of the first month was beginning, they ate the Passover seder/meal. They ate it with unleavened bread because it was the beginning of the 7 day Feast of Unleavened Bread on the 15th day of the first month.]

A straightforward reading of the text above is enough to show that the Last Supper took place 24 hours prior to the Passover seder. This shows that the Last Supper was not a Passover seder. My multi-part article on this subject shows from New Testament scriptural evidence that the Last Supper was not a Passover seder. However, many Christians feel cheated somehow and wish for the Last Supper to be a Passover seder. It was not. They miss the point that Yeshua (Jesus) instituted something new for the body of believers with the Last Supper--something new and unique for them. If you feel argumentative about it, then the following verses seal the deal.

Numbers 33:3 And **they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the daylight period after the Passover**, the children of Israel went out proudly in the sight of all Egypt. And Egypt was burying all their firstborn whom Yahweh had struck down among them; and on their gods, Yahweh executed judgments.

Exodus 12:29 And it came to pass, **Yahweh struck down all the firstborn of Egypt at midnight...**

Exodus 12:30 And **Pharaoh rose up in the night...**

Exodus 12:31 Then **he called for Moses and Aaron at night** and said, "**Rise up and get out from among my people**, both you and the people of Israel; and go, serve Yahweh as you have said.

Exodus 12:37 Now the **children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth**, about 600,000 men on foot, aside from the children.

The Angel of Death struck the firstborn of Egypt that same night at midnight, that the Passover seder meal was eaten. Pharaoh got up while it was still dark and called for Moses and Aaron and told them to leave Egypt. The children of Israel began their Exodus from Egypt that very morning when it was daylight, on the 15th day of the 1st month as Numbers 33:3 shows. Therefore, the original Passover seder was eaten as the 14th was ending and the 15th was beginning. This would have been 24 hours after the Last Supper in the New Testament. Nowhere in Exodus chapter 12 is any mention made of the actual day of the week that these events occurred, or which day was the weekly Sabbath on Saturday. We will have to look elsewhere in the book of Exodus to find that information. [Note: the first month being called Nisan occurred when the Jews were held captive in Babylon for 70 years, some 600 years after the Exodus. At the Exodus it was called the month of Aviv (Abib). That's why I haven't used the month name Nisan in this article.]

Identifying the Days of the Week for the Original Passover:

The first place I found to identify the days of the week with the day of the month is in Exodus 16. This will form the basis for our identification. It identifies the day of the month in mid-month on which the Sabbath occurred (on Saturday of the week), in the 2nd month of the year.

Exodus 16:1 Then they traveled on from Eilim, and the whole congregation of the **people of Israel arrived at the wilderness of Sin** (pronounced Seen in Hebrew, the Seen Desert), which is between Eilim and Sinai, **on the fifteenth day of the second month**.

Exodus 16:4-5 Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Behold, **I will rain bread from heaven for you**; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My Torah (My instruction), or not. And it will be **on the 6th day (of gathering in the week, on Friday), when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.**"

Exodus 16:14 When the dew had evaporated, there on the surface of the desert was **a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground (manna)**.

Exodus 16:22-23 And **on the sixth day they gathered twice as much manna**, two omers for each person; and all the leaders of the congregation came and reported it to Moses. He told them, This is what Yahweh meant: **Tomorrow is a sabbath observance, a holy Sabbath to Yahweh**. Bake what you will bake; and boil what you will boil; and whatever is left over, put aside to be kept until morning.

Exodus 16:26 **Six days you will gather it (manna); but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, there will not be any.**

The above verses tie in the days of the month to the days of the week in the second month of the year. They arrived in the Seen Desert on the 15th day of the second month. On the next morning they began gathering manna; and they gathered it for 6 days. After the 6th day of gathering manna, it was a weekly Sabbath. Therefore, the 15th day of the second month was a weekly Sabbath (Saturday) and the 22nd day of the second month was a weekly Sabbath (Saturday).

**We now know that Saturdays in the second month fell on:
1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th days of the month.**

Calendar Research:

Calendar research shows that all over the world at the time of the Exodus, 30 different cultures had the same calendar of 12 months with exactly 30 days per month and 360 days per year. Dr. Immanuel Velikovsky in his book, *Worlds in Collision*, shows evidence that these 30 cultures worldwide all record a period of upheaval lasting about 50 years when the days of the month and days of the year were in flux before it settled down to what we have now--a year of ~365 1/4 days and a month of ~29 1/2 days. The historically recorded time of the calendar change period was ~725 BC to 675 BC. Dr. Velikovsky put forth the theory that a near collision with a wandering planet sized object caused the earth to change its orbit slightly around the sun, changing the year length from 360 days to 365 1/4 days. The moon's orbit around the earth was also changed slightly so that the regular 30 day orbit came to have a 29 1/2 day cycle.

Dale W. Wong in his 2006 book, *The Ancient 360 Day Year: What It Was And How It Changed*, laid out a simpler thesis than Velikovsky's near collision scenario. Mr. Wong calculated the year when King Hezekiah in Judah was healed, and God gave a sign by moving the sun back 10 degrees on the sundial.

2 Kings 20:8-11 Now Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "What will be the sign that Yahweh will heal me, and that I shall up to the house of Yahweh on the 3rd day?" And Isaiah said, "This shall be the sign for you from Yahweh, that Yahweh will do the thing He has spoken: **shall the shadow go forward 10 degrees/steps or shall it go backward 10 degrees/steps?**" And Hezekiah answered, "It is easier for the shadow to go down 10 degrees: **no, but let the shadow return backward 10 degrees/steps.**" And Isaiah the prophet cried out to Yahweh. And **He (Yahweh) brought back the shadow ten degrees/steps backward, by which it had gone down on the steps/sundial of Ahaz.**

Dale Wong calculated the year of Hezekiah's sundial sign to be 713 BC; and he posits that God actually moved the orbits of the earth and moon to accomplish this sign of moving 10 degrees/steps backward on the sundial. It's an alternative to the catastrophe thesis of Dr. Velikovsky. Either way, the year change happened right around that time, plus or minus a few years.

Dr. Velikovsky and Dale Wong both show that there were 30 cultures around the world that used the 360 day year with 30 day months, before ~713 BC. The ancient Vedas of India showed a 360 day year in the *Brahmanas* and they record that the moon waxed for 15 days and waned for 15 days in a month. The *Brahmanas* also state that the sun moved north 180 days and moved south 180 days in a year. In a later period the Vedas record that the year was reformed to 365 1/4 days. In ancient Persia, the calendar had 360 days; later, it was reformed to add 5 *Gatha* days to the year length. The Sumerians had a 360 day year with months of 30 days, and the Babylonians adopted that Sumerian calendar. At

the beginning of the 7th century BC, Babylon added 5 days to the year length. In ancient Assyria, the clay tablets from the royal library in Nineveh showed a 360 day year with 30 day months, and that the spring equinox always fell on Nisan 15. In Ancient Egypt, the Canopus Decree and Ebers papyrus calendar had 30 day months and a 360 day year. The year change occurred in the 8th or 7th century BC according to Plutarch and the Book of Sothis, with 5 *epagomena* days added to the year length. Rome at the time of Romulus had 360 day years. The Mayans of Mexico and Incas of Peru in Central and South America had a 360 day year calendar; later they added 5 1/4 days to the calendar. Other cultures like China and Polynesia had 360 day calendars that they amended by adding 5 days to the year--China called their added 5 1/4 days, *Khe-ying* days.

The 360 degree circle and 360 degree compass in use all over the world is a remnant of the year length prior to the change, when the year length was exactly 360 days.

Calculation of Saturdays in the 1st Month at the Exodus:

We have sufficient evidence in the historical record from many cultures around the world, to establish that the months at the time of the Exodus from Egypt (approximately 1325 BC) were comprised of exactly 30 days, and the year length at that time was 360 days. If so, then the days of the month on which Saturdays occurred in the first month of the year when the Passover occurred can be accurately determined. Since the 1st day of the 2nd month was a Saturday/Sabbath, then it is easy to count backwards to get the day of the month for each Saturday in the 1st month of the year.

**The calculated Saturdays in the first month fell on:
3rd, 10th, 17th, and 24th days of the month.**

We know that the selection of the lambs for the initial Passover was on the 10th day of the first month, and now know that it was a Saturday. The next weekly Saturday was the 17th day of the first month, just as we originally hypothesized. Therefore, Wednesday was the 14th day of the first month when the lambs were killed in late afternoon; and the Passover seder meal was eaten as the 14th ended and 15th began. The children of Israel left Egypt on Thursday, the 15th day of the first month (Numbers 33:3), departing from Rameses.

**Therefore, the events of the original Passover occurred on the same days
of the week as in the Wednesday crucifixion of the New Testament.**

The above conclusions adds weight to the Wednesday crucifixion of Yeshua our Messiah teaching, which was originally drawn entirely from New Testament scriptures. In the original Passover at the Exodus, the lambs were slaughtered on a Wednesday afternoon. In the crucifixion, Yeshua died on Wednesday afternoon at the time the national Passover lamb was slaughtered by the High Priest at the Temple. If you were on the fence concerning whether the Friday crucifixion teaching has any merit at all, then this paper further diminishes that Friday crucifixion teaching. Likewise, a few teachers have taught a possible Thursday crucifixion; and that teaching too is diminished with the evidence that the original Passover was on a Wednesday.

Holding a false belief in a Thursday or Friday crucifixion does not affect salvation for anyone at all. A person can be genuinely saved and hold some false beliefs. In fact, everyone probably has some false beliefs, even with the best of intentions.

Answering Some Criticisms of the Above Assertions:

1. Hey wait a minute Roy, that would mean they traveled on the Sabbath (Saturday)? Wouldn't

the Sabbath preclude traveling on that day?

This is a criticism that arises from people who assume that the children of Israel had the 10 commandments before the 10 commandments were given at Mount Sinai. Also, it assumes the covenant made at Sinai was a sham covenant, because you assumed they had this covenant even before they left Egypt. It also assumes that the teaching of the Sabbath by Moses was not new to the children of Israel and was really unneeded, since they already had and observed it.

Actually, from Numbers 33:3 we KNOW the children of Israel left Egypt on the morning of the 15th day of the first month, after the Passover seder was eaten the previous evening and all the firstborn of Egypt were killed at midnight. Later, Moses revealed the teaching of the Spring Feast of Unleavened Bread for 7 days, where there is a High Sabbath on the 1st day and on the 7th day (on the 15th and 21st days of 1st month). They traveled on the High Sabbath on the first day they left Egypt.

If the Sabbath was kept and known by the children of Egypt, then why would God give the 10 commandments at Mount Sinai and have the children of Israel bind themselves to God with a covenant? Obviously, they did not know or observe the Sabbath or Feasts of Israel before they were given at Mount Sinai -- they arrived at Mount Sinai on the ~47th day of travel from Egypt. So the criticism of traveling on a Sabbath is a fantasy, projected by people ascribing knowledge to the people of Israel before God gave it to them. They began their travel on what would later be commemorated as the High Sabbath and almost certainly traveled on at least some weekly Saturdays in order to get to Mount Sinai.

2. How could they have selected the Passover lambs on Saturday, the 10th day of the 1st month? Wouldn't that being the Sabbath preclude it happening on a Saturday?

This is a continuation of the above answer. The Sabbath had not been given yet nor had the children of Israel sworn themselves in a covenant to God to keep the 10 commandments. Therefore, it is a specious criticism. The events of the Exodus were actual historical events for the Feasts of Israel. They actually ate the Passover seder meal as the 14th day of the first month was ending, and left Egypt on the morning of the 15th. The Passover seder meal celebrated annually was given to Israel to commemorate that first one. The High Sabbath on the 15th commemorates the children of Israel leaving Egypt without their dough being allowed to rise (unleavened). Later, they arrived at Mount Sinai at the beginning of the 3rd month. A few days later, which is Shavuot (Sivan 6, Pentecost), they were given the 10 commandments and swore a covenant to God.

After Moses broke the first set of tablets, he went back up a second time to beg for forgiveness for Israel in their worshipping the golden calf. He went back up a 3rd time for 40 days and nights on the 1st of Elul and was given two new tablets of stone with the 10 commandments and came down from the mountain with them on the 10th of Tishri. The 30 days of mourning or repentance in the month of Elul commemorates the people repenting for their unfaithfulness over the golden calf incident. The 10th of Tishri is the Day of Atonement commemorating God forgiving Israel over the golden calf issue and giving the second set of stone tablets. You now see that the Feasts of Israel commemorates actual historical events in the Exodus.

That said, the Feasts of Israel are also mainly prophetic in nature. The Spring Feasts prophesied of the coming of the Messiah who would die for the sins of the people. Yeshua fulfilled them on the exact days and times in the week of the crucifixion. The Holy Spirit was poured out on Shavuot (Pentecost). The Fall Feasts of Israel will be fulfilled in the future, at the end-times.

So NO, it was no problem at all to select the lamb for that initial Passover seder meal on the 10th of the 1st month, which fell on a Saturday. Scripture commands Israel to select the lamb for the Passover on the 10th day of the month and it does NOT say, "unless on a Sabbath" (see Exodus 12:3).

The renowned Jewish teacher, Rashi, compiled the following dates for the Exodus:

6th of Sivan (3rd month), Moses went up on the mountain for 40 days.

17th of Tammuz, the tablets were broken.

19th of Tammuz, Moses went up for the 2nd 40-day period to plead for forgiveness.

1st of Elul, Moses went up Mount Sinai for 40 days and nights the 3rd time. God gave Moses the 2nd set of tablets; and he came down with them on the 10th of Tishri (Day of Atonement).

3. Well, maybe Exodus 16:22 means just the 6th day of the week and not 6 days of gathering manna? In that case, we wouldn't know the days of the week for the Passover, etc.

A superficial reading of just that verse without the context of the rest of the chapter might lead someone narrowly focused with reductionist study habits to arrive at that criticism. That's why I gave other verses in Exodus 16, to give context. God told Moses he would test the children of Israel to see if they would obey Him. He said that they would gather manna for 6 days and on the 6th day, which was also the 6th day of the week, they would gather double the manna. The context of the chapter is that God had tested the children of Israel exactly as they would do every week throughout the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness--collect manna for 6 days of the week and rest on the 7th day, which was the Sabbath.

They first gathered the manna on the 16th day of the 2nd month. Exodus 16:20 states that some people hoarded some of the manna overnight in violation of what Moses ordered them to do. On the morning of the 17th those who had hoarded some manna overnight found that it had worms and stank. Verse 21 states they gathered it morning by morning (after the 17th day incident when some had wormy/stinky manna left over). Then verse 22 states that on the 6th day they gathered twice as much. The clear context is gathering for a number of days and the 6th day of gathering it they gathered double. That 6th day of gathering it was also the 6th day of the week, but the strongest linguistic evidence is that they gathered the manna for 6 days, and the next day was a weekly Sabbath. Therefore, the 15th and 22nd days of the 2nd month were weekly Sabbaths. That leads to Saturdays in the 1st month being on 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th; and the 14th day of the 1st month being a Wednesday.

Actually, my opinion is that people who grasp at this question (#3) are desperate to hang onto some false beliefs and have blinders on to the evidence. The Friday crucifixion is a false teaching and Yeshua (Jesus) was crucified and died on a Wednesday afternoon. The New Testament evidence shows the Wednesday crucifixion, and the original Passover seder on a Wednesday corroborates it.

Perhaps it is time to critically examine some beliefs by Christians which have no benefit, including the false Friday crucifixion. The following prophecy is about the end-times when the nations are gathered by the Messiah.

Jeremiah 16:19 Yahweh is my strength and my stronghold in the day of affliction/distress. Nations will come to You from the ends of the earth and they will say, **"Surely our forefathers inherited lies, empty vanities, and things in which there is no profit."**

The implication of the prophecy above is that all the nations inherited false teachings passed down from their forefathers to the next generation. They will cry to God that they inherited falsehoods and vain teachings. We are part of all nations, and therefore even though we are believers and saved by the blood of the Lamb, it doesn't mean that we haven't inherited false teachings. It's something to seriously ponder.

Write to Roy about this article at: <mailto:codes04@ad2004.com?subject=Re: Concerning the original Passover day of the week>