

Passover Explained

By Gerrit Nel



There seems to be a bit of confusion as to when Passover is and when the Feast of Unleavened Bread starts. Allow me to just give my interpretation of the Scripture and see if your spirit bares witness with what I want to share with you. Many of you may know this already, but don't forget the day according to the Scriptures starts in the evening and ends the next evening. If we ignore that then what I'll be sharing will not make sense to you.

When is the Feast of Passover?

Leviticus 23:4-5

4. These are the appointed times of the Lord, set-apart gatherings which you are to proclaim at their appointed times.

5. In the FIRST new moon, on the FOURTEENTH day of the new moon, between evenings, is the Passover to the Lord.

So here we see that Passover starts on the evening of the 14th day, which will be the beginning of the 15th day and the 15th day will end on the evening of the 15th day of Nissan, which will then be the beginning of the 16th day of Nissan. The previous day is the day of preparation and is from the evening of the 13th to the evening of the 14th.

When is the Feast of Unleavened Bread?

Leviticus 23:6-7

6. And on the FIFTEENTH day of this new moon is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the Lord - seven days you eat unleavened bread.

7. On the FIRST day you have a set-apart gathering, you do no servile work.

Here we see that the feast of unleavened bread is on the 15th day of the 1st month, which is the beginning of the harvest cycle. It is also a High Sabbath. Passover is celebrated on the evening of the 14th day, which is also the start of the 15th day. The two festivals thus coincide. Passover is celebrated as part of the 1st day of Unleavened Bread. The implication is that Passover is also a High Sabbath as it is part of the 1st day of Unleavened bread.

Which day was the day of the crucifixion of Yeshua?

John 19:31

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away..

John 19:41,42

Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Yeshua therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

Now let's analyze the 2 above scriptures. We know that the Messiah has to be the Passover Lamb. He had to be crucified and die on the preparation day of Passover, which is from the evening of the 13th day to the evening of the 14th day of Nissan. What is this preparation for? This was the day on which all the lambs were slaughtered in preparation of eating the Passover meal and it was also the day in which all the houses were cleansed from leaven.

It was a preparation for the next day, which is a HIGH SABBATH (15th day) and it is the beginning of what is called the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It also said that the Jews wanted their bodies taken off the cross before that High Sabbath comes. Why was this necessary? Well one reason is because even up to today burials are done on the same day, as the death occurs and this would mean that Yeshua would only be buried two days later. Burials can also not take place on a HIGH SABBATH. They could not take them off when the new day starts because that would be a High Sabbath. There are more reasons but we won't look at them now.

When did Yeshua eat His Passover meal?

I believe where the confusion comes in, is because Yeshua ate His Passover on the evening of the 13th leading into the 14th day and not on the evening of the 14th leading into the 15th day as commanded in the Torah. Some eat it at the beginning of the 14th day, which is the evening of the 13th day leading into the 14th day and some at the end of the 14th day leading into the 15th, which is common in Jerusalem.

The reason for this is that those who lived in the Galilee reckoned time differently than those in Jerusalem and this was called the Galilean Passover. However when you eat your Passover in Jerusalem, it must be at the evening of the 14th leading into the 15th Day. The reason for this is that the Scriptures declare that the law shall go forth from Zion or Jerusalem and thus the eating of the Passover lamb must be done strictly according to the prescription of the Torah.

We need to remember that Yeshua was from the Galilee and would thus eat His Passover meal in accordance with the Galilean Passover, which is the evening of the 13th of Nissan leading into the 14th of Nissan. He was crucified on the 14th of Nissan.

Is there a difference between the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Day of Unleavened Bread?

There is no difference except if you look at it from the perception of the Galilean Passover. Remember that Yeshua and the Disciples were from the Galilee and would have reckoned time according to the Galilean Passover. In Leviticus 23:6 we read that the Feast of Unleavened Bread is on the 15th day of the 1st month of the harvest cycle, but it starts on the evening of the 14th day. In Mark 14:2 we read about the Day of Unleavened Bread.

Mark 14:12

And on the first (protos) day of Unleavened Bread, when they were slaughtering the Passover

lamb, His taught ones said to Him, Where do You wish us to go and prepare, for You to eat the Passover?

The Greek word, "protos" can mean "first", but the word can also be translated as meaning the "one before the other" or "the one before the first of" or "the one in the beginning of". The Passover lamb is always killed on the preparation day. This would have been a contradiction that the disciples would ask him on the day of His crucifixion where they should prepare the Passover, because by then He already ate His Passover and would now already be on the cross. A different way then to translate this verse could be.

And on the day before the (protos) day of Unleavened Bread, when they were slaughtering the Passover lamb, His taught ones said to Him, Where do You wish us to go and prepare, for You to eat the Passover?

However, from the perspective of the reckoning of time called the Galilean Passover, the 13th of Nissan would have been the preparation day for those coming from the Galilee. On the preparation day the leaven is already removed from the houses outside of Jerusalem and those from the Galilee would then eat their Passover meal at what would be the beginning of the 14th day of Nissan. This would be just after sundown on the 13th. This is why it was called the preparation day.

What was this preparation for?

The preparation was not just to eat your Passover, but also rather to prepare your house to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Leaven in the Scriptures is the type of sin and by removing the leaven they were prophetically removing that, which Yeshua would remove for all of the seven days of the feast, which was prophetic for the seven thousand years. On the preparation day, the Passover lamb was slaughtered, as part of the protection against the death angle by the blood of the lamb.

We too are protected from eternal death by the blood of Yeshua, but now that He has become our Passover lamb, we too have to remove the leaven, which is sin from out of the house (our lives). So here we see that they were preparing the Passover (which included the killing of a lamb) to eat at that night. This is the Passover! In effect Passover is only an evening and is until midnight and this is included in the 1st day of Unleavened Bread as the Passover sacrifice leads us into removing the "leaven" (sin) from our houses (our lives). We have now become the dwelling place of the Lord.

Getting back to the original question. If you've followed the above explanation about the translation of the word 1st day you will think that this is already the 1st Day of Unleavened Bread, which would be on the 14th of Nissan. However this is a misinterpretation because people do not distinguish between those coming from the Galilee and those living in Jerusalem.

People would already start eating unleavened bread on this day and not on the 15th day, which is Feast of Unleavened Bread, because they had to clean their houses and remove all the leaven. This is why some interpretations of the Feast of Unleavened Bread consider this to be an eight-day festival and not a seven-day festival, because in practice you eat unleavened bread for eight days and not just seven. It signifies that the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the earth, because the leaven is removed the day before the 1st day of Unleavened Bread. This also brings in the idea that our sins are not just dealt with for the seven days (seven thousand years) which represents man's

existence here on earth, but it also takes us to an eight day, which is the world to come or eternity.

You do not start the counting the seven days of Unleavened Bread on the preparation day, but rather on the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is the 15th of Nissan. So taking this information let's see how it works out for us this year 2018.

Passover is on the evening of the 30th of March 2018 (Friday night), which is the evening of the 14th day of Nissan. Always remember that the day starts in the evening. Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is a High Sabbath starts with the Passover and ends on the evening of the 22nd of Nissan. This is on the 6th of April (Sabbath) at sundown.

I hope this brings clarity to some of you.