

## Commentary — From the Margins

### *The Imprecise Linguistic Referent: The Law of Moses (2<sup>nd</sup> part)*

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This day [YHWH's Passover] shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord [YHWH]; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven out of your houses, for if anyone eats what is leavened, from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. On the first day you shall hold a holy assembly, and on the seventh day a holy assembly. No work shall be done on those days. But what everyone needs to eat, that alone may be prepared by you. And you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generation, as a statute forever. In the first month, from the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. For seven days no leaven is to be found in your houses. If anyone eats what is leavened, that person will be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a sojourner or a native of the land. You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwelling places you shall eat unleavened bread. (Ex 12:14-20)

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Why the repetition? Isn't it enough to tell Israel not to eat leavened bread once? Israel is only told once that the first day and the last day shall be holy convocations. Why does God need to tell Israel two, three times not to eat leavened bread? And why does most of Israel today, a nation inwardly circumcised, eat leavened bread during these seven days?

God made a covenant with Israel on the day that He led this physically circumcised nation out of Egypt: for liberation from physical bondage to Pharaoh, Israel was to sacrifice a Passover lamb and to smear its blood on door posts and lintels, the entrances into Israel's houses. Then Israel was to commemorate this liberation by keeping the Feast of Unleavened Bread, seven days during which Israel was not to eat any leavened bread or to have any leavened bread in its houses ... Moses tells the elders of Israel, "Go and select lambs for yourselves according to your clans, and kill the Passover lamb. Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. *None of you shall go out of his house until the morning*" (Ex 12:21-22 – emphasis added). So the terms of this covenant do not ask of Israel to do anything but select and sacrifice

a lamb, then with hyssop put some of the lamb's blood on their houses' doorposts and lintels and stay inside their houses until morning. This covenant says nothing about keeping the law of God or about being holy as God is holy; this covenant is about liberation from bondage and about all firstborns belonging to God for Him to do with as He pleases.

Moses further says to the elders of Israel, "You shall observe this rite as a statute forever. ... And when your children say to you, "What do you mean by this services?" you shall say, "It is the sacrifice of the Lord's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses"" (Ex 12:24, 26-27). Thus, the Passover sacrifice of a lamb asks Israel to remember its liberation from bondage to Pharaoh.

The covenant God makes with Israel on the day that He leads the nation out of Egypt has two additional clauses: the people of Israel asked the Egyptians for silver, gold, and clothing, and thus plundered the Egyptians (Ex 12:35-36). Plus, as mentioned earlier, God claimed as His own all firstborns: "Whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine" (Ex 13:2). Israel was to redeem its firstborn through either sacrifice or payment of a ransom price; however, Egypt is not offered a way to redeem its firstborns, which died when the death angel of the Lord passed over the houses of both Egypt and Israel. The lives of the firstborns of Egypt were given as the ransom price for Israel's liberation (Isa 43:3). God exercised His claim to the lives of all firstborns when He slew Egyptian firstborns, both of man and beast.

Note what is not in the Passover covenant that God made with Israel on the day when He led the nation out of Egypt: there is no mention of His law, or of Israel being the holy nation of God, or of Israel being holy as He is holy. There is no mention of sacrifices other than the Passover lamb. There are no laws or statutes about how one Israelite is to treat another. There is nothing said about restitution or social justice or the Sabbath or the high Sabbaths, except for the two holy convocations that occur at the beginning and end of the seven days of Unleavened Bread. Thus, this Passover covenant is silent about most of those things that Christians attribute to the *law of Moses*.

But this Passover covenant is not silent about leavening being found in the houses of Israel from the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month at even to the 21<sup>st</sup> day at even. It makes eating or having leavening in the houses of Israel during these seven days a great offense to God and a negation of the covenant by which He liberates Israel from bondage. Yes, the person who eats leavened bread during these seven days shall be cut off from Israel, and if cut off, then this person is as an Egyptian.

Typological exegesis holds that what is and can be known about God, including His invisible attributes [e.g., His eternal power and divine nature] has been clearly perceived through the visible things of this world (Rom 1:19-20), and further, that the physical things that can be seen and described precede invisible, spiritual things (1 Co. 15:46). Therefore, physical circumcision reveals and precedes spiritual circumcision—the circumcision made by hands and concealed by modest attire forms the copy and type [shadow] of the circumcision of the heart by Spirit, and not by the letter of the *law of Moses* (Rom 2:28-29; Col 2:11),

given to the patriarch Abraham as ratification of the covenant by which Abraham was to walk upright before God (Gen 17:1-2). It was the physically circumcised nation of Israel with whom God made the Passover covenant on the day that He led this nation out of bondage. But following Calvary, Israel ceases to be a physically or outwardly circumcised nation and becomes a spiritually or inwardly circumcised nation.

The marriage covenant made when God passed by Israel (Ezek 16:8; Ex 19:5-6) was initially made with physically circumcised Israel, but this nation [that became two nations] played the whore in Egypt (Ezek 23:3) and brought adultery into the marriage covenant. Thus, physically circumcised Israel was put away as a divorced woman, but the One who had married her was not free to marry again until death ended the marriage—and here is where typological exegesis can be confused with *isogesis*, the bringing of meaning from outside sources into Scripture.

The Passover lamb is selected and penned on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the first month, and Israel enters the Promised Land on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the first month (Josh 4:19). Jesus and His first disciples enter Jerusalem on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the first month (*cf.* John 19:31; 12:1, 12). So both the natural nation of Israel under Joshua, then a mixed nation of circumcised and uncircumcised Israelites (Josh 5:2-7), and the man Jesus of Nazareth are selected by God and penned in God's rest, which was initially all of the Promised Land, but after return from the Babylonian captivity was only the rebuilt temple. Both enter God's rest on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the first month. Both enter as the Passover Lamb of God that is to be sacrificed.

But the natural nation post Joshua's leadership played the harlot with sticks and stones in hilltop groves and became a blemished lamb that could not be sacrificed, but became the prey of wolves. So a new Israel was needed, one that would not play the harlot, one that was not consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32), one over whom sin had no dominion (Rom 6:14). This new Israel could not be a physical nation for a physical nation already existed; thus, this new Israel had to be a nation of a different type, a nation with whom a covenant could be made that was unlike the covenant God made with the fathers of Israel and Judah on the day when He took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt (Jer 31:32). This new Israel had to be a spiritual nation, which did not exist prior to the *Logos* as *Theos* entering His creation as His only Son, the man Jesus, the first man of circumcised Israel who covered His nakedness with obedience to God.

Jesus' disciples form the Body of Christ.

By His obedience, Jesus was made the Passover Lamb of God—and when a lamb is sacrificed, it isn't only the head that is killed, but also the body. The Head of the Lamb of God cannot be sacrificed without the Body also being sacrificed, or crucified with Christ. And if crucified with Christ, then the flesh of disciples can be slain as was the fleshly body of the man Jesus; for the disciple is not above his teacher or the servant greater than his master (Matt 10:24). It is enough for disciples to be like Christ Jesus (*v.* 25), to walk as He walked (1 John 2:6), and to present their bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God (Rom 12:1).

And this becomes especially important when disciples are liberated from bondage to indwelling sin and death (Rom 7:21-25), for the number who have been “slain for the word of God and for the witness they have borne” (Rev 6:9) is not yet complete (v. 11).

Israel does not cease to be when circumcision moves from being of the outer man to being of the inner man, born of Spirit as a son of God. This new creature is housed in a tabernacle or tent of flesh; so the following correspondences exist—

- Circumcision of the foreskin is physical and as such precedes and serves as the copy and type of circumcision of the heart.
- The physically circumcised Israelite in a house in Egypt precedes and serves as a copy and type of the spiritually circumcised Israelite [i.e., the new creature born of Spirit] in a tent of flesh.
- The two doorposts and lintel of the physically circumcised Israelite’s house in Egypt delineate the entryway into the house and as such correspond to the mouth of the tent of flesh in which the born of Spirit son of God dwells.
- Thus, the physically circumcised Israelite who, after smearing blood on doorposts and lintels, eats of a physical lamb roasted whole with fire serves as the copy and type of the spiritually circumcised Israelite who eats the flesh of the spiritual Lamb roasted over the fiery sins of Israel.
- For the disciples, eating the unleavened bread that is or represents Christ’s body functions spiritually as eating the flesh of an actual lamb by a physically circumcised Israelite.

The covenant that ends at Calvary is the covenant[s] made with the flesh, beginning with Abraham who was to walk blamelessly before God. Born of Spirit disciples are to walk blamelessly before God (Rom 2:26; 3:31; 6:12-13 *et al*) as Abraham walked, keeping commandments and statutes and laws by faith (Gen 26:5). And it is the faith that causes disciples to keep these commandments and laws in a rebellious world that will be counted to them as righteousness, not the keeping of the commandments, a distinction that will be lost on those individuals who have not truly been born of Spirit.

Where typology comes close to being isogesis is in Egypt representing sin, a correspondence taught for centuries as a Christian truism ... when Jesus, during the eating of His last physical Passover, took the cup and after giving thanks over it, says, “Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matt 26:27-28), He made the wine the equivalent of His blood—and His blood the equivalent of the blood of the Passover lamb. He also made *forgiveness of sins* the equivalent of *leaving Egypt*. So the long held correspondence of Egypt representing sin is confirmed when the Passover covenant made with the flesh of physically circumcised Israelites moves inward to become the Passover covenant made with the spiritual new creature, a son of God.

The validity of typological exegesis is now strengthened when returning to Exodus: “None of you shall go out the door of his house until the morning” (12:22) ... the house of a spiritually circumcised Israelite is the tent of flesh in which this son of God dwells. So, as no physically circumcised Israelite was to leave his house until the morning, no spiritually circumcised Israelite will leave his house [again, the tent of flesh] until the “Light” returns, meaning until Christ Jesus returns and the judgment of saints is revealed (1 Co 4:5). Disciples do not consciously go to heaven upon death, but dwell as sleeping spirits under the altar of God (Rev 6:11) until the end of this age.

Of equal importance prophetically is the realization that the darkness [i.e., the long spiritual night that began at Calvary] does not end until the kingdom of this world becomes the kingdom of the Ancient of Days and of His Christ (Rev 11:15; Dan 7:9-14). This means that the first half of the seven endtime years of tribulation are the dark hours between midnight and when Pharaoh tells Moses and Aaron to take the people of Israel and go and serve the Lord.

The Passover covenant does not end when the covenant made with the flesh—what is traditionally identified by the very imprecise icon phrase, the *law of Moses*—is abolished. The Apostle Paul writes,

Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants [note the plural] of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. (Eph 2:11-16)

The *covenants of promise* are not abolished when the hostility created by physical circumcision dies on the cross. Rather, what had been two peoples, one physically circumcised, one uncircumcised, are now the same as far as God is concerned. Both “have access in one Spirit to the Father” (Eph 2:18). Both are uncircumcised of heart until both have made a journey of faith that is spiritually equivalent to the patriarch Abraham’s physical journey made by faith from Ur of the Chaldeas to Haran, then on to the Promised Land (Rom 4:9-12). Thus, the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century Greek who, by turning to God, separated himself or herself from his or her neighbors all worshipping a pantheon of deities that sprang from the heads (as Athena sprang from Zeus’) of ancient peoples, began a spiritual journey in the same way that Abraham began a physical journey when he set out with his father Terah from Ur to go into the land of Canaan. This Greek’s journey called for him or her “to abstain from things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood” (Acts 15:19-20). Everything else

this Greek would need to know could be learned from hearing Moses read every Sabbath (*v.* 21). Likewise, the Jew who kept the commandments as a cultural expectation and who broke with his or her culture by professing with his or her mouth that Jesus is Lord and believing in his or heart that God had raised Jesus from the dead (Rom 10:9) would have made a journey of faith of equivalent distance to that of the Greek's, for to confess that Jesus is Lord requires perceiving God as two, not one.

Without undertaking a journey of faith equivalent to Abraham's journey while still uncircumcised, no heart is cleansed. The heart cannot be circumcised. The person born of Spirit will be as a Hebrew infant of less than eight days age, and will remain as a new born infant until the heart is cleansed by faith; for with God, maturity is not obtained by the passage of time but by the journey of faith from spiritual Babylon to the heavenly city of Jerusalem. Circumcision comes when the person spiritually crosses the River Jordan and begins living as a spiritual Judean, thereby taking the Passover sacraments on the night that Jesus was betrayed.

The *law of Moses* is not one covenant, but rather, all of the *covenants of promise* that were made with the flesh. It includes the Passover covenant (Ex chap 12-13), the Sinai covenant (Ex chaps 20-24), the covenant between God and the men of Levi (Ex 32:25-29), the added laws concerning offerings (the Book of Leviticus), and the Moab covenant (Deu chaps 29-32). All of these *covenants of promise* are shadows and copies that are continued as *covenants of promise* made with born of Spirit sons of God—and this is what greater Christendom has failed to understand. Disciples take the sacraments of bread and wine on the night that Jesus was betrayed (1 Co 11:23-26) as the continuation of the Passover covenant made with Israel on the night that God took Israel by the hand to lead this nation out of Egypt.

It is convenient to use the theological shorthand of saying that the covenants of promise made with the flesh were “abolished” rather than “continued on at a higher plain.” Yes, they were abolished, for all covenants made with the flesh were abolished at Calvary. But “Israel” was not abolished! And if Israel is not abolished but becomes a nation with circumcised hearts, then the covenants are not abolished either but become covenants made with this spiritual nation that used to be two peoples, divided by the hostility created through physical circumcision. And Jesus' actions on the night that He was betrayed, when compared to what happened at the first Passover, disclose the relationship between the physical and the spiritual ... the plundering of Egypt, now, becomes an interesting case study: when Israel took the gold and silver of Egypt, it took those things that “reflected light” as the moon reflects the light of the sun. Jesus is the light of this world (John 1:4, 7; 12:35-36; 1 John 1:5 *et al*), and when He died at Calvary, darkness overcame this world. It is physical things that reflect visible light; the true light of this world is invisible and spiritual. And Jesus was the true light of God. So as Egypt lost those things that reflected light, the world lost its light and was plunged into darkness when Christ died on the cross.

A word needs to be said about covenants: a “covenant” (Heb: *bereeth*) or a “compact” or a “law” in its broad sense is a formal declaration of contractual terms that begins with the shedding of blood or a cutting and extends until blood is again shed or a cutting is again made. Hence a covenant is the space or distance from cutting to cutting. A marriage covenant was to extend from when the hymen of a virgin is broken by her husband and blood is shed in the marriage bed until blood is again shed at death (for the hymen could not be restored). Thus, a covenant made in the flesh cannot be spiritual for death ends a covenant ratified by blood.

Since death ends every covenant or “will” (Gr: *diatheke*) made in the flesh, the *law of Moses* was abolished at Calvary. However, the covenants of promise were not dependent upon the flesh, but upon the will of God. Isaac was not born through the strength of Abraham and Sarah’s flesh, but by promise. Likewise, Jesus was not resurrected from the dead through the strength of His flesh, but by the will of God. So Moses remains as the witness against every Israelite (John 5:45; Deu 31:26) regardless of whether physically or spiritually circumcised. And the covenants of promise remain in force.

The writer of Hebrews said, “Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. Thus, it was necessary for copies of heavenly things to be purified with these rites [i.e., the shedding of blood], but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these” (Heb 9:22-23 – read *vv.* 15-28).

The covenant the Lord made with the fathers of Israel and Judah on the day when He took their fathers by the hand to lead them out of Egypt began with the shedding of blood by Passover lambs and was confirmed by the death of Egyptian firstborns as the ransom price for Israel’s liberation (Isa 43:3). This covenant continues forward, now, until it ends when blood is again shed (*v.* 4). And it is this second shedding of blood that will make Israel forget its liberation from bondage to Pharaoh (Jer 16:14-15; 23:7-8).

The annual shedding of the blood by Passover lambs was a memorial of the inauguration of the Passover covenant by which physical liberation is promised from physical bondage to Pharaoh. When this blood became the blood of the Passover Lamb of God, taken when the disciple drinks from the cup on the night that Jesus was betrayed, liberation ceased being from physical bondage and became liberation from spiritual bondage to sin and death. Everything moved upward one step on a spiritual hierarchy—

- The spiritually circumcised Israelite who eats the bread and drinks of the cup on the night that Jesus was betrayed becomes the spiritual equivalent of the physically circumcised Israelite in Egypt who smeared blood on doorposts and lintel and ate the flesh of the paschal lamb in haste.
- The person who claims to be born of Spirit but who has not been (but who lies) becomes the spiritual equivalent to Egyptians on the night when the death angel passed through Egypt.

- The person who has no interest in God becomes the spiritual equivalent to the livestock of Egyptians on that fateful night.
- All firstborns who do not cover themselves with the blood of Christ will be slain when the lives of men are again given as ransom for the liberation of Israel.
- This second slaying of firstborns will end the Passover covenant, which began when God took Israel by the hand to lead the nation out of Egypt. The exodus from Egypt will no longer be remembered, for the covenant will no longer be one of promise—the promise will be fulfilled in the recovery of Israel from the north country and out of all the countries where God has driven these peoples (again Jer. 16:15), with *the north country* representing death.

Remember, as a contractual term of the Passover covenant, all firstborns of man and beast [i.e., what is first to open a womb] belong to the Lord and must be ransomed if not sacrificed to the Lord (Ex 13:1-2). God's claim on firstborns is largely unrecognized by humankind; His claim would seem unreasonable and arbitrary if it were recognized. Nevertheless, what typology reveals is that firstborns not covered by the blood of the Lamb will lose their lives as spiritual Babylon is dealt a below-the-belt blow that staggers and wobbles the prince of this world and his angels. There will be a [second Passover](#) ransom of firstborns paid for the liberation of Israel. A third part of humankind will die, but as importantly, the first or great king [or horn] of the spiritual coalition identified as the king of Greece will also lose his life because he is "first." Then those rebelling angels who have been cast into outer darkness will realize that the death sentence under which they are imprisoned will be, and can be executed.

The Passover covenant made on the day when God took Israel by the hand to lead this nation out of Egypt *did not* include the *Decalogue* or the need to be physically circumcised or the promise of spiritual circumcision. A mixed multitude left Egypt with Israel, and this mixed multitude would not have been physically circumcised in Egypt and they were not physically circumcised in the wilderness. Nor were the children born into the tents of Israel in the wilderness physically circumcised ... physical circumcision is not seen until after Israel crosses the River Jordan under Joshua's leadership (Josh 5:2-7). So partaking in the exodus from Egypt did not require a person to be physically circumcised even though to eat of the Passover required a person to be circumcised (Ex 12:48). Circumcision, now, and the blood shed when a person is circumcised equates to the blood shed by Egyptian firstborns as ransom for Israel. Therefore, no one can enter into this Passover covenant at a future time unless the person is circumcised, physically or spiritually, until lives are again given for the ransom of Israel.

An uncircumcised Greek in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, prior to being a disciple, would not have eaten of the Passover, and the context of Jesus' comment about circumcision making well only a part of a man emerges: circumcision makes a man naked before God, makes the man covered only by his obedience to God. But

when covered by obedience, the man is liberated from sin and death; he is healed so that he should live forever ... circumcision equates to liberation, or the exodus from bondage to disobedience. It is only when the man loses this covering of obedience that he needs another covering (fig leaves or animal skins). As long as a man has his covering of obedience, he has not returned to sin or to Egypt, the earthly representation of sin.

But physical circumcision was done to a man on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of his life—done before he could sin. Unfortunately, circumcision did not prevent a man from sinning; physical circumcision did not compel obedience. Hence, circumcision produced death when the promise of obedience is life. Therefore, spiritual circumcision does not occur until after a person cleanses his or her heart by a journey of faith that will leave the person living as a Judean. Spiritual circumcision doesn't automatically follow spiritual birth. Many are those who have died from spiritual SIDS before they were circumcised of heart.

The mixed multitude that left with circumcised Israel was covered by the loss of their firstborns in a manner similar to how the sons of Levi were ordained at the cost of their sons and brothers ... much blood is shed in the Law and the Prophets, too much blood for the sensitivities of modern Americans and Europeans. This shedding of blood has become a stumbling block that prevents “modern” nations from worshipping the *Theos* of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or from recognizing the validity of Scripture. In most churches the Bible story has been rewritten with a blotter to remove the blood. The love of Jesus is emphasized, and the *law of Moses* is devalued. The numbers recorded in Scripture are reduced: the 600,000 adult male Israelites that leave Egypt under Moses become 40 or 50, maybe as many as 200 in documentary dramas aired on *The History Channel*. Israel's exodus from Egypt is told as a good story that should not be taken literally, and the stumbling block of shed blood is covered by a mantle of disbelief.

The Passover covenant was not ratified by the blood of bulls and goats cast on the people and the altar, but by Passover lambs and the lives of Egyptian firstborns, both of men and beasts. At Calvary, the blood of the Lamb of God was shed on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month at even as the Pharisees then reckoned when Passover lambs were to be sacrificed. But lambs slain on that first Passover in Egypt were killed the previous evening if Moses' command that *none shall go out of their houses until morning* were obeyed; so the one day difference has tremendous significance that has been lost. Again, when Jesus eats the Passover, He eats it at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib, the first month. He is then sacrificed as the Lamb of God at the prescribed time when Pharisees taught that Passover lambs were to be sacrificed. So the Passover covenant was not abolished when the Sinai covenant was added—if it had been abolished Jesus would not have eaten the Passover on the dark portion of the 14<sup>th</sup>. Rather, because of ambiguity within the covenant as to when the Passover lamb was to be sacrificed, two Passover sacrifices were needful in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century CE. This ambiguity enhances the annual provision for a second Passover in the second month to be eaten by all who were unclean or on a far journey on the 14<sup>th</sup> of the first month.

Two Passover observances annually; probably two Passover sacrifices in the 1<sup>st</sup> month—human reasoning is left with doubts. Yet rabbinical Judaism today eats the Seder meal twice each spring. Its reason, however, stems from tradition and from the calculated calendar.

Are two Passover sacrifices logical, or has Scripture been misread for a long time? Is there really only one Passover sacrifice and only one seven day period when unleavened bread is eaten? There is certainly reason to believe that Israel in Egypt remained in its houses until morning, spoiled the Egyptian during the daylight hours of the 14<sup>th</sup>; then left Egypt with a high hand under the full moon on the beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup>. If this is the case—and this seems to be the best reading of Scripture—then the past practices of the Churches of God are correct: the sacraments of bread and wine are to be taken on the 14<sup>th</sup>, shortly after dark, and the night of the 15<sup>th</sup> is to be remembered as the night of Israel's exodus from Egypt.

Unfortunately, there might not be more than 30,000 people annually taking the Passover sacraments on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Abib, and if this is the case, the Churches of God stand condemned before God as worthless servants who have hid the knowledge of God that they have.

When Jesus' disciples asked Him, "Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover?" (Matt 26:17) — this occurring on the 13<sup>th</sup> — no one said that He would be eating the Passover a day early. The owner of the house where Jesus ate the Passover did not say that He was a day too early. So in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century CE it was not unusual to eat the Passover on the dark portion of the 14<sup>th</sup> although Pharisees would not begin slaughtering Passover lambs (as far as records reveal) until the ninth hour [3:00 pm] on the afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup>. And this apparent discrepancy, allowed by the ambiguity of Scripture, highlights the failure of Israel to teach simple truths to a jaded world, turned off by hypocrisy and dishonestly.

[The above represents approximately the second third of this *Commentary* that has grown too lengthy to be published as one piece; hence, the above will appear with the July 5<sup>th</sup> date, and the third installment will be dated July 7<sup>th</sup>. These three installments, however, will be e-published as one article at a latter date.]

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