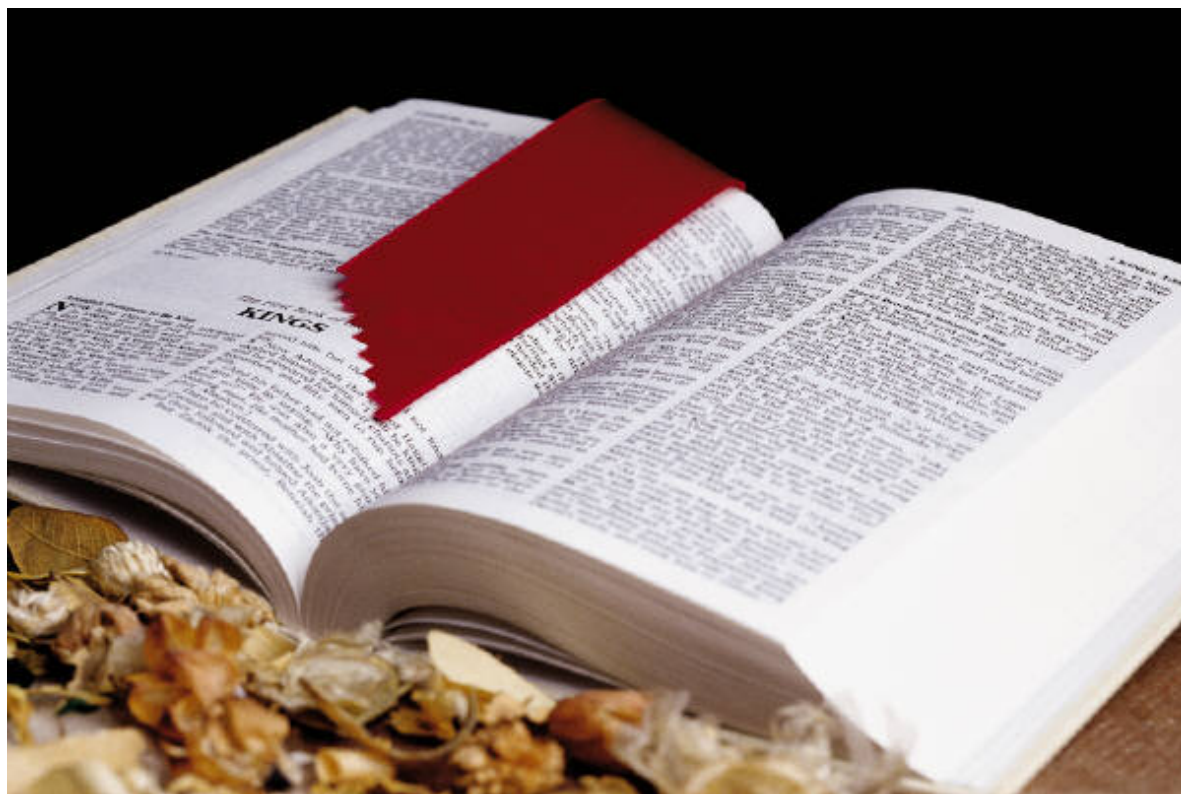


Foundation Institute

Center for Biblical Education

Fundamental Beliefs

Church of God, a Worldwide Association



Passover

Handouts/Study Material

Summary of Fundamental Belief – The Passover

From the Constitution of Church of God, a Worldwide Association

The Passover is to be observed in the evening, at the beginning of the 14th of Nisan (Abib) in accordance with the Hebrew calendar as preserved by the Jews. The New Covenant Passover symbols instituted by Jesus Christ on the night before He died—foot-washing, unleavened bread and wine—are part of this service. Christians follow Jesus Christ’s instruction and example by observing the Passover annually as a memorial of His death.

Scriptural support: Exodus 12; Matthew 26:18-30; John 13:1-15; Luke 22:1-20; John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7.

Summary:

Jesus instituted the new Passover symbols of the bread and the wine and said of the wine, “. . . this is My blood of the New Covenant. . .” (Mark 14:24). This shows that the Passover ceremony we are to observe is a New Covenant (New Testament) observance. Jesus personally identified this *memorial* ceremony (Luke 22:19) as “this Passover” (Luke 22:15) and observed it on the date set aside in Leviticus 23 which was to take place on the 14th of Abib according to the Hebrew calendar.

Jesus Himself set the time of the New Testament Passover service as the night before He died. Paul confirmed that we are to keep it “*on the same night in which He was betrayed*” (1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Luke 22:14-20; John 13:1-17) – which was in the evening at the beginning of the 14th of Abib. He gave His disciples instructions concerning how, when and where they should prepare for this new way of commemorating the death of the Messiah (Luke 22:7-13).

The New Testament Passover is about the death of the “Lamb of God” and about His suffering (Luke 22:15). The entire sacrifice should be remembered — both His suffering and His death. His suffering, death, and burial all occurred on the 14th day of Abib. The new symbols of the bread and the wine replaced the sacrificial lambs from the Old Testament (Exodus 12).

Jesus, as the Lamb of God, is “our Passover” (1 Corinthians 5:7). The bread and wine represent His total sacrifice—His suffering and His death.

It is true that Christ died on the afternoon of the 14th of Abib, but His suffering began the night before while He was still with His disciples. “And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, ‘My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. . .’” (Matthew 26:37,38)

Our practice is to observe the Passover at the beginning of the 14th, the night Jesus was betrayed, and to keep the Festival of Unleavened Bread from the beginning of the fifteenth to the end of the twenty-first. This is all according to scripture. The biblical record is plain in this regard and we have never had any difficulty discerning the correct sequence of events—Passover is followed by Unleavened Bread.

Summary of Fundamental Belief – The Passover

From the Constitution of Church of God, a Worldwide Association

As Christ is our Passover, the bread and the wine are reminders of His suffering and death. Christ and the disciples had observed the Passover throughout their lives. But now there are new symbols. Christ showed His disciples the deep meaning of the Passover through the new symbols and through His ultimate suffering and death on the 14th day of the first month.

Christ's modification of the Passover symbols is consistent with His responsibility as "the Mediator of the new covenant" (*Hebrews 12:24*). That is exactly what Jesus was doing when, after telling them to drink the wine, He said, "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (*Matthew 26:28*).

Jesus commands us to observe the Passover service in remembrance of Him (*Luke 22:19-20*). Paul makes it clear in *I Corinthians 11:20-26* that the Church is to "come together" to "eat this bread and drink this cup." The purpose of this ceremony is to "proclaim the Lord's death till He comes" -- representing the only way mankind can be reconciled to God the Father. Paul also tells us that we are only *reconciled* to God the Father by Jesus' *death* -- that we are *saved* by His *life* (*Romans 5:10*).

Jesus also established at that time the footwashing service and we still practice it today. After first giving us a personal example of being a servant by washing His disciples feet, He commanded us: "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (*John 13:17*).

There are three elements—the footwashing, the bread, and the wine—which are part of the annual ceremony observed by the Church of God, a Worldwide Association. This ceremony is only observed once a year shortly after sunset, on the evening at the beginning of the 14th day of the first month as established by the Word of God.

PASSOVER AND THE FOURTEENTH SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES

The Passover is always associated with the fourteenth day of the first month. It is never associated with the fifteenth, yet the Jews observe the Passover on the fifteenth.

References in Scripture to Passover and the fourteenth...

1. **Exodus 12:6** “Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.”
2. **Leviticus 23:5** “On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the LORD’s Passover.”
3. **Numbers 9:3** “On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you shall keep it at its appointed time. According to all its rites and ceremonies you shall keep it.”
4. **Numbers 9:5** “And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight, in the Wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did.”
5. **Numbers 9:11** “On the fourteenth day of the second month, at twilight, they may keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.”
6. **Numbers 28:16-17** “On the fourteenth day of the first month is the Passover of the LORD. And on the fifteenth day of this month is the feast; unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days.”
7. **Joshua 5:10** “Now the children of Israel camped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho.”
8. **2 Chronicles 30:15** “Then they slaughtered the Passover lambs on the fourteenth day of the second month. The priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought the burnt offerings to the house of the LORD.”
9. **2 Chronicles 35:1** “Now Josiah kept a Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem, and they slaughtered the Passover lambs on the fourteenth day of the first month.”
10. **Ezra 6:19** “And the descendants of the captivity kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month.”
11. **Ezekiel 45:21** “In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall observe the Passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.”

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

PASSOVER OF THE EXODUS

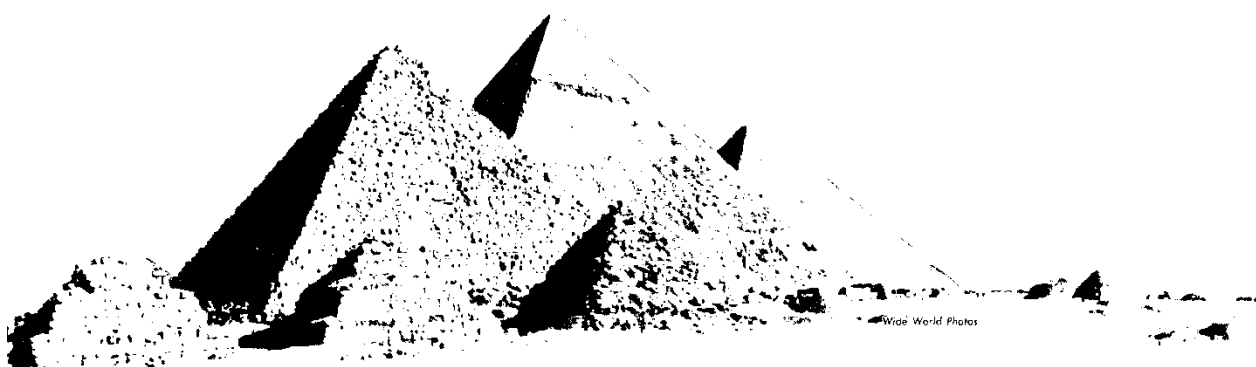
THE PASSOVER OF THE EXODUS (CHART 1)...

<p style="text-align: center;">SUNSET <i>(Ba erev)</i></p> <p>"Between the two evenings" (<i>Bein ha arbayim</i>; Ex. 12:6)</p> <p>Lamb kept "until the fourteenth" (Ex. 12:6)</p>	<p>Passover meal eaten "that night" (Ex. 12:8)</p> <p>Firstborn of Egypt killed at midnight (Ex. 12:29)</p> <p>Pharaoh sends for Moses by night—after midnight, but not called morning (Ex. 12:31). No record of Moses going to see Pharaoh that night.</p> <p>Israel remains inside till morning (Ex. 12:22)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SUNSET <i>(Ba erev)</i></p> <p>Remains of meal burned in morning (Ex. 12:10)</p> <p>Israel baked unleavened cakes for trip (Ex. 12:39)</p> <p>Joseph's remains collected for trip (Ex. 13:19)</p> <p>Israel gathers at Rameses by "armies"; "hosts"; "divisions" (Ex. 12:41; Num. 33:1)</p> <p>Spoil the Egyptians (Ex. 12:35)</p> <p>Firstborn being buried as Israel gathers to leave (Num. 33:3-5)</p>	<p>Night to be Much Observed (Ex. 12:42)</p> <p>Israelites march to Succoth, about 20 miles from Rameses (Ex. 12:37; Num. 33:1-3)</p> <p>Left Egypt by night, 430 years to the selfsame day (Ex. 12:40-42; Deut. 16:1)</p> <p>600,000 men, equal to 2 to 3 million people, plus a mixed multitude, and "very much cattle" (Ex. 12:37-38)</p>	<p>Israelites camp at Succoth on the First Day of Unleavened Bread (Num. 33:1-3; Ex. 12:37)</p> <p>Seven days of Unleavened Bread began at sundown the previous evening (Ex. 12:16)</p> <p>Seven days of Unleavened Bread follow the Passover. The first and the seventh days are Holy Days (Deut. 16:6-8).</p>
13th	14th PASSOVER		15th FIRST DAY OF U.B.	

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS PASSOVER OF THE EXODUS

THE PASSOVER OF THE EXODUS (CHART 2)...

NISAN (ABIB)					SEVEN DAYS OF UNLEAVENED BREAD				
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	PASSOVER	ANNUAL SABBATH						ANNUAL SABBATH	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
NIGHT					DAY				



- | | |
|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Passover lamb eaten. 1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Israelites receive gold and jewels
of Egyptians (Ex. 12:35-36). 2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Israel leaves Egypt by night (Deut. 16:1) 3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">After celebrating the Feast they arrived
at Succoth (Ex. 12:37). 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pharaoh hears the people have fled (Ex. 14:5). 5</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">6 Israel leaves all civilization and enters
Egyptian wilderness (Ex. 13:18, 20).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7 Pharaoh's army overtakes Israel encamped
at Pi-hahiroth (Ex. 14:9).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8 God leads Israelites through Red Sea
to safety before daylight.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9 Songs of Moses and Miriam. Great celebration
on final day of Unleavened Bread.</p> |
|--|---|

Meaning of the Hebrew Words

In *Exodus 12:6* the Hebrew phrase translated “twilight” is *bein ha- ‘arbayim*. The lambs were to be slain during twilight or “between the two evenings”—the literal translation of *bein ha- ‘arbayim*. Jewish tradition claims that this was between noon and sunset. But the true meaning of this ancient phrase is in dispute. The term twilight means: “*evening twilight*; time of concealment; of refreshment; of stumbling, in dim light.”¹ Twilight is not in the afternoon, but it is when the light grows dim, after sunset, but before complete darkness. There are various opinions about the duration of this time period (noon to sunset, noon to darkness, between sunset and darkness).

- The phrase *bein ha- ‘arbayim* is translated as: “dusk” in the JPS (Jewish Publication Society); “between dusk and dark” in the New English Bible; and “between sunset and dark” in the Moffatt Bible. *Brown-Driver-Briggs*: “between the two evenings, i.e. prob[ably] between sunset and dark.”²
- “At twilight, Hebrew *bein ha- ‘arbayim* literally means ‘between the two settings.’ Rabbinic sources take this to mean ‘from noon on.’ According to Radak, the first ‘setting’ occurs when the sun passes its zenith just after noon and the shadows begin to lengthen, and the second ‘setting’ is actual sunset. Josephus testifies that the paschal lamb was slaughtered in the temple between 3 and 5 P.M.”³
- “At twilight, Hebrew *bein ha- ‘arbayim* is ambiguous. The translation ‘twilight’ understands it as designating the period of time between sunset and nightfall, approximately one and one-third hours in duration. As a dual form *‘arbayim* expresses two ‘settings:’ sunset and a later ‘setting’ that follows—nightfall. Mekhilta Bo’ 5 presents the view of Rabbi Nathan that *bein ha- ‘arbayim* is the time after the sun begins to incline toward the west, after the sixth hour of the day. In a hypothetical twelve hour day that begins at 6:00 A.M. and concludes at 6:00 P.M., this would mean that the time period called *bein ha- ‘arbayim* begins at noon. Mishnah Pesahim 5:1 tells us that during the period of the Second Temple, the paschal sacrifice was offered on the altar at approximately nine and a half hours into the day, immediately following the second daily offering (*tamid*), which was scheduled earlier on Passover eve . . . There is no similar information available about practices in earlier periods of antiquity.”⁴
- *Expositor’s Bible Commentary*: “(*bein ha ‘arbayim* lit., ‘between the two evenings’; NIV, ‘at twilight’) has given rise to a much discussed question that is explained in two ways: (1) between sunset and dark (Aben-Ezer, Qaraites, Samaritans, KD) or (2) between the decline of the sun (three to five o’clock) and sunset (Josephus, *Mishna*, and modern practice).

¹Whitaker, Richard, Editor, *The Abridged Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1997.

²*Ibid.*

³The JPS Torah Commentary, *Exodus*, (Philadelphia – New York – Jerusalem: The Jewish Publication Society) 1991.

⁴*Ibid.*

Meaning of the Hebrew Words

Deuteronomy 16:6 fixes the time at ‘when the sun goes down,’ the same time set for the lighting of the lamps in the tabernacle ([Exodus] 30:8) and the offering of the daily evening sacrifice ([Exodus] 29:39). Latter custom necessitated moving this time up to allow the Levites to help everyone with their sacrifice. . .”⁵

To view the term “*bein ha- ‘arbayim*” as meaning between sunset and darkness (twilight, between the two evenings, after sunset) is consistent with the view of many scholars, but, of course, not all agree. With this explanation of the term, the Passover of Exodus 12 could only be sacrificed in the evening as the fourteenth was beginning (after sunset but before complete darkness).

In *Exodus 12:18* the Hebrew word translated “even” is *ba- erev*. This is not the same word used in verse 6 (*bein ha- ‘arbayim*). The meaning of *ba- erev* is: “n.[m.] (sun)set,evening — 1. a. evening, orig[inally] sunset, and hence per[haps]. *At the time of sunset; usu[ally]. Alone = time of sunset, evening: in the evening = every evening; at the turn of evening*”⁶

In *Exodus 12:22* the Hebrew word for “morning” is “*boqer*.” The meaning of this word is: “n.m. morning — 1. morning (of point of time, time at which, never during which, Eng. morning = forenoon): a. of end of night b. implying the coming of dawn, and even daylight. c. of coming of sunrise cf. i.e. places of sunrise and sunset. d. of beginning of day.”⁷

- *Genesis 1:3-5* “Then God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light. And God saw the light that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening [*erev*, darkness, night] and the morning [*boqer*, light, day] were the first day.” Morning is used in scripture to refer to the light portion of a day. The Hebrew word for night is *layil*. It is used as a synonym for the Hebrew *erev*, which is normally translated “evening.”
- A day is defined as “an evening and a morning.” The evening begins at sunset according to Joshua 8:29 “And the king Ai he hanged on a tree **until evening**. And as soon as **the sun was down**, Joshua commanded that they should take his corpse down from the tree.” Sunset marks the beginning of evening and the end of a day. It also marks the beginning of a new day. The Sabbath begins at sunset (that is Friday evening when the sun goes down). It should also be noted that this is another case where the term “until” does not include the end marker (evening).

⁵Gaebelein, Frank, General Editor, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House) 1990. Volume 2; page 373.

⁶Whitaker, Richard, Editor, *The Abridged Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1997.

⁷*Ibid.*

Meaning of the Hebrew Words

Summary...

We see from the above that there are actually three words (or phrases) which are loosely translated “evening” in the Old Testament. These can be summarized as follows:

1. In the King James Translation (AV), we find the English word “evening” (Genesis 1:5). This is the Hebrew word *‘erev*. This is actually a very general term and refers to the darkness and is called evening.
2. Next we find the expression “in the evening” or “at even” (Exodus 12:18). This is the Hebrew expression *ba ‘erev*. In general it means sunset.
3. The third expression is also translated in the AV as “in the evening” (“twilight” in the NKJV). This expression is found in Exodus 12:6. In Strongs we find the same number assigned to the term “at even” in both verse 6 and verse 18, but these are two different expressions in Hebrew. In verse 6 we find *bein ha- ‘arbayim*. It means “between the two evenings.” While there is some dispute, in general scholars accept that the literal and ancient meaning of this expression is “the time between sunset and darkness.” The following are just a few of these sources: Gesenius,⁸ Brown-Driver-Briggs,⁹ *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*,¹⁰ Merrill Unger and William White, Jr. in *Smith’s Expository Dictionary of the Old Testament*,¹¹ the Jewish Soncino Commentary¹² and the *Word Biblical Commentary*.¹³

⁸Between the two evenings—sunset and darkness (page 552) 1847.

⁹“probably between sunset and dark” (page 788) 1906.

¹⁰“The counsel to kill the lambs ‘in the evening’ is more literally followed in the Samaritan rite; the Hebrew is properly interpreted as dusk and cannot be fully reconciled with the later practice of making the sacrifice in the late afternoon,” Buttrick, George, *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press) 1962. Volume 3; page 666.

¹¹“Period between sunset and darkness, twilight” (page 71), 1980.

¹²“Period of approximately one-and-a-third hours between sunset and the disappearance of the light. . .” Cohen, Dr. A., *The Socino Books of the Bible* (London-Jerusalem-New York: The Soncino Press, LTD.) 1994. Volume 1.

¹³“pair [of evenings] suggested by sunset and then dark,” Durham, John, *Word Biblical Commentary* (Waco, TX: Word Books Publisher) 1987. Volume 3; page 151.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

CHRIST'S FINAL PASSOVER

CHRIST'S FINAL PASSOVER APRIL 25, 31 A.D.

TUESDAY	TUESDAY NIGHT	WEDNESDAY	WEDNESDAY NIGHT	THURSDAY	THURSDAY NIGHT	FRIDAY
<p>Sunset</p> <p>Christ sends Peter and John into Jerusalem to prepare the Passover. (Luke 22:8)</p> <p>Disciples enter Jerusalem to prepare for the Passover. (Luke 22:13)</p> <p>"...they prepared the Passover." (Luke 22:13)</p>	<p>Christ and the 12 disciples gather in the room "when the hour has come" to eat the Passover. (Luke 22:14)</p> <p>Christ introduces the foot-washing and the bread and the wine. (John 13; Matthew 26:26-30)</p> <p>After the meal they sing a hymn. (Matthew 26:30)</p> <p>Christ prays in the Garden. (Matthew 26:39) arrested.</p> <p>Christ is betrayed by Judas and He is arrested. (Matthew 26:47).</p>	<p>After a night of court hearings and trials Christ is crucified about 9:00 A.M. in the morning. (Mark 15:25)</p> <p>"There was darkness over all the land" from noon to 3:00 P.M. (Matthew 27:45).</p> <p>Christ dies about 3:00 P.M., or the ninth hour of the day. (Matthew 27:46)</p> <p>Joseph of Arimathea asks for the body to be buried in the tomb that he prepared. (Matthew 27:57)</p> <p>The women watch. It is now sunset and the beginning of the High Day. (Matthew 27:61)</p>	<p>Sunset</p> <p>At sunset the First Day of Unleavened Bread begins.</p> <p>The women return to their homes.</p> <p>Christ spends His first night in the garden tomb.</p> <p>The prophecy calls for three days and three nights before the resurrection.</p>	<p>Christ spends His first day in the garden tomb.</p> <p>The Jews celebrate the First Day of Unleavened Bread. (John 19:31)</p>	<p>Sunset</p> <p>Christ spends His second night in the garden tomb.</p>	<p>The women purchase and prepare spices prior to the weekly Sabbath. (Luke 23:56)</p> <p>The 7th day Sabbath begins at sunset. (Luke 23:56)</p>

Nisan 13

**Nisan 14
Passover**

**Nisan 15
First Day of UB**

**Nisan 16
2nd day in Tomb**

PASSOVER REVIEW SHEET

1. What chapter in the Bible contains the story of the first Passover?
2. The Bible provides the dates for the observance of the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. What are they?
3. What time of the day was the Passover of the Old Testament slain? When was it eaten?
4. What happened on the night of the Passover that caused Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave Egypt?
5. Explain the Hebrew term "*bein ha ' arbayim*". What does it mean and why is it significant?
6. Explain the Hebrew term "*boqer*". What does it mean and why is it significant?
7. On the night before He died did Christ observe the Passover or was this a "Passover-like" meal? Provide Biblical support for your answer.
8. On what day was Christ crucified (day of the week and date on the Hebrew calendar)?
9. Explain how Christ can be both "our Passover" and our High Priest.
10. When we celebrate the Passover today, whose example do we follow? What are the symbols of the Passover ceremony as practiced in the Church today?