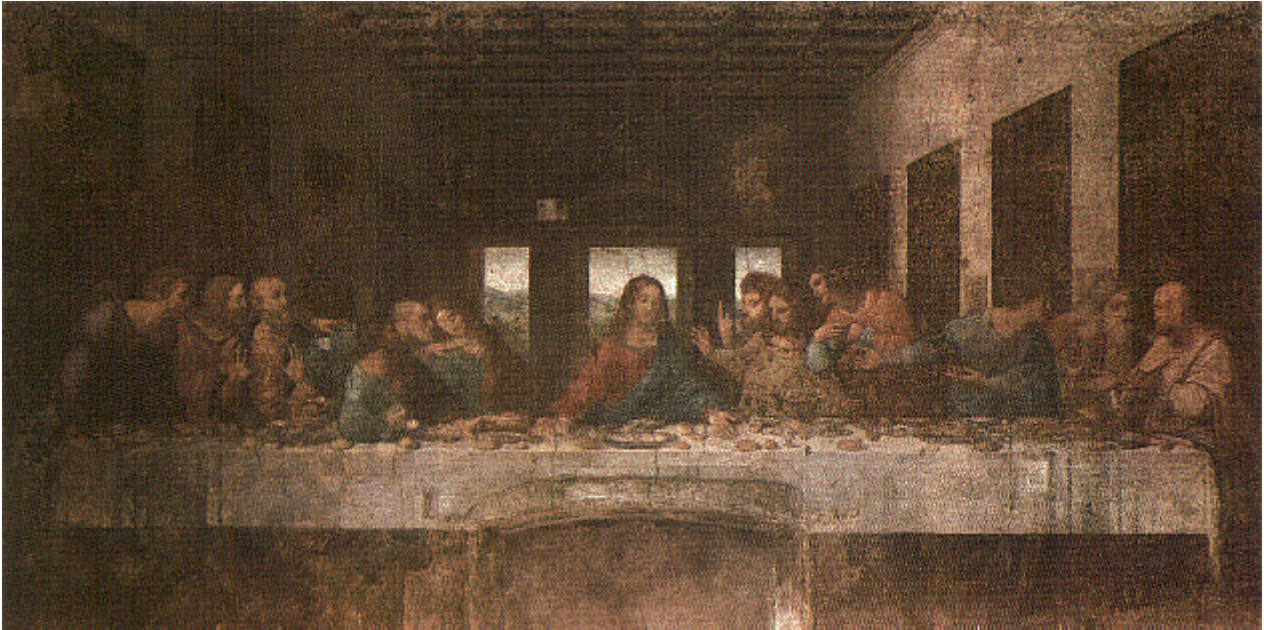


The Passover Controversy



Leonardo da Vinci, *Last Supper*

1. Introduction

There is generally much confusion over the Passover. A brief study into the matter leaves one's head spinning with questions such as: When did the children of Israel keep the Passover? In fact, just what did it mean for the children of Israel to keep the Passover? Did they sacrifice the lamb on one day and eat it the on the next? When did Christ eat the last supper with his disciples? Was the last supper *the* Passover or merely a type of Passover? When did the Jews of Christ's time keep the Passover? When should Christians keep the Passover?

This article attempts to look at the problem in a systematic way, address arguments in favour of and against the various possibilities and make sense of both history and Scripture in an attempt to come to an unbiased conclusion.

The approach taken in this paper is first to establish the different chronologies (or possibilities), and then consider (known) contentious issues. For each contentious issue the arguments for and against are considered and a conclusion is reached. Based on the conclusion and the contentious issue being considered some of the chronologies are marked as having problems. At the end of the analysis, the chronology that has the fewest problems is considered to be the one most likely to be the truth.

Of course, the reader may feel that an important issue has not been addressed. If that is the case then please let the author know. Further, the reader may of course disagree with some of the conclusions in this paper. If that is the case, the reader is encouraged to make his own table such as the one at the end of this paper and mark in it the problems associated with each chronology as he deems correct and come to his own conclusion. The author's purpose is not to persuade others to come to his point of view but rather to encourage others to look into this Passover controversy in a systematic, unbiased and honest way.

2. The Chronologies

If a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts;
but if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties.
Francis Bacon

To start off, it is appropriate to establish the key Passover events and the possible times at which they may have occurred. To the author's knowledge there are only four such Passover events that need to be addressed:

- i) The Passover which the children of Israel kept in the days of Moses referred to in this article as the Old Covenant Passover.
- ii) The Passover which the Jews kept in the days of Christ referred to in this article as the Jewish Passover.
- iii) The Passover which Christ kept with His disciples just prior to His crucifixion referred to in this article as the Last Supper.
- iv) The Passover which Christians are to keep today referred to in this article as the New Covenant Passover.

The controversy lies in when these four Passover events occurred.

2.1 Little Doubt Over the Timing of the Last Supper

Of these four Passover events, there is little doubt over the timing of the Last Supper amongst those who keep the Passover.

The events surrounding the Last Supper and the understanding that the Sabbath that immediately followed the crucifixion was the first day of unleavened bread place the Last Supper at the beginning of the fourteenth of Abib. For suppose that the Last Supper occurred at the end of the fourteenth then Christ's crucifixion would have been on the fifteenth, the first day of unleavened bread, an annual Sabbath. But this makes no sense of Matt. 27:57-62, Mark 15:42-45, Luke 22:50-54 and John 19:38-42 which state that Joseph of Arimathaea rushed to take Christ's body down before the Sabbath began, unless perhaps the Sabbath referred to in these verses was a weekly Sabbath immediately following the annual Sabbath. But this cannot be so either because: (a) there would be no point in them rushing to take the body down before the (weekly) Sabbath if they were already in the (annual) Sabbath and (b) Christ's resurrection three days and nights later would then occur mid week, contradicting those Scriptures that state that He was in the grave for three days and nights, Matt. 12:40 and Mark 8:31, and those Scriptures which state He was risen by Sunday morning, Matt. 28:1-6, Mark 16:1-6, Luke 24:1-6 and John 20:1-9. So, the Last Supper must have occurred at the beginning of the fourteenth of Abib.

2.2 Where there is Contention

The only possible times at which the Old Covenant Passover could occur were:

- i) at the beginning of the fourteenth of Abib;
 - ii) or at the end of the fourteenth of Abib;
- (because the Passover lamb had to be slain on the fourteenth of Abib at twilight, see section 3.1).

Concerning when the Jews kept the Passover, there seem to be three possibilities:

- i) there could have been some who kept it at the beginning of the fourteenth and some at the end of the fourteenth;
- ii) they all could have kept it at the end of the fourteenth;
- iii) or they all could have kept it at the beginning of the fourteenth (although highly improbable).

Similarly, the only possible times at which the New Covenant Passover can occur are:

- i) at the beginning of the fourteenth of Abib;
- ii) or at the end of the fourteenth of Abib.

In an attempt to be systematic, this paper considers the twelve possible combinations, or chronologies, of the Old Covenant Passover, the Jewish Passover and the New Covenant Passover. These are represented below in Table 1.

1	OC	J	NC	2	OC	J	NC	3	OC	J	NC	4	OC	J	NC
B	X	X	X	B	X	X		B		X	X	B		X	
E		X		E		X	X	E	X	X		E	X	X	X
5	OC	J	NC	6	OC	J	NC	7	OC	J	NC	8	OC	J	NC
B	X		X	B	X			B			X	B			
E		X		E		X	X	E	X	X		E	X	X	X
9	OC	J	NC	10	OC	J	NC	11	OC	J	NC	12	OC	J	NC
B	X	X	X	B	X	X		B		X	X	B		X	
E				E			X	E	X			E	X		X

Table 1 - The Twelve Possible Chronologies.

Key

- OC Old Covenant Passover
- J Jewish Passover
- NC New Covenant Passover
- B Beginning of the fourteenth
- E End of the fourteenth
- X Marks the timing (B or E) of an event (OC, J or NC)

It should be mentioned that some of these chronologies are unrealistic: for example numbers 2, 6 and 10 because they place the New Covenant Passover at the end of the fourteenth whilst claiming that the Old Covenant Passover occurred at the beginning of the fourteenth; and numbers 9, 10, 11 and 12 because they claim that no Jews at the time of Christ kept the Passover at the end of the fourteenth. However, all twelve are included in the analysis for completeness.

Of note are:

- i) chronology number 1 to which the Worldwide Church of God held during the days of Herbert W. Armstrong and to which the Global Church of God holds,
- ii) chronology number 7 to which the Worldwide Church of God held during the days of Joseph W. Tkach Senior,
- iii) and chronology number 8 to which William F. Dankenbring of Triumph Prophetic Ministries (Church of God) holds.

3. Contentious Issues

Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.
Prov 13:10.

For each discussion of a contentious issue, note is made of those chronologies that are affected by it and at the end of it a conclusion is reached which may or may not result in various chronologies being marked as having a problem of varying severity and type. These are displayed in the table in the conclusion of this article (see chapter 4). As mentioned earlier, the reader is of course free to disagree with the conclusions presented in this paper and mark up his own table.

3.1 The Passover Account of The Old Testament

The account of the Passover in Exodus makes it clear that the Passover lamb was slaughtered on the fourteenth of Abib.

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, 2 This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. 3 Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: 4 And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. 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: 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 in the evening.** Ex. 12:1-6.

However, what is not immediately obvious is whether the evening of verse 6 refers to the beginning of the fourteenth or the end of it. It is this question that is addressed in the following sub-sections.

3.1.1 Between the Two Evenings

God commanded the children of Israel to kill the Passover lamb in the evening, Ex. 12:6. The Hebrew word for evening in Ex. 12:6 is *'ereb*. This is an arguably vague word. Sometimes it can refer to the beginning of the day, for example, Gen. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31 and sometimes it can refer to the end of the day, for example, Ex. 12:18, Lev. 23:32. However, Lev. 23:5, Num. 9:3, 5, 11 use a more precise term *beyn ha'arbayim* which means "between the two evenings".

Unfortunately there is much contention over the exact meaning of "between the two evenings". Sadly, the situation was no different in the time of Christ:

The time of the Passover sacrifice is defined in the Law as "between the two evenings" ... This was interpreted by the Pharisees and Talmudists to mean from the hour of the sun's decline until its setting; and this was the later temple practice ... The Samaritans, Karaites, and Sadducees, on the other hand held that the period between sunset and dark was intended.¹

The phrase "between the two evenings" in Ex. 12:6 (also Ex. 16:12; Lev. 23:5; Num. 9:3, 5, 11) has been accorded two variant interpretations, according to variant community practice—either between 3 p.m. and sunset, as the Pharisees maintained and practiced (*cf Pesahim* 61a; Josephus, *BJ* 6. 423); or, as the Samaritans and others argued, between sunset and dark.²

¹ James Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. III, p. 691.

² R. A. Stewart, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas (Leicester: Inter Varsity Press, 1994), Part 3, p. 1157.

The Pharisees and the Sadducees had a dispute as to the time when the slaughtering should take place; the former held it should be in the last three hours before sunset, the latter, between sunset and nightfall.³

Moreover, to complicate matters, if “between the two evenings” means between sunset and dark, then is that period at the beginning of the day or at the end? In other words, does the day begin when the sun has just set or half an hour or so later when it becomes dark? There are three possibilities:

- i) “Between the two evenings” means between sunset and dark and this is at the beginning of the day.
- ii) “Between the two evenings” means between sunset and dark and this is at the end of the day.
- iii) “Between the two evenings” means between sometime in the afternoon (3:00 p.m.) and sunset, and hence at the end of the day.

If i) is correct then chronologies 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 12 have problems. If, however, ii) or iii) are correct then chronologies 1, 2, 5, 6, 9 and 10 have problems.

The question that needs to be answered is: Does the Bible clearly explain what “between the two evenings” means? The Hebrew expression *beyn ha'arbayim* is only used in the Bible in following verses: Ex. 16:12; 29:39; 30:8, Lev. 23:5, Num. 9:3, 5, 11; 28:4, 8. At a first glance these verses do not appear to give any clear and direct indication of the meaning of the term. However, a closer examination of these and other verses has led to various arguments concerning the meaning of “between the two evenings”: some in favour of it being at the end of the day and one in favour of it being at the beginning of the day.

Argument in support of “between the two evenings” being at the end of the day

This argument cites the order of the words “morning” and “evening” (*beyn ha'arbayim*) in Ex. 29:39 which describes when the daily sacrifice of the two lambs should be killed. The logic of the argument is that since the word “morning” precedes the word “evening” (*beyn ha'arbayim*) in this verse and since this verse is talking of a day, then *beyn ha'arbayim* (“between the two evenings”) must be at the end of the day. Obviously, most people would not accept this as proof but only suggestive. However, when one realises that the order of the words “morning” and “evening” (*beyn ha'arbayim*) is reversed in Ex. 16:12 and that the context is again that of one day, the argument must be dismissed as insupportable.

Argument in support of “between the two evenings” being between afternoon and sunset and thus at the end of the day

This argument takes the form of an association, as follows. Since Christ said of the Pharisees:

The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not. Matt. 23:2-3.

then what they believed concerning the meaning of “between the two evenings” must be correct, and further, since Christ said of the Samaritans:

Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. John 4:22.

then what they believed concerning the meaning of “between the two evenings” must be incorrect.

This argument might sound convincing until one realises that Christ did not always do what the Pharisees bade, such as the time when His disciples were plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath, Matt. 12:1-8, Mark 2:23-28, Luke 6:1-11 and when his disciples ate bread with unwashed hands Mark 7:1-13. Also, it should be remembered that Christ gave a blistering diatribe against the Pharisees when he said, among other things, that they were blind guides, Matt. 23:16, 24; they omitted the weightier matters of the law: judgment, mercy and faith, Matt. 23:23; they worshipped God in vain teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, Mark 7:7; and they rejected the commandments of God that they might keep their traditions, Mark 7:9. Is it not conceivable that if the Pharisees could be so seriously in error in these important matters that they might also be wrong in their understanding of “between the two evenings”? Of course they could, but how can the apparent contradiction of Christ's statements concerning the Pharisees be explained? More than likely Christ was instructing obedience to the Pharisees because they held a position of authority (cf Rom. 13:1-3) so long as it did not compromise with obedience to God, Act 5:29.

Another argument in support of “between the two evenings” being between afternoon and sunset and thus at the end of the day

This argument firstly notes that there were four things to be performed “between the two evenings”:

- i) the sacrifice of the Passover lamb Lev. 23:5, Num. 9:3, 5, 11,
- ii) the daily sacrifice Ex. 29:39, Num. 28:4, 8,
- iii) the lighting of the lamps Ex. 30:8,
- iv) the offering of the incense Ex. 30:8.

³ *Universal Jewish Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 8, p. 406.

Secondly, this argument notes that prayer is at times associated with the evening sacrifice, for example, Psalm 141:2, 1 Kings 18:29, 36-39 and Dan. 9:21 and also with the offering of incense, for example, Psalm 141:2, Luke 1:9-10 and Rev. 8:3-4. Thus prayer is associated with “between the two evenings”.

The argument claims that this association of prayer with “between the two evenings” and the fact that the “hour of prayer” is the ninth hour (3:00 p.m.), Acts 3:1, means that the evening sacrifice must occur at 3:00 p.m. and so “between the two evenings” must mean between 3:00 p.m. and sunset. Careful thought reveals that the argument assumes that the hour of prayer is the prayer time of the evening sacrifice. Why should it be? Further, even if that assumption is correct an additional assumption is made that the Jews at the time of Christ were performing the evening sacrifice at the correct time. Surely at best, this argument is only mildly suggestive.

Argument in support of “between the two evenings” being at the beginning of the day

This argument relies on the order of events in a couple of verses in Exodus 16:

12 I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even (*beyn ha'arbayim*) ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God. 13 And it came to pass, that at even (*'ereb*) the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host. Exodus 16:12-13.

Obviously, the quails came up before the children of Israel ate them and thus in the above passage, *'ereb* (evening) must occur before *beyn ha'arbayim*. Thus, according to this argument, “between the two evenings” cannot mean between sometime in the afternoon (3:00 p.m.) and sunset, but rather it means between sunset and dark. So *'ereb* must refer to sunset. But according to Gen. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31 and Lev. 23:32 the day also begins at *'ereb* and so the day begins at sunset. Therefore, “between the two evenings” means between sunset and dark and this is at the beginning of the day.

In the author’s opinion, only the last argument has any substance and presents a minor scriptural problem to chronologies 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 12.

3.1.2 Does To Keep the Passover Means To Eat the Passover?

Surely there can be no doubt that the Passover should be kept on the fourteenth of Abib, as Num. 9:1-5 makes clear:

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, 2 Let the children of Israel also keep the Passover at his appointed season. 3 In the fourteenth day of this month, at even (*beyn ha'arbayim*), ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it. 4 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the Passover. 5 And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even (*beyn ha'arbayim*) in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel. Num. 9:1-5.

Does this instruction mean that the Passover lamb was to be both sacrificed and eaten on the fourteenth or just sacrificed on the fourteenth. Does “keep” mean “sacrifice and eat” or just “sacrifice”? If “keep” means “sacrifice and eat” then it poses a major problem to those chronologies which have the Old Covenant Passover occurring at the end of the fourteenth, namely 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 12 (for had the Israelites sacrificed the Passover lamb at the end of the fourteenth then by the time they had roasted it they would have eaten it well into the fifteenth). However, if “keep” means just “sacrifice” then it poses no problems to any of the chronologies.

There does seem to be a very strong indication in two Scriptures, Ex. 12:48 and Matt. 26:17-18, that to keep the Passover means to eat the Passover:

And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will **keep** the Passover to the LORD, 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. Ex. 12:48.

Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to **eat** the Passover? 18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will **keep** the Passover at thy house with my disciples. Matt. 26:17-18.

If Christ did not eat a Passover lamb at the Last Supper then the reference in Matthew may have little relevance; however, Ex. 12:48 and Num. 9:2-5 appear to clearly indicate that the Old Covenant Passover occurred at the beginning of the fourteenth. In the author’s opinion, these two Scriptures pose a major problem to those chronologies which have the Old Covenant Passover occurring at the end of the fourteenth, namely 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 12.

3.1.3 When is Morning?

The Hebrew word that is generally translated morning is *boqer*. This word is arguably a vague term, however it is almost always used in the context of sunrise or that part of the day between sunrise and noon. The importance of what *boqer* means arises in Ex. 12:22 where the Israelites were commanded to remain inside their dwellings until *boqer*.

... and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. Ex. 12:22.

It is clear from Num. 33:3 and Deut. 16:1 that the Israelites left Egypt on the night of the fifteenth of Abib:

And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the Passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians. Num. 33:3.

Observe the month of Abib, and keep the Passover unto the LORD thy God: for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night. Deut. 16:1.

If the Israelites sacrificed the lamb at the beginning of the fourteenth then they could have comfortably stayed in their dwellings that night and left Egypt the following day (the night of the fifteenth). However, if the Israelites sacrificed the lamb at the end of the fourteenth (and thus ate it on the evening of the fifteenth) then they must have left Egypt that night in apparent disobedience to God's command not to leave their dwellings until morning.

This issue is only potentially a problem to those chronologies that have the Israelites leaving their houses before morning, which are chronologies 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 12.

It is unlikely that the Israelites disobeyed God in this matter as no mention of disobedience is made. An argument in favour of the Passover lamb being sacrificed on the end of the fourteenth states that *boqer* can mean before sunrise and uses Ruth 3:14 as support:

And she lay at his feet until the morning (*boqer*): and she rose up before one could know another. ... Ruth 3:14.

The argument states that because Ruth left in the morning (*boqer*) but early enough so that no one could recognise her, an allowable meaning for *boqer* is that part of the day before sunrise while it is still dark. However, in order for the thousands of Israelites to have left by night they must have gone out of their dwellings several hours before sunrise. But from the context of Ruth 3:14 it is clear she arose in the *boqer* just before sunrise, not several hours beforehand. In fairness Ruth 3:14 cannot be used to claim that *boqer* can mean several hours before morning.

Thus, in the author's opinion Ex. 12:22 presents a minor problem to the belief that the Old Covenant Passover is at the end of the fourteenth and thus a minor problem to chronologies 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 12.

3.1.4 How Large was the Region of Goshen?

The children of Israel kept the Passover in their own homes and then departed Egypt from Rameses, Num. 33:3, in orderly ranks, Ex. 13:18. If the children of Israel left Egypt before morning as chronologies 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 12 claim then they must have travelled from their homes to Rameses within six hours (midnight to morning) so that they could depart from Rameses in orderly ranks. However, the children of Israel dwelt in the region of Goshen, Gen. 47:27, Ex. 8:22; 9:26, which extended 30 to 40 miles in length.⁴ This then poses a problem, for how could they travel so far in so short a time during the night, especially considering they were driving their cattle as well? In the author's opinion this presents a major scriptural problem to chronologies 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 12.

3.1.5 When Did the Egyptians Bury their Dead?

According to Num. 33:3-4, the children of Israel left Egypt on the fifteenth day of Abib in the sight of all Egyptians because they were burying their dead.

3 And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians. 4 For the Egyptians buried all their firstborn, which the LORD had smitten among them: upon their gods also the LORD executed judgments. Num. 33:3-4.

⁴ Unger, *Bible Dictionary*, p. 420.

Although, the KJV has “the Egyptians **buried** all their firstborn” (verse 4), the NKJV, RSV, NRSV, NIV, ASV all have “the Egyptians **were burying** all their firstborn”. If the children of Israel kept the Passover at the beginning of the fourteenth as chronologies 1, 2, 5, 6, 9 and 10 claim then they would have seen the Egyptians burying their dead as they made their way to Rameses the next day. However, if the children of Israel journeyed to Rameses before morning as chronologies 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 12 claim then the Egyptians buried their dead during the night, which is very strange. Although not a problem, this presents an enigma to chronologies 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 12.

3.2 Linking the Passover Accounts of The Old and The New Testaments

This section looks at how the Old and New Covenant Passovers are linked.

3.2.1 The New Covenant Passover must Coincide with either the Old Covenant Passover or the Last Supper

This issue affects all chronologies that have neither the Old Covenant Passover nor the Last Supper coinciding with the New Covenant Passover, which consists of chronologies 2, 6 and 10.

Suffice it to say that the New Covenant Passover must coincide with either the Old Covenant Passover or the Last Supper if there is to be any Biblical rationale for its timing.

On this basis chronologies 2, 6 and 10 are ruled out.

3.2.2 Can the Passover Sensibly be One Day Before the Start of the Days of Unleavened Bread?

An argument that some give against the Passover being at the beginning of the fourteenth is that it seemingly makes no sense for one to eat unleavened bread for the Passover and then be able to gorge oneself on leaven for twenty-four hours before going into the days of unleavened bread.

This issue affects those chronologies that place either the Old Covenant Passover or the New Covenant Passover at the beginning of the fourteenth, namely chronologies 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11.

Sense, however, can be made of it by realising that a Christian is called whilst a sinner and has Christ’s sacrifice applied to him whilst he is still in sin, before embarking on a lifetime journey of coming out of sin. In like manner, a Christian observes the Passover (which commemorates Christ’s sacrifice) whilst in days of leaven (picturing sin), just before embarking on the seven days of unleavened bread (picturing coming out of sin).

In the author’s opinion this issue presents no problems to any of the chronologies.

3.2.3 Parallel between the Timing of the Passover Lamb’s Selection and the Length of Christ’s Ministry

God commanded the children of Israel to select the Passover lamb on the tenth of Abib,

Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house. Ex. 12:3.

and then sacrifice it on the evening of the fourteenth,

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 in the evening. Ex. 12:6.

The Israelites probably selected the lamb during the morning of the tenth, (wanting to be obedient to God they probably selected it as soon as there was light to see clearly). If they sacrificed the lamb at the beginning of the fourteenth then about three and a half days would pass from the selection of the lamb to its sacrifice. There is then a beautiful parallel with the events that occurred in Christ’s ministry. From the time that John the Baptist cried,

... behold the lamb of God. John 1:29

which was the time that Christ began preaching in public, to the time of Christ’s sacrifice was about three and a half years.

Although this issue poses no problems to those chronologies that claim the Old Covenant Passover is at the end of the fourteenth, which are chronologies 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 12 it does however pose a minor enigma: Why were the children of Israel not commanded to select the Passover lamb on the eleventh of Abib so that there would be a beautiful parallel with the events that occurred in Christ’s ministry?

3.2.4 Did Christ's Death Coincide with the Sacrifice of the Passover Lambs?

A major point often cited to support the belief that the Passover lamb was sacrificed at the end of the fourteenth is the idea that Christ's death should coincide with the slaying of the Passover lamb, that is the Old Covenant Passover. This issue affects those chronologies that do not have Christ's crucifixion coinciding with the Old Covenant Passover, namely, chronologies 1, 2, 5, 6, 9 and 10.

It should be mentioned that in order for this argument to make sense, "between the two evenings" must mean between 3:00 p.m. and sunset. If it means between sunset and dark then Christ's death at approximately 3:00 p.m. would not have occurred "between the two evenings".

Obviously, the Last Supper and Christ's crucifixion cannot possibly both coincide with the Old Covenant Passover. So something has to give. The Bible nowhere states that Christ's crucifixion coincided with the Old Covenant Passover; it is only (possibly flawed) human reason that states so. On the other hand, as covered later (see section 3.3), there is ample evidence from the synoptic gospels that the Last Supper coincided with the Old Covenant Passover, in which case Christ's death still occurred on the day of the Passover.

The death of Christ has far more significance than fulfilling the symbolism of the slaying of the Passover lamb. The children of Israel had to do more than just kill the Passover lamb to obtain redemption from the Egyptian slavery. They also had to apply the blood of the lamb to the lintels and doorpost as well as eat the lamb. It was not until morning that the Israelites were free from the plague of death.

Christ's death fulfilled the symbolism of all the events of that day:

- Christ's crucifixion fulfilled the slaying of the Passover lamb.
- The sparing from death by Christ's sacrifice, Gal. 3:13, fulfilled the sparing of the Israelites at the passing over of the Lord.
- The spoiling of principalities and powers, Col. 2:14-15, fulfilled the spoiling of the Egyptians.
- The ultimate deliverance from sin, 1 John 3:2, fulfilled the deliverance of the Israelites from bondage.
- The defeat of Satan and his demons, Rev. 20:2, 10, fulfilled the crushing of the Egyptian enemy.

It is interesting to note that if the Last Supper coincided with the Old Covenant Passover and the Jews were keeping the Passover at the wrong time (at the end of the fourteenth) then there is a fitting irony that *they* were putting to death the Lamb of God at the time when *they* sacrificed *their* Passover lambs.

In the author's opinion this issue does not present a problem to chronologies 1, 2, 5, 6, 9 and 10.

3.2.5 Is The Passover Moveable?

Some explanations of the Passover events claim that Christ actually moved the time of the Passover from the end (or beginning) of the fourteenth day of Abib to the beginning (or end) of it. This issue affects chronologies 3, 7 and 11 (and 2, 6 and 10).

There is a major problem with this view: There is no Scripture stating that Christ moved the time of Passover. In fact, every indication is that the Passover is not moveable. God commanded his people to keep it throughout their generations as an everlasting ordinance:

12 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 is the LORD'S passover. 14 And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD **throughout your generations**; ye shall keep it a feast by **an ordinance for ever**. 17 You shall observe the festival of unleavened bread, for on this very day I brought your companies out of the land of Egypt: **you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a perpetual ordinance**. Ex. 12:11, 14, 17.

the same phrase that God used in commanding the Sabbath,

13 Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you **throughout your generations**; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you. 16 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, **to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant**. Ex. 31:13, 16.

So really, the Passover is as moveable as the weekly Sabbath.

It is interesting to note that if Christ moved the Passover then it is only another short step to claim that the Passover or the Lord's Supper can be kept several times a year, as indeed many religious organisations do.

In the author's opinion, Ex. 12:11-17 and Ex. 31:13-16 are enough to show that a major problem exists for any chronology that claims that the New Covenant Passover occurs at a different time than the Old Covenant Passover. This affects chronologies 2, 3, 6, 7, 10 and 11.

3.2.6 No Doubt that Some Jews kept the Passover at the End of the Fourteenth During Christ's Time

No one seriously doubts that at least some Jews kept the Passover at the end of the fourteenth during the time of Christ, because today the Jews eat their Passover meal at the beginning of the fifteenth and there is no historical evidence (or Biblical evidence), of which the author knows, that the Jews have changed the time that they keep Passover since the death of Christ.

This presents a serious historical problem to chronologies 9, 10, 11 and 12.

3.3 The Passover Account of the New Testament

The account of the synoptic gospels give the clear impression that the Last Supper was the Passover meal:

17 Now **the first day of the feast of unleavened bread** the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we **prepare for thee to eat the Passover?** 18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; **I will keep the Passover at thy house with my disciples.** 19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and **they made ready the Passover.** Matt. 26:17-19.

12 And **the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the Passover,** his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that **thou mayest eat the Passover?** 13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. 14 And whosoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, **where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?** 15 And he will show you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us. 16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and **they made ready the Passover.** Mark 14:12-16.

7 **Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed.** 8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and **prepare us the Passover,** that we may eat. 9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare? 10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in. 11 And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, **where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?** 12 And he shall show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. 13 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and **they made ready the Passover.** 14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. 15 And he said unto them, **With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you** before I suffer: 16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. Luke 22:7-16.

However, John's gospel gives the impression that the Passover coincided with the crucifixion of Christ. Note in particular John 18:28; 19:14:

Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover. John 18:28.

And it was the preparation of the Passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! John 19:14.

These verses in John appear to contradict the synoptic gospels which give the impression that the Passover coincided with the Last Supper.

This apparent contradiction of the gospels has been acknowledged and discussed a great deal by theologians for many hundreds of years. Here are some typical comments from a few commentaries.

Some scholars believe "the *Pesach*" refers to the Passover lamb and conclude that John, unlike the Synoptic Gospels, places the *Seder* (the first evening of the Passover) on Friday evening after the execution of Jesus in the afternoon.⁵

⁵ David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, (Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), p. 206.

The Synoptics seem to indicate that Jesus and his disciples ate the Passover meal the evening before the Crucifixion (see esp. Mark 14:12-16; 15:1-15, and parallels), whereas John seems to suggest that the Passover lamb was slaughtered at the moment Jesus was being put to death, which would of course mean that he and his disciples did not eat the Passover at the Last Supper (cf. esp. John 18:28; 19:14). ... The literature about this question is immense. ... There are many indications that the synoptics understand the Last Supper to be a Passover meal (see esp. Jeremias, *Eucharistic Words*, pp. 41-63; Marshall, *Last Supper*, pp. 59-62).⁶

Many scholars maintain that the discrepancies between the synoptic gospels and John's gospel are not reconcilable—that either the Synoptics are right or John is. There are, fortunately, some scholars who believe in the chronological reliability of all four Gospels on this point. Here are some of the various approaches taken by these scholars:

- i) Some hold that the Passover coincided with the Last Supper and interpret John 13:1; 18:28; 19:14, 31, 42 in such a way as to be consistent with this,⁷ (see 3.3.1.).
- ii) Others maintain that the Passover coincided with Christ's crucifixion (John 13:1; 18:28; 19:14, 31, 42) and attempt to explain how the synoptic gospels could not be describing *the* Passover meal as the setting for the Last Supper, in spite of all appearances that it was, (see 3.3.2.).
- iii) Several argue that the synoptic gospels and John's gospel actually describe different Passovers that different groups celebrated, (see 3.3.3):
 - a) One proposes that Jesus, having been repudiated by the priesthood and consequently considered apostate, would not have been allowed to obtain a lamb for sacrifice and would have been compelled to celebrate the Passover at a different time.⁸
 - b) Another that the Last Supper was held on an earlier evening in the week when sectarians such as those at Qumran celebrated the Passover.⁹
 - c) Yet another suggests that Jewish groups had different methods of reckoning dates, so that if some calculated the date from evening to evening and others from dawn to dawn, both groups would celebrate the Passover on the same *date* but on different *days*. The Judeans (and John) might have followed one method and the Galileans (and the synoptic gospels) the other.¹⁰
 - d) Others argue that the Pharisees and the Sadducees adopted different calendars.¹¹

These different approaches are examined in the following sub-sections.

3.3.1 Is the Passover in John's Gospel the *Chagigah*?

As mentioned above, some scholars hold that the Passover coincided with the Last Supper and interpret John's gospel in such a way as to be consistent with this. Such an interpretation makes two claims:

The first claim is that the Passover in John 18:28 refers not to the Passover but to the *chagigah* (festival sacrifice) which was eaten joyfully on the afternoon the day after the Passover sacrifice.

I do not believe that John's Gospel reports a different date for the crucifixion from the Synoptics; rather, the meal of John 13:1 was the *Seder*, and it took place on Thursday night; but "the *Pesach*" in this verse refers to other food eaten during *Pesach*, specifically the *chagigah* (festival sacrifice) which was consumed with great joy and celebration on the afternoon following the *Seder*. This is the *Pesach* meal which the Judeans gathered outside the Pilate's palace would have been unable to eat had they entered, because their defilement would have lasted till sundown. If "the *Pesach*" meant the Passover lamb, defilement in the morning might not have been a problem, since the *Seder* meal took place after sundown.¹²

More plausibly, "to eat the Passover" in John 18:28 may refer, not to the Passover meal itself, but to the continuing feast, and in particular to the *chagigah*, the feast-offering offered on the morning of the first full paschal day (cf. Num. 28:18-19). This could explain the Jews' concern: ritual purification could be regained by nightfall, but not by the morning *chagigah*.¹³

The second claim is that the preparation of the Passover in John 19:14 refers to the preparation day of the first day of unleavened bread in the Passover season, John 19:31, which is of course an annual Sabbath or Holy Day.

⁶ D. A. Carson, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. F. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), Vol. 8, pp. 528-529.

⁷ N. Geldenhuys, *The Gospel of Luke*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), pp. 649-670. D. A. Carson, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. F. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), Vol. 8, pp. 528-532.

⁸ Ethelbert Stauffer, *Jesus and His Story*, (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1959), pp. 113-118.

⁹ A. Jaubert, *The Date of the Last Supper*, (New York: Alba House, 1965).

¹⁰ H. Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), pp. 65-93.

¹¹ Stack and Billerick, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*.

¹² David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, (Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), pp. 206-207.

¹³ D. A. Carson, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. F. Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), Vol. 8, p. 531.

This particular Preparation Day was also the first day of *Pesach*.¹⁴

This interpretation of John's gospel is proposed by those who believe that there was no disagreement amongst the Jews over when the Passover should be kept and that the Last Supper coincided with this. (This tends to be those who believe in a Friday crucifixion and a Sunday resurrection.) Of course, this would place the Last Supper at the end of the fourteenth. But it was established in section 2.1 that the Last Supper occurred at the beginning of the fourteenth so this issue does not affect any of the chronologies.

3.3.2 Was the Last Supper was *The Passover*?

As mentioned above, other scholars maintain that the Passover coincided with Christ's crucifixion and attempt to explain how the synoptic gospels could not be describing *the* Passover meal as the setting for the Last Supper, in spite of all appearances that it was. Such an argument claims that the Last Supper was merely a type of Passover. The reasoning is that if Christ's crucifixion were to coincide with the sacrifice of the Passover lambs then Christ by necessity could not eat the real Passover with His disciples but ate a type of Passover with them the night before. The unique circumstances of Christ's crucifixion allowed the Passover to be kept a day early in that situation. This argument affects those chronologies that place the New Covenant Passover at the end of the fourteenth and hence claim that the Last Supper was not *the* Passover, namely chronologies 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12.

Some supposed evidence given for the claim that the Last Supper was merely a type of Passover is the Greek word used for bread in the account of the Last Supper: *artos*. This word is not the usual Greek word that is used for unleavened bread: *azumos*. The reasoning is that since *artos* is used and not *azumos*, the bread that Christ broke to symbolise his broken body at the Last Supper was leavened bread, and hence the Last Supper cannot have been the real Passover because unleavened bread is used for the Passover, Ex. 12:8. This is a weak argument because *azumos* means bread, not specifically leavened bread, and so its meaning can encompass both leavened and unleavened bread; and more significantly the apostle Paul, when instructing the church at Corinth how to observe the Passover, uses the word *artos* to describe the bread eaten at the Passover:

23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread (*artos*): 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 1 Cor. 11:23-24.

The argument that the Last Supper was merely a type of Passover has a very serious problem. Not only is there an absence of direct scriptural evidence that the Last Supper was merely a type of Passover but more importantly there is direct scriptural evidence in the synoptic gospels that the Last Supper was *the* Passover:

And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; **I will keep the Passover at thy house with my disciples.** Matt. 26:18.

And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where **I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?** Mark 14:14.

And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guestchamber, **where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?** Luke 22:11.

And he said unto them, **With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.** Luke 22:15.

In the author's opinion, these verses each present a major problem to chronologies 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 which claim that the Last Supper was not the New Covenant Passover but merely a type of it.

3.3.3 Did some Jews Keep the Passover on the Wrong Day During the Time of Christ?

As mentioned in 3.3 (iii), some arguments suggest that the synoptic gospels and John's gospel actually describe different Passovers that different groups celebrated. In the author's opinion, the approaches listed, (a), (b), (c) and (d), are listed in order of increasing likelihood: (a) is rather ridiculous, (b) unlikely, (c) possible but lacks evidence and (d) most probable and has some circumstantial evidence described below.

If it can be shown that different groups of Jews celebrated the Passover at different times during the time of Christ then this presents a problem to chronologies 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12; conversely, if it can be shown that the Jews all kept the Passover on the same day during the time of Christ then this presents a problem to chronologies 1, 2, 3 and 4.

¹⁴ David Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary*, (Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992), p. 209.

Certainly, there was disagreement amongst the Jews over when the day of Pentecost was. The Sadducees counted fifty days from the weekly Sabbath within the days of unleavened bread, whereas Pharisees computed it so that it always fell on the sixth of Sivan.

The Sadducees celebrated it [Pentecost] on the 50th day (inclusive reckoning) from the first Sunday after Passover (taking the “sabbath” of Lev. 23:15 to be the weekly sabbath); their reckoning regulated the public observance so long as the Temple stood, and the church is therefore justified in commemorating the first Christian Pentecost on a Sunday (Whit Sunday). The Pharisees, however, interpreted the “sabbath” of Lev. 23:15 as the Festival of Unleavened Bread (*cf.* Lev. 23:7), and their reckoning became normative in Judaism after AD 70, so that in the Jewish calendar Pentecost now falls on various days of the week.¹⁵

As to the Feasts, the two parties [Pharisees and Sadducees] differed in the manner of fixing the date of Pentecost. According to Lev. 23:11, 15, seven full weeks had to be counted from “the morrow after the sabbath” upon which the priest waved the sheaf of first-fruits before the Lord. The Pharisees followed the traditional interpretation (e.g. in the LXX; *cf.* *Ant.* 3X, 5), that the “sabbath” meant the first day of the feast, and that consequently Pentecost might fall on any day of the week. The Sadducees ... held that the “sabbath” meant the weekly sabbath, and that therefore Pentecost always fell on the first day of the week.¹⁶

If the Pharisees and Sadducees disagreed on Pentecost then it is not inconceivable that they or other groups disagreed over Passover. There is actually indirect Biblical evidence that there was disagreement amongst the Jews over when the Passover should be kept and that is covered in the next sub-section below.

Although this issue has not been proved one way or the other, it exists as an attempt to harmonise the gospel accounts. In the author’s opinion as nothing has been proved, it presents no problems to any of the chronologies.

3.3.4 Why is the Passover in John’s Gospel Labelled as Jewish?

On several occasions John’s gospel refers to the Passover as Jewish:

And the Jews' Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. John 2:13.

And the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. John 6:4.

And the Jews' Passover was nigh at hand. John 11:55.

For those who believe that Christians should keep the Passover (although in its New Covenant form) this is indeed a very strange statement to make; unless, of course, (most of) the Jews were keeping the Passover at the wrong time, in which case it makes sense.

In the author’s opinion this issue poses a minor enigma to those chronologies that claim all the Jews kept the Passover at the same time (at the end of the fourteenth), namely chronologies 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12.

3.3.5 The Disciples came to Christ on the Day the Passover Lambs were Killed

Both Mark 14:12 and Luke 22:7 clearly state that the disciples came to Christ on *the* day that the Passover lambs were killed, not the day before, asking him where they were going to prepare to eat the Passover. This perhaps presents a problem for those chronologies that place the New Covenant Passover at the beginning of the fourteenth, namely 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11, for how could the disciples have had time to prepare to eat the Passover at the *beginning* of the fourteenth if they came to Christ on the fourteenth and not before?

There is a plausible explanation. If Christ celebrated the Old Covenant Passover with his disciples (as well as institute the New Covenant Passover at the Last Supper) and hence ate a Passover lamb then the question that the disciples asked him in Mark 14:12 and Luke 22:7 could have been posed after their Passover lamb had been slain. If, however, Christ did not celebrate the Old Covenant Passover with his disciples but just instituted the New Covenant Passover at the Last Supper, and hence there was no lamb to sacrifice, then the question that the disciples asked him in Mark 14:12 and Luke 22:7 could have been posed as the 13th Abib drew to an end and the 14th began.

¹⁵ D. Freeman, *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. J. D. Douglas (Leicester: Inter Varsity Press, 1994), Part 3, p. 1188.

¹⁶ James Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. IV, p. 351.

Either way, maybe within as little time as half an hour the disciples could have prepared the Passover. “When the hour was come”, Luke 7:14, Christ sat down with the twelve disciples to eat the Passover. It is probably a mistake to think that this hour was “between the two evenings”, because the commandment was to sacrifice the lamb “between the two evenings”, not to start eating the Passover “between the two evenings”, Lev. 23:5. Thus Christ may have sat down with the twelve disciples to eat the Passover half an hour, an hour or even two hours after sunset. Although this explanation is speculative, there is nothing in the Scriptures to contradict it, and so Mark 14:12 and Luke 22:7 need not present any problems to any of the chronologies.

It is perhaps worth noting that Mark 14:12 refers to the day that the Passover lambs were killed as the first day of unleavened bread. Ordinarily, the first day of unleavened bread would mean the fifteenth of Abib, but the added description of “when they killed the Passover” makes it clear that the fourteenth of Abib is meant. This is supported by Josephus who in one place speaks of the feast of unleavened bread beginning on the fourteenth of Abib¹⁷ and in another as beginning on the fifteenth of Abib.¹⁸ The entire eight-day celebration, including the Passover, was sometimes referred to as the feast of unleavened bread.¹⁹

So, for this issue there is a reasonable explanation in defence of chronologies 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11 and it presents no problems to them.

3.3.6 Did Christ Grow Up Keeping the Passover at the Correct Time?

Chronology number 5 in effect purports that all the Jews observed the Passover at the wrong time (at the end of the fourteenth) and Christ established the correct time for it (at the beginning of the fourteenth) with His disciples. There is an obvious problem with this. If the correct time for the Passover is at the beginning of the fourteenth and all the Jews kept the Passover at the wrong time at the end of the fourteenth, then as Jesus was growing up as a child he would have been instructed incorrectly and kept the Passover incorrectly and thus imperfectly. Since Christ is perfect this presents a scriptural problem to chronology 5.

4. Conclusion

How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible,
whatever remains, however *improbable*, must be the truth?
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, (Sherlock Holmes to Watson)

Table 2 (see below) lists the contentious issues that this article has addressed and displays the conclusions reached for each issue by showing the problems it presents (if any) for the chronologies. At a glance, it is clear that there is only one chronology that has no problems, chronology 1, and all the others have serious problems of one sort or another.

Thus it appears that:

- the children of Israel sacrificed the Passover lamb at the beginning of the fourteenth Abib,
- by the time of Christ there were at least two groups keeping the Passover at different times,
- Christ kept the New Covenant Passover with his disciples at the beginning of the fourteenth of Abib,
- Christians today should keep the New Covenant Passover at the beginning of the fourteenth of Abib,
- and “Between the two evenings” means between sunset and dark and this is at the beginning of the day.

It also perhaps reassuring to note that this conclusion agrees with the teachings of a man through whom God did a mighty work for over half a century, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong.

¹⁷ Josephus, *War*, Vol. V, p. 99, [iii.1].

¹⁸ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Vol. III, pp. 248-250, [x.5].

¹⁹ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Vol. II, pp. 315-317, [xv.1].

Sect.	Contentious Issues	Chronology Numbers											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
3.1.1	Between the two evenings			s	s			s	s			s	s
3.1.2	Does to keep the Passover mean to eat the Passover?			S	S			S	S			S	S
3.1.3	When is morning?			s	s			s	s			s	s
3.1.4	How large was the region of Goshen?			S	S			S	S			S	S
3.1.5	When did the Egyptians bury their dead?			e	e			e	e			e	e
3.2.1	The NC Passover must coincide with either the OC Passover or the Last Supper		X				X				X		
3.2.2	Can the Passover sensibly be one day before the start of the days of UB?												
3.2.3	Parallel between timing of Passover lamb's selection and Christ's ministry			e	e			e	e			e	e
3.2.4	Did Christ's death coincide with the sacrifice of the Passover lambs?												
3.2.5	Is the Passover moveable?		S	S			S	S			S	S	
3.2.6	No doubt that some Jews kept Passover at the end of the 14 th during Christ's time									H	H	H	H
3.3.1	Is the Passover in John's gospel the <i>chagigah</i> ?												
3.3.2	Was the Last Supper <i>The</i> Passover?		4S		4S		4S		4S		4S		4S
3.3.3	Did some Jews keep the Passover on the wrong day during the time of Christ?												
3.3.4	Why is the Passover in John's gospel labelled as Jewish?					e	e	e	e	e	e	e	e
3.3.5	The disciples came to Christ on the day the Passover lambs were killed												
3.3.6	Did Christ grow up keeping the Passover at the correct time?					S							

Table 2 - Contentious Issues, Chronologies and their Problems.

Key

- X Ruled out
H A major historical problem exists
S A major scriptural problem exists with one particular verse or with two or more verses when put together.
nS where *n* is a number, means *n* S's, e.g. 2S.
s A minor scriptural problem exists with one particular verse or with two or more verses when put together.
e A minor scriptural enigma exists

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