

Passover and the Second Coming: An Observance the Church Can Ill Afford to Ignore!

Where, pray tell, is the Church today whose leaders lead and “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints”? (Jude 3) In this dialogue, I wish to challenge not only the many churches who have followed the tradition of Rome in excluding Passover observance, but also demonstrate that its correct observance may be critical to Holy Day observers in properly preparing for the Second Coming of our Lord.

Polycarp, the apostle in Asia Minor who succeeded John the Apostle in the leadership of the churches there, contended with the bishop of Rome (in 154 A.D.), who tried unsuccessfully to get him to stop keeping the Passover. Irenaeus tells us that Anicetus was unable to persuade Polycarp “not to observe what he had always observed with John the disciple of our Lord, and the other apostles with whom he had associated.”

Bishop Poycrates succeeded Polycarp. He and his Asian churches were excommunicated by **Victor**, the Bishop of Rome, because they refused to stop commemorating Christ’s death on the 14th day of Abib, the first month of the Hebrew calendar. [Their followers became known as the sect of the Quartodecimans in Church history.] Polycrates wrote a letter to the brethren throughout the world, saying, “I, therefore, brethren, who have lived 65 years in the Lord, and have met with the brethren throughout the world, and have gone through every Holy Scripture, am not affrighted by terrifying words. For those greater than I have said, ‘We ought to obey God rather than man.’” Polycrates thus echoed the words of John and Peter when forbidden (in Acts 4:18-19) by the Sanhedrin from teaching in the name of Yahshua.

Church, in your reflections upon yourself, you should think it rather odd that you do not consider the Passover a matter concerning your obedience to God. Well has Hosea prophesied of the Church (Ephraim): “I have written to him the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing.” How can we claim to know God when we relegate Yahweh’s most important institutions to the ash heap of history?

Emperor Constantine in the 4th Century passed laws which made it a capital offence for any Christian to keep the Passover in remembrance of the Lord’s death. He did so in the name of Christianity. I quote [with emphases] from his post-Nicean letter, so you can see the kind of perverse mind that spawned the anti-Semitic heritage of Western European Christianity:

Constantine, the August, to the churches. ...

When the question arose concerning the most holy day of Easter, it was decreed by common consent to be expedient, that this festival should be celebrated on the same day by all, in every place. ... it seemed to every one a most unworthy thing that we should follow the custom of the Jews in the celebration of this most holy solemnity, who, polluted wretches! having stained their hands with a nefarious crime, are justly blinded in their minds. It is fit, therefore, that, rejecting the practice of this people, we should perpetuate to all future ages the celebration of this rite, in a more legitimate order, which we have kept from the first day of our Lord’s passion even to the present times. *Let us then have nothing in common with the most hostile rabble of the Jews.* We have received another method from the Savior. A more lawful and proper course is open to *our most holy religion*. In pursuing this course with a *unanimous consent*, let us withdraw ourselves, my much honored brethren, from that most odious fellowship. ... As it is necessary that this fault should be so amended *that we may have nothing in common with*

*the usage of these parricides and murderers of our Lord; and so that order is most convenient which is observed by all the churches of the West, as well as those of the southern and northern parts of the world, and also by some in the East, it is judged therefore to be most equitable and proper, and I pledged myself that this arrangement should meet your approbation, viz. that the custom which prevails with one consent in the city of Rome, and throughout all Italy, Africa and Egypt, in Spain, Gaul, Britain, Lybia, the whole of Greece, the diocese of Asia, Pontus and Cilicia, would be gladly embraced by your prudence, ... and to have no fellowship with the perjury of the Jews. And, to sum up the whole in a few words, it is agreeable to the common judgment of all, that the most holy feast of **Easter** should be celebrated on one and the same day (A Historical View of THE COUNCIL OF NICE; with a TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENTS by Rev. Isaac Boyle, D.D.*

First of all, this decision was not arrived at democratically, or unanimously, as Constantine would have future generations believe. Rather it was shoved down Christianity's throat by fiat, although it must be admitted that the bishops of the vast majority of these Gentile, so-called orthodox churches, were of the same spirit with Constantine.^[1] But there were still thousands of Christians, especially in Asia Minor, Antioch, and throughout the East for whom Passover was still the chief cornerstone in their liturgical year in the 3rd and 4th Century. Even in the West, research by Samuele Bacchiocchi in his doctoral dissertation—From Sabbath to Sunday—he shows how up until this time many fellowshipped all weekend, calling Saturday the Sabbath and Sunday “the Lord's Day.”^[2] His research at the Vatican archives shows that Biblical institutions such as the Sabbath and Passover were still held in high regard in Italy at this late date. All of this changed when Constantine the demigod became the chosen instrument of Lucifer, the adversary of Israel, in putting to death sincere believers who still clung to these cherished institutions.

Secondly, Constantine's attitude is that if it weren't for the Jews, Christ would have never been crucified, and that he himself bears no responsibility for the torture and death of the Holy Lamb of Yahweh. A truly converted Christian never loses sight of the fact that he personally was as responsible as anyone else for putting Yahshua up on that cross. Furthermore, Christ said in talking to the Gentile woman from Samaria in John 4 that “salvation is of the Jews... we know what we worship”. Constantine succeeded in totally divorcing^[3] Christianity from Judaic institutions. Even Eusebius, the father of Church history who presided at the Council of Nicea, despised what Constantine made the Church into, ie. an image of the Roman Empire itself.

Anyone who thinks that Constantine was a noble Christian man who legalized Christianity and made it a state religion is a fool. The fact that both the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Churches hold this man in high esteem is prima facie evidence of their reprobate foundation. In 324 AD Constantine gave permission to the Jews to rebuild their Temple in Jerusalem. After the Council of Nicea, the anti-Semitic (which is to say, anti-Old Testament) sentiment fostered by that conclave led to a reversal of this directive. But instead of just ordering the Jews to cease work on the project, he ordered their ears cut off because he knew the Torah forbade anyone from working on the Temple who was dismembered in any way. How's that for an exemplary icon of early Christendom.^[4]

But his attitude goes hand and hand with his thinking that his is the most holy religion. This is laughable when one realizes that “Easter” was none other than the Babylonian goddess Ishtar (pronounced the one and the same as Easter), a fertility goddess. I will not go into

the lurid details of phallic and vaginal symbols and obsession with sex attendant with her worship.^[5] The worship and practices of the heathen incited the wrath of Almighty Yahweh against our ancestors and was explicitly condemned from one end of the scriptures to another. It never entered the mind of any of the apostles to keep Easter, in that the Lord commanded us to remember His death in the new emblems of the Passover, not His resurrection via some kind of weekly Easter.

We see how Constantine lies about Easter having been observed since 31 AD by Christ's followers (another joke). Worse, he uses "we" as though he has anything in common with the Jewish founders, disciples, and Apostles of the 1st Century. But his devilish, subliminal purpose is to hijack Christianity and tote it on his pagan, sun-worshipping back. Many church historians cite evidence that he remained a sun-worshipper until his death in 337 AD. But historians tell us that it was the bishop of Rome or his top prelates in the Catholic Church who wrote these theological diatribes on behalf of Constantine, not Constantine himself. So what does that tell you. A group of religious zealots who were no more than a dozen years removed from their last persecutions (303-312 A.D.) at the hand of a Roman Emperor (Diocletian), when given all the dominion that Satan had to give them, are now all too happy to dish out death and inquisition to anyone practicing allegiance to the Jewish Traditionary Law, Passover, Sabbath, etc., totally devoid of any kind of Christian spirit. The following commentary on Constantine's "bull" is taken from sabbatarian leader Wade Cox (Australia) of the Christian Church of God:

Not only do we perceive a high level of manipulation of power, propaganda, and religious belief, but we see the expression of roots of anti-Semitism in Western culture from the world government of the day.

Eusebius understood that the Church was not supposed to be run like some Gentile kingdom from Matt 20, where Yahshua said the princes of the Gentiles "exercise dominion over them...however, it shall not be so among you (Matt. 20:25-26). But whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant."

So it is not just a coincidence that Yahshua states clearly in two places in His messages to the seven Churches of Rev. 2 that He hates the deeds of, as well as the doctrines of the Nicolaitanes. Nick means *victor*, one who gains preeminence over the people, the laity. It is that system of church government, of giving undue authority to pastors in violation of I Cor. 14:29-31, Matt. 20:25-27 and Matt. 23:8 ["only One is to be your Master; all of you are brethren."]^[6] And so in the 2nd Century we have Bishop Victor in Rome going against Irenaeus' advice to be tolerant of those observing the Passover. Victor presumes to have authority to excommunicate the bishops in Asia who held to this Apostolic ordinance. And so Constantine was simply following the bigoted, oppressive mentality of bishops in Rome before him who utterly failed to follow Yahshua's words. Now, however, Constantine wields the power of the sword/the state to enforce false doctrines and commandments of men. Small wonder then that the prophet Daniel tells us that the fourth and last beast to have dominion over the earth (which all interpreters recognize to be Rome), would be both political as well as religious, and would scatter the power of the holy people intent on clinging to Yahweh's institutions.

Passover in the Early Church

This is not to say that there were not sincere believers in the name Jesus Christ in that Church system. Jerome, the 5th C. scholar who translated the Greek scriptures into Latin, wrote a book

to describe the customs and practices of the early churches. He says it was an *apostolic* tradition to extend the Passover vigil until past midnight because of “the expectation of the Advent of Christ.”

He quotes from *The Epistle of the Apostles*, written in Asia Minor around 140 A.D. There Christ is quoted as saying,

“And you therefore celebrate the remembrance of my death, i.e. the Passover... when you complete my remembrance and my Agape [meal] at the crowing of the cock.” The disciples ask Christ: “O Lord, have you then not completed [fulfilled] the drinking of the Passover. Must we then do it again?” Jesus responds to the apostles, saying: Yes, until I come from the Father with my wounds.”

Contrary to what virtually all Churches tell us about the Passover, Yahshua of Nazareth at the Last Supper indicated the Passover would *not* be completely fulfilled by his atonement on the cross. Notice Luke 22:15:

With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: For I shall not any more eat thereof, until *it* is fulfilled in the kingdom of Elohim/God.

In my thesis on the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, I show that it is a Passover meal. This pinnacle event of the Ages will finally fulfill all the hopes and dreams of the Godhead, not to mention the earnest expectation of the creation (Rom. 8:21-22).

In the above quote by Jerome, taken from his Commentary on Matt 25:6, the cry that goes out at midnight, “Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him,” is thought to be a reference to the Passover story in Exod. 12. Even Alfred Edersheim, the great Messianic Jewish historian and prodigious scholar of the late 1800’s, likens the original Passover of Exod. 12 to the midnight cry of Matt 25:6.^[7] In the original, it was the night of Israel’s birth as a nation: of their creation and adoption as the people of God (Isa. 43:15).

The question we ask for the first time in this paper is this: Could Passover picture the birth of that holy nation (I Pe. 2:9), that kingdom of priests (Rev. 5:10), which in time past were not a people, but now are the people of God. Rom. 1:4 speaks of even Christ being declared the Son of God with power...*by the resurrection from the dead*. So, likewise, the manchild at Christ’s 2nd Coming [whose birth of the woman, ie. the church, is there symbolized in code (Rev.12:5)]

In that midnight hour of the 14th did Yahweh execute “judgment against all the gods of Egypt.” Likewise, the simultaneity of salvation for one group and disappointment for another group is described in the parallel passage of Isa. 66:5-6:

Hear ye the word of Yahweh, ye that tremble at His word; your brethren, that hated you (without a cause), that cast you out for My Name’s sake [exactly what Yahshua predicted would happen to His true disciples in Matt. 10:22—“ye shall be hated of all men for My name’s sake”—and in Matt. 24:9, Lk. 6:22.] They said, ‘Let the LORD be glorified’: but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. v. 6-- A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of Yahweh that renders recompence to his enemies.

v. 7—Before she travailed, she brought forth: before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.^[8]

v. 8—Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born all at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

While Is. 66:10 goes on to prophesy of the restoration under Messiah of physical Jerusalem, the initial fulfillment of the above verses can only be understood in terms of a rapture of the Elect at the opening of the womb of Sheol. But can you imagine the shame of those Left Behind, whose recognition of Yah's chosen comes only after His presence has been revealed?

Notice how beautifully Paul's letter to Thessalonica dovetails with the principles laid out above:

Seeing it is a righteous thing with Elohim to recompense tribulation to them that trouble (Gr. Thlibo=tribulate, pressure, vex) you. And to you who are troubled rest (sabbatize)... relax with us when the Lord Yahshua shall be unveiled from heaven with His might angels, who in flaming fire are taking vengeance on them that know not Elohim, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Yahshua the Messiah; Who shall be punished with age-lasting destruction from the face and presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.

But there is even more definitive allusion to the Passover in Yahshua's discussion of how to prepare for the 2nd Coming. Notice Luke 12:35:

Let your loins be *girded* about (a reference to Exod. 12:11), and your lights burning (something one does when one stays up at night), and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding: that when he comes and knocks, they may open to Him immediately. (V. 37) Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he comes shall find watching: truly I say to you, that He *shall gird himself*,^[9] and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. [Another allusion to the last Passover, where He humbly example stooped down and washed His disciples' feet]

v. 38--And if he shall come in the **second watch**, or come in the **third watch**, and find them so, blessed are those servants.

These words need to be understood in their literalness. They are referring to His People staying up and watching for His return on Passover night.

In Samuele Bacchiocchi's book *God's Festivals in Scripture and History*, he says (commenting on chap. 15 of *The Epistle of the Apostle*): "the deliverance of Peter took place in the Passover night, the night of watching." Here, Passover is kept as a night of vigil, in remembrance of the death of Jesus." It is useful to connect Luke 13:28 to Luke 12:37 quoted above:

There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets, in the kingdom, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall be arriving from the east, west, north and south and ***will be made to recline*** in the kingdom of Elohim.

The Apostle John reclined on Yahshua's bosom at the supper (John 21:20). The casual, relaxed sitting position is explained partly by Jewish custom at the Passover. This was done to symbolize their freedom from slavery in Egypt.^[10]

According to Josephus, Passover always falls when the sun is in Aries. Aries is the heavenly sign preceding Taurus in spring. Aries, the sign of a ram, refers to the ram which Yahweh provided when Abraham was about obey Yahweh in offering up his son Isaac's life. (Gen. 22) Hence, Aries and Passover are inextricably linked. When 13th months are inserted inappropriately, as in 2005, it causes the Passover to fall when the sun is in Taurus the bull. Bullinger's *The Witness of the Stars* shows that the meaning of Taurus is that of judgment, not mercy. Witness the fact that the Noachian Deluge came in the 17th day of the 2nd month when the sun was in Taurus.

There is further confirmation of the springtime return of Christ in the Olivet prophecies in the parable of the fig tree at the end of the Olivet prophecies. Remember these prophecies (Matt. 24, Mk. 13, Lk. 21) are answers to the disciples questions concerning the end of the Age and the sign of His Coming. In addition, all three end-of-the-Age discourses in the synoptic gospels mention this parable immediately after the body of the prophecy is finished:

[The fig tree], when its branch is yet tender and its leaves sprouting out, you know that summer is near. Thus you, also, whenever you may be perceiving all these things, know that He is near, even at the doors. (Matt. 24: 32 Concordant Literal N.T.)

There must be some reason that Yahshua makes reference to an unripe fig tree, and makes its springtime growth into a parable concerning his return to the earth. Tie this together with the fact that Yahshua--the only One found worthy to open the seals (in Rev. 5) that bring about the 2nd Coming--refers to unripe figs falling from an unripe fig tree at the time of the opening of the 6th seal (Rev. 6:13). This just happens to be the very point in prophecy that the 2nd Coming occurs! Christ the Revelator makes the remarkable and, by itself, unlikely analogy between the great meteorite shower associated with the 2nd Coming (Matt. 24:29b), and unripe figs falling from an unripe fig tree. This would be a strange analogy if it weren't for the fact that He has already tipped us off in the Olivet that unripe fig trees are a riddle that needs to be solved.

Rev. 6:13 is a deliberate nexus or tie in to Matt. 24:29, so that no one should miss the fact that His Coming is in the early spring. Furthermore, some Greek manuscripts add "whole" in front of moon (Gr. is *selene*) in the previous verse (v. 12). Thus, it is a *full moon*. What springtime full moon could it be but the Passover? The moon is symbolic of those who reflect Yahshua's light, and Passover is the night when His Church is to be figuratively covered in His blood through contrition and confession. It is a time for examining oneself, whether one is in the faith (II Cor. 13:5); time for confession of sin and heartfelt repentance, and yet hopefulness that our redemption draws near (Lk. 21:28).

What better night for a gracious God to send His Son back, than on a night on which He is most likely to find His Bride spotless and clean, untainted by unconfessed sin.

Not so the Church--that stubborn, disobedient, unchanging entity for whom words are nigh well useless to persuade. And if she has no changes, Ps. 55:19 tells us *it is because she fears not Elohim/God*. The Church has so deceived herself that everything that can be done for her salvation has already been done that they have no motive or incentive to change. In contrast, the message of the gospels, like the Passover, is that salvation is ever a matter of urgency and desperation. It is the beggars in spirit, the blind men who cry out shamelessly by the side of the road, the woman who presses through the crowd so she can grab the corners of His garment, and the little tax collector who runs ahead and climbs up into a tree so he can catch a glimpse of the

Savior (Lk.19:4), and the forceful ones who lay hold of the kingdom, pressing into it (Matt.11:12, Lk. 16:16), who are ultimately rewarded with the Kingdom of Heaven.

Yes, the truth is different than what churches would have you believe, even in Paul's writings:

Much more then, being now justified (acquitted and put back into access to the Father) by His blood, we *shall be saved* from wrath through Him (that is, currently, via His ongoing priesthood)...we were reconciled to Elohim by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. (Rom. 5:9-10)

Quote the above verses to most any Christian today and you will get a blank stare. Worse, some will get angry and accuse you of taking it out of context. Christ must live in the believer through His Spirit, and the believer must cooperate with His spirit by making conscious choices to live by the Word and study the Word.

The ancient Israelites listened to Moses and feared Yahweh, and prepared diligently to keep the Passover, by faith (Heb. 11:28). Will the end-time Church listen to this message and keep a proper Passover, or will she slumber the night away--the very night on which Yahshua was manhandled shamelessly, and paraded before one authority after another, and back again. Can you sleep, O Church, on the night His form and countenance were so marred more than any man ever was? (Isa. 52:14)

If so, then you are still in the garden of Gethsemane with the Eleven who fell asleep in the hour of Yahshua's greatest need--with Him physically, but certainly not in spirit. "Could you not pray with me one hour?" is your Savior's question to you. And if you never make it to Acts 2 and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, how, pray tell, do you ever expect to be saved? *Yahweh is not in the business of picking unripe, immature, unsavory fruit* from His vineyard, however much you might like to insist that He will.

He will likely get you saved, but you will not like how--the means--by which He will accomplish that end. You give Him no choice but to leave you behind only to be saved by means of fire, the fiery time of God's Trumpet Plagues. [And yes, it can be proven that the Trumpet Plagues are subsequent to His return] Rev. 12:6 says the woman (left behind Church people and other Israelite people fleeing the cities for the wilderness) will be fed and nourished/taught for 1260 days leading up to a 2nd Harvest of souls at the time of the resurrection of the Two Witnesses. But the wilderness ordeal of the Church will involve a paucity of hot water and bathing in cold streams. It will involve a lack of refrigeration, a total lack of access to shopping malls and other municipal conveniences. It will involve a lack of heat during the winter and perhaps electricity in general, except what can be achieved thru burning of wood and coal. There will not likely be much air conditioning during the summer. Yahshua Himself will do much of the teaching in the wilderness (Ezek.20:35-38), and will set up shepherds over His people during this time in the wilderness. Ezek 34:10-25 is very descriptive of what Yahshua plans to do during the two 3 1/2 year periods during which His people undergo wilderness testing and training.

Some will mature during the first half of the seven years and ripen as a wheat harvest on Pentecost. Still others will be tested further during the 42 month period (the 2nd half of the Day of the Lord) during which the Beast will be actively pursuing believers (the woman) into their wilderness sanctuaries. (Rev. 12:15)

Many during this time will overcome only by giving their neck to the guillotine, instead of taking the mark of the Beast microchip into their hand or forehead. This latter system of economic and religious control only comes about via the powers and military hegemony of a

united Europe, and her false prophet, the harlot church of Rome, Italy. The mark will not be legislated by our Congress prior to Christ's Coming.

In Lk. 23:43, Yahshua said to the thief on the cross, "*This day* you shall be with me in Paradise." Since Christ was in the tomb that day and the next three days (Matt 12:40), then "this day" must refer to Passover, and the fact that they would be re-united eventually on "that day" at His Coming. {Linguistic analysis by Ivan Panin and common sense mitigate against putting the comma after "day", since it is pointless for Christ to emphasize the day when He is speaking}

Finally, it should be mentioned that Israel's crossing over the river Jordan into the promised land was just prior to the Passover of 1445 B.C. (approx.) Jewish commentaries--based on the allusions to Passover in Gen. 18 (where Abraham made a hasty meal for Yahweh and the two angels) and Gen. 19: 3, where Lot made a feast of unleavened for the two angels sent over to take him out of Sodom--tell us that the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah likely took place at Yahweh's spring appointed times.

I personally believe the Left Behind Church will flee out of their places of comfort in the cities and commence a 1260 day period of trial just after a spring Passover in the near future, (when Yahshua returns for His Elect). Their disqualification from being part of the Elect is due in part to the manner in which they have treated the Passover. Failure to keep 14th evening after the new moon (crescent), or not keeping it at all, may ultimately prove to be due to the same problem, ie. not being led of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is there to lead us into all truth. But the Church pretends that there is not enough information provided in scripture to guide us to the correct night. But this is not true.

In the absence of knowledge, people naturally turn to their leaders. Well has Isaiah (3: 12) prophesied, not just of the nation, but the Church:

O My people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.

And yet many in the Church of God sabbatarian movement have switched from the 14th to the 15th. This is a step in the wrong direction. Being neither versed in Hebrew or the scriptures, nor led by the Spirit in this and other matters, believers have naturally gravitated toward the Jewish fixed calendar, or simply follow the theological mentor of their own Church. This may be convenient, and leave many with more time to vegetate in front of their televisions, but it hardly leads to keeping the holy days according to God's plan. *What you do, and when you do it, is a metaphor for whom (or Whom) you serve.*

For instance, for decades I kept the Day of Atonement fast on the 9th day and 11th day of the 7th month (depending on the year), instead of the designated 10th day (Lev. 23:27). All because 1)I was relying on the Church of God to do my thinking, and 2)they were trusting the rabbinic Judaism, which decided at some point after the fall of the Temple that it was not a good idea to have Yom Kippur fall on a Friday or Sunday, or have the autumn holy days fall back to back with weekly Sabbaths.^[11]

This dependence upon the rabbinic thought extends not just to when we do our annual holy days, but to eschatological interpretation of these days. The Feast of Trumpets is a good case in point. Church of God and Messianic groups alike buy the argument that Trumpets refers to the 1st resurrection from plausible arguments in the Talmud. But the 7th Trump of Revelation (Rev 11:15 is toward the end of the 7 year Day of Judgment period; yet I Thes. 5:9 says "ye are not appointed to Judgment, but to obtain salvation."^[12] The eschatology of nominal holy day observers has the Church going through almost all of the Day of Yahweh's wrath!

Nevertheless, as the Apostle Paul says in I Cor. 15, the resurrection is every man in his own order (Gr. Word tagma=army squadron in the LXX). The various Palestinian crops—barley, wheat, grapes—matured and were harvested at different times, thus picturing the different resurrections. But the barley could be harvested as early as the Saturday night after Passover, even if it fell on the weekly Sabbath. (see p. 204 of Alfred Edersheim—The Temple: Its Ministry and Services) Barley is a type of the Elect, because they are the firstfruits.

Judah will be the lead tribe in the Millenium. Judah, the son of Jacob, was the first to repent and contritely petition Joseph for mercy down in Egypt (Gen. 44:16-33).^[13] It is those, above all others, who have pierced Him whose eyes behold Him when He comes with clouds (Rev. 1:7). Christ predicted the repentance even of the Pharisees and scribes at the end of his long indictment in Matt. 23. They declare His blessed coming as reigning Messiah (see Ps. 118: 26 and Matt 23: 39) at the start of the Day of Judgment. Zech. 8:23, 12:10-14 refer the leading role that Jews will play in guiding the survivors of Yahweh's plagues. Nevertheless, they will, along with the other tribes, have to bow down and serve those whose life has followed the pattern of Joseph, ie. the saints of the Most High.^[14] The work of the Church of God groups who have persisted in the lies and traditions of the elders (Matt. 15:2-6), will have to be tried in fire, and burned up. They will overcome as Sardis and Laodicean Christians during the horrific events of the book of Revelation (cp. Rev. 16:15 with the warnings given to these two churches in Rev. 3:3 and 3:18). The rewards bequeathed to those who overcome here are among the highest (Rev. 3:21), despite their initial recalcitrance and spiritual complacency.

By the grace of Yahweh and His Son I have kept the holy days and weekly Sabbath since I was a teenager (I being now in my 50's). The father has been gracious to my iniquity through the perfect atonement of Yahshua. But this fullness of the gospel is the reason that my burden today is light, and I can truly say that His yoke is easy (Matt.11:28). I have had the joy and privilege of rejoicing the heart of the widow (Job 29:13), and the blessing of those ready to perish has come upon me. By Yahweh's strength I have traveled over 350,000 miles and performed some 5,000 piano vocal concerts for seniors and convalescents in two dozen states. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has truly removed the yoke of this world from off my back. But it all begins and ends with the Passing Over of our sins. There is no revival or salvation without the Passover Lamb, and our diligent remembrance of what He has done for all mankind. Passover is the alpha and omega of Yahweh's plan of salvation.

If you have never kept a Passover, consider observing it unencumbered by rabbinic tradition or sullied by the catholic casualness of the masses. If you are a long-time Passover ob-server, but are concerned that your Church has left its timing to others, drawn attention to itself more than the Savior, and failed to keep it as a vigil in expectation of Christ's return, then pray about the matter.

While the Sabbatarian movement [that I have been a part of for thirty some years] never taught me to keep Passover as a vigil through the 2nd and 3rd Watches of the night, I fully intend to next year. For information on Passover dates, please e-mail from this website.

www.convince-the-gainsayer.com

[1] It should also be noted that the leaders of these same proto-orthodox churches, back in the late 2nd Century, when convened to decide whether Marcion's teaching was legitimate, could only by the slimmest of margins vote to reject his idea that the God of the O.T. was a completely different God than the One who sent Jesus Christ.

[2] This is the mistaken idea that Christ had risen on a Sunday morning. Hence, the professional scribes who copied Codex Alexandrinus and Vaticanus excluded Mark 16:9ff, because *protos sabbaton* in that vs. showed that Christ first appeared to Mary Magdalene at the tomb early on the *first Sabbath* after Passover, not on a Sunday morning. My dissertation on The Chronology of the Passion Week explains why *mia ton sabbaton* of John 20:1,19, Mt. 28:1, Mk. 16:1, Lk. 24:1 and Acts 20:7 also cannot mean "first day of the week."

[3] The Apostle Paul said in II Th. 2:3 there would come "a falling away" prior to the day of the Lord, and that man of sin would be revealed. "Falling away" in the Greek is the same word for "divorce," *apostasion*. Hence, there is no question that Constantine was the chief instrument of apostasy in the Christian era, and just the kind of man of sin that Paul would have had in mind. Constantine canonized the mystery of lawlessness/iniquity (II Th. 2:7) so pervasive in other church fathers' writings, even the heretic Marcion.

[4] And yet the Catholic Church canonized his sainthood, and Greek orthodox Church practically deifies Constantine.

[5] John Calvin and Martin Luther were both quite aware of the historical facts concerning Easter, were appalled that the term had ensconced itself into the liturgical calendar of the Church, and wanted nothing to do with Easter or its accoutrements, conscientious as they were toward Deut. 12:30-31.

[6] This passage Christ also forbade us calling men by flattering titles "father", "rabbi", and "Master".

[7] See pg. 186 of Bible History Old Testament, by Alfred Edersheim.

[8] This cannot refer to the events of May 15, 1948, as the modern state of Israel's birth as a nation came about via the pain of warfare, death, and its attendant suffering. The resurrection and gathering of the Elect, on the other hand, will be abrupt, yet painless (Rev. 21:4).

[9] Jn. 13:4-5--"He rises from supper, laid aside his robe, took a linen towel, and *girded Himself*. After that He poured water into a basin, began to wash the disciples' feet, and wipe them with the towel he was *girded* with.

[10] See account of Paschal Supper in *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Alfred Edersheim, p. 350.

[11] Yet there are no less than three places in the Mishnah--Besah 2:1, Shabbat 15:3, Sukkah 5:7--where there is clear-cut reference to Day of Atonements falling on either a Friday or Sunday. Hence, the dehiyyot rules came into existence later. The Encyclopedia Judaica tells us they were not in place until the 11th Century

[12] I have proven elsewhere that the 1st resurrection is described in Rev. 7, taking place at the 6th seal. This is less than 5 1/2 years before the blowing of the 7th Trump. The reasons are too numerous to mention here.

[13] He confessed: "Elolim has found out the iniquity of thy servants." Judah was even willing to be a slave to Joseph in place of his brother Benjamin. This is the most moving story of repentance in the entire O.T.!

[14] It is shocking to learn of Messianic Jewish groups who believe their relatives are saved and in the kingdom apart from a saving knowledge of the Lord Yeshua the Messiah, simply because they were "good" Jews.