

The New Covenant Passover Sequence

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Comparing Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and 1 Corinthians, this is a summary of events that took place in association with the new covenant Passover in as chronological an order as possible.

1) Near the end of Abib 13, as it grew dark, Christ ate his last meal with his disciples **before** the annual appointed time of the Passover, which occurred the following evening of Nisan 14,

Now **before** the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that his hour had come... (Jn. 13:1; NASB used throughout unless otherwise noted; emphasis added).

2) Christ could not participate in the annual memorial of Passover, at the conclusion of Abib 14, because he would have to die as the Passover Lamb at around the same time that the lambs were being sacrificed (approximately 3:00 pm on Nisan 14),

When the hour had come, he reclined (at the table) and the apostles with him. And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, **I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God**" (Lk. 22:14-16; emphasis added).

3) Christ's last meal with his disciples commenced at the conclusion of Abib 13 and the beginning of Abib 14. As God calculates each day from evening to evening (Gen. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31), we would expect the beginning of the 14th of Abib to be in the evening,

When it was evening he came with the twelve (Mk. 14:17; emphasis added).

4) The disciples were already eating before Christ blessed the bread and wine that was to symbolize his body and blood (Mt. 26:26). Therefore, one can conclude that Christ asked a blessing on this regular evening meal as was his custom (Mt. 14:19; 26:26; Mk. 6:41; 14:22; Lk. 9:16; 24:30).

It should be noted that the apostle Paul confirms, along with Luke's account, that some wine was blessed a second time, but it was later on that evening and an explanation of its meaning given **when the meal was concluding** (Lk. 22:17-20 cf. 1Cor. 11:25).

5) After the usual blessing on the meal was given, and after the disciples had begun eating, Christ got up from the table and began washing the disciples' feet,

(He) got up from supper, and laid aside his garments; and taking a towel, he girded himself. Then he poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded (Jn. 13:4-5).

It is important to note that the foot-washing occurred before Judas partook of the morsel mentioned in John 13:26.

We are also to do what Christ did, but for each other, showing our willingness to humble ourselves and serve one another,

If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you (Jn. 13:14-15).

6) After the foot-washing and while the disciples were eating, Christ asked a blessing on some bread and explained what it symbolized,

While they were eating, he took (some) bread, and after a blessing he broke (it), and gave (it) to them, and said, "Take (it); this is my body" (Mk. 14:22 cf. Mt. 26:26; comments in parentheses added).

7) **After the meal** had finished, Christ blessed some wine, **poured it out**, and explained what it symbolized,

And in the same way (he took) the cup **after they had eaten**, saying, "This cup which is **poured out for you** is the new covenant in my blood (Lk. 22:20 cf. 1Cor. 11:25; emphasis added).

The wine was poured out so that each disciple had some of his own (Lk. 22:17). The wine, which was in one large cup, was divided amongst the 12 disciples.

The evening's activities concluded with singing a hymn (Mk. 14:26).

In summary, God's people are to gather together annually toward the end of the 14th day (Num. 9:1-3; Dt. 16:6) of the first month of God's year (Ex. 12:1-2; Dt. 16:1), which commences in the spring (March/April), as a memorial of Christ's death. During this service, all baptized members of the body of Christ discuss the meaning behind Christ's action when he washed his disciples' feet. Following this discussion, pairs of men and pairs of women proceed to wash one another's feet (see: Explanation of the Symbols of the New Testament Passover). Later, the group discusses the meaning of unleavened bread, prior to someone asking a blessing upon it and distributing broken pieces to everyone (Mt. 26:26). Next, the group discusses the meaning of the wine, prior to someone asking a blessing upon it and distributing a portion to everyone (Mt. 26:27; 1Cor. 10:16). At the conclusion of the service, a hymn can be sung and preparations for the meal associated with the Night to Be Much Observed can begin (Ex. 12:42). This evening is the beginning of the seven Days of Unleavened Bread. It is also the first High Day of this festival, during which unleavened bread is to be eaten daily (Ex. 12:15; 13:6-7; 34:18; Lev. 23:6; 28:17; Dt. 16:3). God's people gather for

fellowship and discussions throughout this seven day period (Ex. 12:18-20; Dt. 16:3-4). There is a gathering together on the morning after the weekly Sabbath, for the purpose of discussing the wave sheaf offering, which symbolized Jesus Christ being accepted by his Father on behalf of every sinner (Lev. 23:11). It is from this point in time that the Day of Pentecost is counted (Lev. 23:15-21). The seventh day, or last day of this festival, is also a High Day during which no business, buying, or trading is to occur (Ex. 12:15-16).

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor. 11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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