

IMPORTANT PASSOVER TEXTS IN JOSEPHUS AND PHILO

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In order that the passover statements by first century writers may be understood, it is essential that their festal terms be cataloged and interpreted. Generally speaking, these ritual words and phrases are an unknown language, and may be of quite different meaning from their English translations. For example, the Greek word *πάσχα*, or *φάσκα*, as sometimes occurs, is found about twelve times in Josephus. It is translated *passover*, and we commonly think of the paschal supper. But *commonly*, with Josephus, the word is interchangeable with the eight-day feast of unleavened bread, and only three times does it refer directly to the 14th day of Nisan, while only three times does it signify the paschal lamb. And apparently no place has as yet come to light where *πάσχα* designates the supper alone, although it may refer to paschal sacrifice and supper together. In Josephus, there are about twenty-five references to this sacrificial ceremony.

Again, a writer is sometimes speaking of ceremonies throughout (*καθ' ἡν*) the feast of unleavened bread. Again not. But in any event, the analyst must carefully compare any one statement with all the other cognate records before valid conclusions can be drawn. Therefore every *πάσχα* sentence must be seriously examined, for the writer by no means invariably, as some conclude, thereby refers to a sacrificial supper on a specific date. Moreover, with Josephus, it is easy to overlook details. Consequently it seems worth while to analyze a few important passages from these authori-

tative witnesses in the time of Christ—statements which have provoked much discussion. For convenience, the most important texts will be recited.

I. *Wars II.i.1-3 and Ant. XVII. ix.1-3*. The circumstances underlying these two Josephus texts appear to be as follows: The seven days of public mourning for Herod the Great ended at evening, apparently at the evening *ineunte* of 14 Nisan, at which time a sedition arose among the Jews. The time is indicated in Section 3 of the first text:

καὶ δὴ τῆς τῶν ἀζύμων ἐνστάσης ἑορτῆς, ἣ πάσχα παρὰ Ἰουδαίους καλεῖται, πολὺ τι θυμάτων πλῆθος ἐνδεχομένη, κάτεισι μὲν ἐκ τῆς χώρας λαὸς ἄπειρος ἐπὶ τὴν θρησκείαν, οἱ δὲ τοὺς σοφιστὰς πενθοῦντες ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ συνειστήκεσαν τροφήν τῇ στάσει ποριζόμενοι.¹

Translation (mine)—

And now that the feast of unleavened bread had already come, which is called pascha by the Jews, one that contributes such a large number of sacrifices, countless people, on the one hand, stream in from the country for the ceremony, while, on the other hand, those mourning for the doctors stood in the temple procuring recruits for their faction.

The foregoing sentence outlines the contrasting situation. Josephus adds that the clamors of the temple party were heard all over Jerusalem. At the same time the masses had lodged in the plain and were ready to offer their paschal lambs. Evening had come on, as indicated by the drunken rioting of Archelaus.² *It was his conduct that caused the*

¹ *Wars II.i.3*.

² *Wars II.ii.5*.

sedition. He countered at once by sending his general against the Jews, but they drove him away with stones. Then a tribune with a cohort of soldiers was sent. These were killed. After this the people "betook themselves to their sacrifices as if they had done no mischief." Finally Archelaus sent his whole army—the footmen into the city, and the horsemen into the plain, who fell upon the people as they were offering their lambs, and killed three thousand.

It is quite obvious that this series of episodes points to one evening only—that of the paschal sacrifice. Antipater identifies the sedition as occurring at this time.³ In addition, he catalogs this sacrifice as a private offering (*idiai θυσιαi*). Similarly Philo.⁴ We know from the sacrificial date—14 Nisan—that the moon had come to her full, and on this evening rose "full" in the east as the sun set in the west. The people actually made the assault with lambs in one hand and stones in the other, while the wailers in the temple urged them on.⁵ The description is significant in showing (1) that the passover lambs were at this time being slain in the evening, and (2) that they were being offered in the outskirts of the city, "around the sanctuary," not in it.

Such was the temper of the age in which Jesus was born.

II. *Ant. II.xiv.6, III.x.5, and XI.iv.8.*

It seems inconsistent to make Josephus say in one place that the paschal lambs were being slain from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., with the supper necessarily occurring on the subsequent evening, when in other passages he describes the whole passover

ceremony—sacrifice, feast, and burning of the remnants—as taking place on one day only, the 14th of Nisan. Here is one of his descriptions of the 14th day:

ἐνστάσης δὲ τῆς τεσσαρεσκαίδεκάτης πάντες πρὸς ἄφ-οδὸν ἔχοντες ἔθνον, καὶ τῷ αἵματι τὰς οἰκίας ἤγγιζον ὑσώπου κόμαις ἀναλαμβάνοντες καὶ δειπνήσαντες τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν κρεῶν ἔκαυσαν ὡς ἐξελευσόμενοι. ὅθεν νῦν ἔτι κατὰ τὸ ἔθος οὕτως θύομεν τὴν ἑορτὴν πάσχα καλοῦντες.
...⁶

Translation (mine)—

But when the fourteenth day had come, all, in readiness to start, sacrificed, and purified the houses with blood, using bunches of hyssop for sprinkling, and after the repast burnt the remnants of the meat as people ready for departure.

In this passage three principal acts are tied to the 14th of Nisan—the *sacrificing*, the *purifying*, and the *burning* of the remnants after the supper. The ceremony is confined to one complete sentence with *καὶ* connectives. Consequently it is inconsistent that up to the word *ἤγγιζον*, it is 14 Nisan, but that from there on it is 15 Nisan. And please note that Josephus adds, "to this day we keep this sacrifice in the same customary manner." (Cf. English text.)

A text similar to the foregoing is found in Philo, for which the claim has also been made that it represents two dates. I quote Dr. Colson's translation of this passage:

On this day every dwelling-house is invested with the outward semblance and dignity of a temple. The victim is then slaughtered and dressed for the festal meal as befits the occasion. The guests assembled for the banquet have been cleansed by purificatory lustrations, and are there not as in other festive gatherings, to indulge the belly with wine and viands, but to fulfil with prayers and hymns the custom handed

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Philo, Vol. VII, *De Decalogo* XXX.159. Tr. by Colson. London, 1937. Loeb Classical Lib.

⁵ *Ant.* XVII.ix.3.

⁶ *Ant.* II.xiv.6. Tr. by Thackeray. Loeb Classical Library.



Last quarter moon at highest point at sunrise

down by their fathers. The day on which this national festivity (*πανδήμου εὐωχίας*) occurs may very properly be noted. It is the 14th of the month, etc.⁷

In this description both sacrifice and supper are featured. The word *εὐωχία* means feast. And in addition, it is the national feast about which Philo is discoursing, and he says plainly that it was kept on the 14th of the month. There appears to be no place for any 15th-day supper in this text!

Josephus has altogether three descriptions of a 14th-day passover, the first of which we have cited. A second text is as follows:

Τῷ δὲ μηνὶ τῷ Ξανθικῷ ὃς Νισὰν παρ' ἡμῖν καλεῖται καὶ τοῦ ἔτους ἐστὶν ἀρχή, τεσσαρεσκαίδεκάτῃ κατὰ σελήνην ἐν κριῶ τοῦ ἡλίου καθεστῶτος τούτῳ γὰρ τῷ μηνὶ τῆς ὑπ' Αἰγυπτίου δουλείας ἠλευθέρωθημεν, καὶ τὴν θυσίαν ἣν τότε ἐξιώντας ἀπ' Αἰγύπτου θύσαι προείπον ἡμᾶς πάσχα λεγομένην, δι' ἔτους ἐκάστου θύειν ἐνόμισεν, καὶ δὴ τελοῦμεν αὐτὴν κατὰ φατρίας μηδενὸς τεθυμένων εἰς τὴν ἐπιούσαν τηρουμένου.⁸

Translation (mine)—

And we were commanded to offer every year the sacrifice called *πάσχα*, which I previously said we offered upon leaving Egypt, indeed in the month Xanthicus—which we call Nisan and it begins our year—on the 14th day according to the moon, the sun then standing in Aries, for in this month we were freed from Egyptian bondage, and so we do keep it in companies, nothing of the victim being left until the next day.

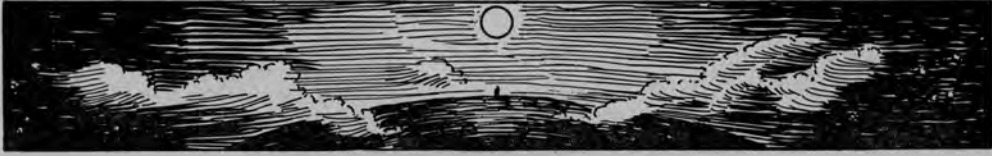
⁷ Philo, Vol. VII, *Special Laws* II.xxvii.148, 149. Tr. by Colson. Loeb Classical Library.

⁸ *Ant.* III.x.5. Loeb Classical Library.

The principal verbs in this sentence are two—*ἐνόμισεν καὶ τελοῦμεν*. There is no specific word here for paschal supper, but the one word *θυσία* is called *πάσχα*, and in this long sentence apparently represents the whole ceremony, and that taking place on the 14th of Nisan. For in the concluding clause, emphasis is made that no piece of the victim was kept until the next day. Thus it must have been eaten on the 14th. Josephus must therefore have had in mind not only the sacrifice, but also the eating of the same in the equation *θυσία = πάσχα*. Furthermore, in his subsequent sentence he goes on to describe the service of the 15th day, which he says succeeds the *πάσχα*. How therefore could the supper have been part of the 15th? It surely would appear out of turn here to date the sacrifice and supper other than the 14th of Nisan.

The genitive absolute *ἐν κριῶ τοῦ ἡλίου καθεστῶτος* is not merely an aside in this interesting sentence, but shows that Josephus understood the relation of early astronomy and of the ancient agricultural seasons to his own time. For, although at the time of the exodus the vernal equinox, with reference to the stars, was nearly two weeks later than in the first century,⁹ and the paschal season therefore probably as late, yet

⁹ Edward Freiherrn von Haerdtl, "Astronomische Beiträge assyrischen Chronologie," *Denkschriften der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften mathematischnaturwissenschaftliche Classe*. 49. Band. Wien, 1885, 154.



Full moon always at its highest point at midnight

in both paschal periods, the sun was in Aries during a common-year passover, but in Taurus during a leap-year passover. There was a contrasting difference, however, between the period of the exodus and that of the first century. In the time of Moses, the word Aries could refer only to the constellation, for the signs of the zodiac were not described until the Nabonassar era. But in the first century, the paschal season of a common year could occur only in the actual *sign* Aries, for already, due to precession, the vernal equinox had retrograded into the adjacent constellation Pisces.¹⁰

The fact that Josephus does not mention the sign, would indicate that he refers to the constellation, and hence to the time of Moses, whose passover he is describing. In addition too, Josephus is obviously depicting the passover of a common year, and his language appears to imply that such was the character of the year when Israel left Egypt. For under the seventh Egyptian plague, the barley was in ear and the flax balled (Ex. 9:31). This must have been at least three months before the passover, and very early indeed for barley ears, even though the season in Egypt was earlier than that of Palestine.

A third 14th-day passover by Josephus relates to the time of Darius I, when the

¹⁰ C. W. C. Barlow and G. H. Bryan, *Elementary Mathematical Astronomy*. London, 1934, 106.

second temple had been completed. The text reads:

καὶ τὴν ἑορτὴν ἤγαγον ἀγνεύοντες μετὰ γυναικῶν καὶ τέκνων τῷ πατρὶϊ νόμῳ, καὶ τὴν πάσχα προσαγορευομένην θυσίαν τῇ τετάρτῃ καὶ δεκάτῃ τοῦ αὐτοῦ μηνὸς ἐπιτελέσαντες, κατενωχῆθησαν ἐπὶ ἡμέρας ἑπτὰ, μηδεμίᾳ φειδόμενοι πολυτελείας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς ὀλοκαυτώσεις ἐπιφέροντες τῷ θεῷ καὶ χαριστηρίους θυσίας ἱερουργοῦντες. . . .¹¹

Translation (mine)—

And they kept the feast in a state of purity with women and children, according to the law of their fathers, and having fulfilled the sacrifice named *πάσχα* on the 14th day of the same month, they feasted for seven days, sparing no expense, but bringing whole burnt offerings to God, and offering sacrifices of thanksgiving. . . .

In this text Josephus makes a difference between the seven-day feast of unleavened bread as a whole, with its distinctive offerings, and the sacrifice named *πάσχα*, which he says was completed on the 14th day. We should not therefore expect the *πάσχα* ceremony to extend over into the 15th day. The offerings called *ὀλοκαυτώσεις* and *χαριστήριαι θυσίαι* will be referred to later—the sacrifices pertaining to the seven-day feast.

Why then should we conclude that either Philo or Josephus would present a changed emphasis regarding the 14th-day passover hereto described? Apparently they do not do this, but their festal terms are not always understood.

¹¹ *Ant.* XI.iv.8.



Full moon rises at sunset

III. We wish to compare two more texts—one each from Josephus and Philo, and both of similar trend. With reference to these two passages, the claim has been made that the writers thereby place the paschal sacrifice on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan, and the supper on the subsequent evening of the 15th. The text by Josephus reads:

οὐ δ', ἐνστάσης ἑορτῆς, πάσχα καλεῖται, καθ' ἣν θύουσιν μὲν ἀπὸ ἐνάτης ὥρας μέχρι ἐνδεκάτης, ὥσπερ δὲ φατρία περὶ ἐκάστην γίνεται θυσίαν οὐκ ἐλάσσων ἀνδρῶν δέκα, μόνον γὰρ οὐκ ἔξεστιν δαίνεσθαι πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ συνείκοσιν ἀθροίζονται, τῶν μὲν θυμάτων εἰκοσιπέντε μυριάδας ἠρίθησαν, etc.¹²

Translation (mine)—

So, when the festival had come—it is called *πάσχα*—during which, on the one hand [μὲν] they sacrifice from the ninth hour to the eleventh, but on the other hand [δὲ] as it were a little company of not less than ten gathers around the offering, for it is not permissible to dine alone, and often as many as twenty are numbered, these high priests counted as many as 250,000 of sacrifices, etc.

In this scene there are two contrasting sacrificial occasions: (1) The afternoon sacrifices, as indicated by the *μὲν* clause, and involving the whole feast, so often called *πάσχα* by Josephus, as in this text; and (2) the paschal sacrifice and supper, represented by the *δὲ* clause, around whose tables the small groups of ten or twenty assembled. The afternoon offerings embraced the *ὀλοκαυτώσεις*, *χαριστήριον* *θυσίαι* and *σωτήρια*—burnt offerings, thank offerings, and the peace

¹² *Wars* VI.ix.3.

offerings.¹³ These sacrifices began in the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan,¹⁴ and continued throughout the festival. The peace offerings on the 14th day were also called passovers.¹⁵ Not all the people necessarily took part in the afternoon sacrifices, at which time, obviously, no accurate count could have been made. The paschal companies, on the other hand, included the whole nation, and hence it was only at the time of this ceremony that a strict count could have been carried out. In this text Josephus does not state at what time of day the small group sacrifice customarily occurred; but in *Wars* II.i.2 and II.ii.5 he had already featured it as an evening episode,¹⁶ and later, in *Antiquities*, he several times describes both sacrifice and supper as belonging to one and the same day—the 14th of Nisan. These texts have been discussed. Hence the paschal ceremony was obviously an evening event during the life of Josephus.

The foregoing incident took place in the time of Nero, whom Cestius Gallus wished to inform of the number of Jews in Jerusalem when the Jewish revolt was just beginning—probably about 65 A.D.¹⁷

¹³ *Ant.* XI.iv.8 and *Wars* IV.vii.2.

¹⁴ Maimonides, *De Sacrificiis Liber*, cap. dec., sec. 12. Tr. by Compiegne de Veil. Londini, 1683.

¹⁵ Deut. 16:2; 2 Chron. 30:16,17.

¹⁶ It was the evening drunkenness of Archelaus that started the Jewish sedition which accompanied the paschal ceremony.

¹⁷ *Wars* II.xiv.3. Loeb Classical Library (margin).

shipped²¹—not sun and moon—but the Lamb of God, of whom the bleeding sacrifice was at that very moment a figure. It seems most improbable that this solemn and impressive ceremony was ever changed by the Jews until forced by Roman persecution to do so.

In near eastern countries the Nisan moon regularly fulls on the 13th of the lunar month.²² But not so in the seventh month, whose feast of Tabernacles in this text Philo is comparing with the paschal 14th. He states that the autumn feast came on the 15th for the same reason that the spring feast occurred on the 14th, namely, because the world was then full of light. The sun shone all day, and the moon shone all night.²³

In the autumn, however, the astronomical conditions are quite different from those in the spring on account of the Harvest Moon, which, toward the middle of the Jewish seventh month, rises full about sunset for several evenings in succession.²⁴ But in the spring month Nisan, the moon rises full at sunset only once, and that at the beginning of the paschal 14th. Thereafter the moon appears about an hour later each consecutive night. Hence the feast of Tabernacles began in fullness of light even though the moon may have fullled several days earlier than the 15th.

Our context shows that Philo definitely understood the astronomy of the Jewish feasts. It therefore seems very

²¹ Ex. 12:27.

²² *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. LXIII, Part II, 1944, 183, 183.

²³ Philo, *Id.*, XXVIII.155. Loeb Classical Library.

²⁴ In the season of Tabernacles, both setting sun and rising moon course so low against the horizon that for several evenings together the full moon rises with very little difference of time.

inconsistent to charge him with confused and contradictory statements as we shall have to do if we are to conclude that his afternoon sacrifices included the paschal lambs. He is in agreement with the OT when he assumes that on the paschal 14th throughout the whole day the nation was honored with the dignity of the priest's office. In 2 Chron. 30:16,17 this honor appears to be respected. Here, on account of levitical uncleanness, some of the people did not offer their passover peace offerings in the temple—a statement suggesting that there were some who did, as in 2 Chron. 35:11.

No confusion in any way arises in our Philonic text by the interpretation that the "myriads of victims" comprised the burnt offerings, thank offerings, and peace offerings, as we have explained for *Wars* VI.ix.3. With this understanding, the paschal ceremony had already been celebrated at the sunset beginning of the paschal 14th. And though all the rest of the day was still the 14th, yet it was not the time of the paschal sacrifice. This simple exposition implies that in the time of Philo and Josephus the ancient ceremonies were still in operation. If such were not the case, then why should Josephus say, several times over, that in his own day the people kept the paschal rite the same as in the time of the exodus.²⁵

The difficulty which has arisen over these texts largely comes from the assumption that the word *πάσχα* always refers to the paschal ceremony. On the contrary, as has been pointed out, this word commonly refers to the whole feast of unleavened bread. And no different meaning should be ascribed to it unless represented in the text.

²⁵ *Ant.* II.xiv.6; III.x.5; *Against Apion* I.8.

NOTE. The drawings illustrating this article were made by Harry L. Gage from illustrations in *The Raft Book*, by permission of the publishers, George Grady Press, New York, and of the author, Harold Gatty.



Full moon sets at sunrise

The companion text from Philo is equally significant:

Μετὰ δὲ τὴν νομηνιαὴν ἐστὶν ἑορτὴ τετάρτη, τὰ διαβατήρια, ἣν Ἑβραῖοι Πάσχα πατριῶ γλώττῃ καλοῦσιν, ἐν ἣ θύουσι πανδημεὶ πολλὰς μυριάδας ἱερείων ἀρξάμενοι ἀπὸ μεσημβρίας ἄρχι ἐσπέρας, ὁ λεὼς ἅπας, πρεσβύται καὶ νέοι, κατ' ἐκείνην τὴν ἡμέραν ἱερωσύνης ἀξιώματι τετιμημένοι.¹⁸

Translation (mine)—

After the new moon festival is the fourth feast—the Crossing-feast—which the Hebrews call Πάσχα in their native tongue, in which all the people, old and young together, honored on that day with the dignity of the priesthood, sacrifice many myriads of victims from noon until evening.

This text introduces the feast called the Crossing-feast by Philo, but *πάσχα* in native Hebrew. The writer is speaking of a specific day of the festival—κατ' ἐκείνην τὴν ἡμέραν—a day on which old and young alike were honored with the office of priest. The day in point must have been 14 Nisan, when the paschal lambs were offered, but throughout the whole day, the people, if levitically clean, also performed priestly services in the temple in connection with their peace offerings. The claim has been made that the “myriads of victims from noon until evening” included the paschal sacrifices. But this claim is inconsistent with chapter xxvii, in which this text is found; for at the end Philo

declares with emphasis that both pass-over sacrifice and banquet were celebrated on the 14th day. He could not therefore have numbered the *πάσχα* with the afternoon victims, for with this understanding, the banquet would necessarily have been served on the evening *ineunte* of the 15th!

Moreover, in *De Vita Mosis* Philo again states that the 14th day was clearly appointed for the paschal rite.¹⁹ And he further marks the paschal day astronomically when he says—ἡλίου καὶ σελήνης κατ' ἐκείνην τὴν ἡμέραν ἀλλήλους ἐπαυατελλόντων τῶν αὐλαῖς ἀδιαστάτοις (when sun and moon on that day appear upon [ἐπ'] and up [ἀνά] to each other in undivided rays of light).²⁰

Now the “upon and up” appearance of the paschal sun and moon always occurs after the moon has full, and therefore at the very beginning of the 14th of Nisan, when at sunset the sun is lowering *upon* the western horizon, while in the east the moon, now full, is rising *up* simultaneously. The Babylonians said that the god was being seen with the god. But with the Hebrews, the presence of the paschal full moon in the eastern sky together with the westerling sun, was an astronomical event that pointed to the slain lamb. And the people bowed their heads and wor-

¹⁸ Philo, Vol. VII, *Special Laws* II.xxvii.145. Tr. by Colson. Harvard University Press, 1937. Loeb Classical Library.

¹⁹ Philo, Vol. VI, *De Vita Mosis* XLI.224,228. Loeb Classical Library.

²⁰ Philo, *Special Laws* II.xxxiii.210. Tr. by Colson. Loeb Classical Library.

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THE JOHANNINE-SYNOPTIC ARGUMENT

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The question of the Jewish date of the crucifixion passover is of even greater importance than the Julian date, which is obviously based upon it. The problem appears primarily to depend upon understanding the festal terms employed—first in the time of Moses, then in the crucifixion century, and later on in the period of the Talmudic recension. Inasmuch as many diverse conclusions concern the death passover of Christ, the argument here presented is closely connected with the events of passion week and their corresponding outline. We are attempting to demonstrate (1) harmony between the Johannine and Synoptic passovers, and to offer (2) interpretation of the texts commonly set forth as evidence of chronological disagreement between John and his associate gospel writers.

I

A study of the Outline of passion week on page *will* reveal the fact that the NT phrase τὰ ἄζυμα ("unleavened bread"), commonly found in the genitive, occurs in several of the gospel references to the paschal season. This expression is a typical Synoptic term; and yet, both Mark and Luke apparently would have it understood that at the time of their writing, festal names τὸ πάσχα and τὰ ἄζυμα were being used interchangeably in a general sense.¹ How-

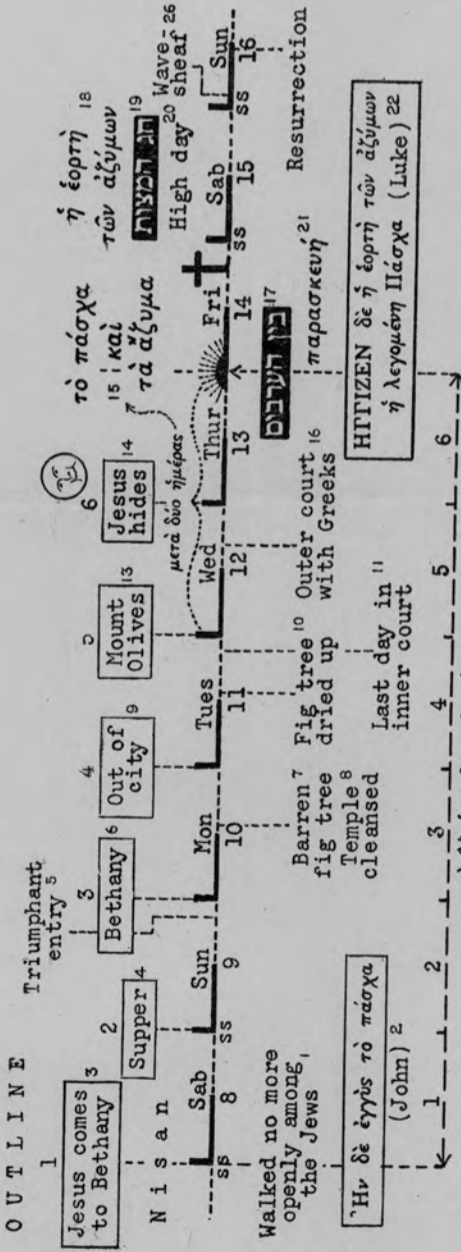
ever, the second of these seems to have been Luke's favorite in representing the passover season,² and probably Mat-

thew's as well.³ Josephus also recog-

nizes the alternative use of these two festal terms in his own day.⁴ He even

calls the "fourteenth" the "day of unleavened bread."⁵ But with Jesus and

John, the passover was always τὸ πάσχα, although John frequently added τῶν Ἰουδαίων.⁶ His terminology is consistent, for John himself taught his communicants in Asia the original form of Jewish passover observance, in contrast to a different type adopted by the Euro-



1 John 11: 54
2 John 11: 55
3 John 12: 1
4 John 12: 2
Matt. 26: 6
Mark 14: 3
Matt. 21: 6-11
Mark 11: 7-10

Luke 19: 35 ff
John 12: 12 ff
Matt. 21: 17
Mark 11: 12
Matt. 21: 19
Mark 11: 13, 14
Matt. 21: 12, 23
Mark 11: 15

Luke 19: 45
Mark 11: 19
Matt. 21: 20
Mark 11: 20
Matt. 23
Mark 12
Matt. 21: 12, 23
John 12: 1

Luke 21: 37, 38
John 12: 36
Matt. 26: 2
Mark 14: 1
John 12: 20
Ex. 12: 6
John 19: 31
Matt. 27: 62

Num. 28: 4
Num. 9: 3
Num. 9: 5, 11
Lev. 23: 5
Lev. 23: 6 LXX
Ibid. MT
John 19: 31
Matt. 27: 62

Mark 15: 42
Luke 23: 54
John 19: 42
Luke 22: 1
Matt. 26: 17
Mark 14: 12
Luke 22: 7
Lev. 23: 10, 11

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paean churches.⁷ And in addition, as is well known, the so-called Christian passover in early times had many variations that were founded upon many different cycles, so that the feast in Europe was commonly observed in a different month and on another date from that of the Johannine passover, as represented by Scaliger.

These circumstances may account in part for the appearance of a general name for the paschal period in the first century. Nevertheless, the phrase *τὰ ἄζυμα* without any doubt had origin from OT practice, whose primitive laws stipulated that unleavened bread should be eaten with the roasted lamb on the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month.⁸

⁸ Ex. 12: 8, 18; 23: 18; Num. 9: 3, 11; Deut. 16: 3. Thus Philo: "The victim is then slaughtered and dressed for the festal meal which befits the occasion. The guests assembled for the banquet have been cleansed by purificatory lustrations, and are there . . . to fulfil with prayers and hymns the custom handed down by their fathers. The day on which this national festivity (*τῆς πανδήμου εὐωχίας*) occurs may very properly be noted. It is the 14th of the month. . . ." (Vol. VII, *Special Laws II*, XXVII, 149. Tr. Colson, 1937, Loeb Classics.) Such was the case with the passover both for the clean, and for the unclean.⁹

⁹ Num. 9: 11.

Ceremonial regulation made sharp distinction between the passover itself, which Jehovah called "my sacrifice," and "my feast,"¹⁰ and which was also

¹⁰ Ex. 23: 18.

termed the "feast of the passover,"¹¹

¹¹ Ex. 34: 25.

and the consecrated unleavened-bread festival of the fifteenth, which Christianity understood to be the symbol of purity,¹² and not a sin-offering.

¹² 1 Cor. 5: 7.

In harmony with this special significance, OT law ascribed to each of these feasts a different date, commanding that the passover was to be slain at sunset,¹³

¹³ Deut. 16: 6. Cf. Gesenius שֶׁשֶׁת on this text—interpreted as sunset.

"in the fourteenth day . . . between the two evenings;"¹⁴ but that on the fifteenth day of the same month was to be the "feast of unleavened bread."¹⁵

¹⁴ Lev. 23: 5.

¹⁵ Lev. 23: 6; Num. 28: 17.

This *fifteenth-day* feast, therefore, was not the passover festival, according to OT command, and could not consistently coincide with the eating of the paschal sin-offering, because it (the feast of the fifteenth) was accompanied by a prescribed sin-offering of its own.¹⁶ But

¹⁶ Num. 28: 22.

under Talmudic law, "the fifteenth day of Nisan was the first day of the Passover,"¹⁷ and the fourteenth as such is

¹⁷ A. W. Streane, *Translation of the Treatise Chagigah*, Cambridge, 1891, 36 n.

no longer observed.

It is commonly understood that the fourteenth of the first Jewish month was an ordinary day—one on which a man could buy and sell, and work. But it was also a day, as Philo puts it, on which each Israelite household became the symbol of a temple,¹⁸ where the offerer

¹⁸ Philo, Vol. VII, *Special Laws II*, xxvii, 145. 1937. (Loeb Classics.)

brought his innocent paschal sacrifice to Jehovah as a substitute offering for sin, and where the blood was originally brushed upon the lintel with hyssop,¹⁹

¹⁹ Ex. 12: 22; Heb. 11: 28.

instead of being sprinkled upon an altar. On the contrary, the fifteenth was set apart as a holy day because, as is obvious, the entire camp of Israel had thereupon become free from the leaven of sin, and hence was commanded to keep a feast of purity for seven days.²⁰ But

²⁰ Ex. 12: 15; 23: 15; Num. 28: 17.

not, however, without customary atonement through the sacrifice of the special sin-offering, which was eaten by the priest in the holy place.²¹

²¹ Num. 28: 22; Lev. 6: 25, 26. Ant. III.x. 5.

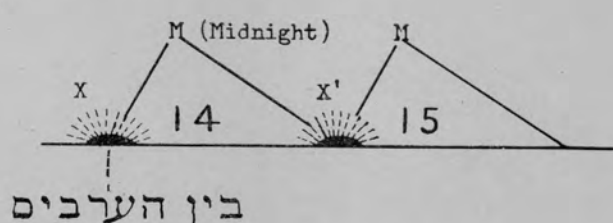
The lesson for the fourteenth day was impressive. It was for the individual as Philo implies. Thus once a year an Israelite was specially reminded that atonement through sacrifice could be made at his own door,²² though in sight

²² Regarding "private altars:" Philo, Vol. VII, *Special Laws II*, xxvii, 145, 146, 148. 1937. Loeb. Maimonides, *De Sacrificiis Liber*, tr. Compiegne de Veil. Londini, 1683, 4. Ant. XVII. ix. 3; B.II.ii.3. Edward Greswell, *Dissertations*, Vol. I, Oxford, 1830, 80. Joseph Klausner: "According, however, to an earlier ruling, which held good among the priestly party almost to the close of the period of the Second Temple, the Passover was regarded as a private sacrifice, and one which might not abrogate the Sabbath rules."—*Jesus of Nazareth, His Life, Times, and Teaching*. Tr. by Herbert Danby. New York, 1925, 326.

of the temple. Along with the sacrificial meal was to be eaten the unleavened bread representing purity and truth. But the contrasting sacrifices of the fifteenth day were always offered in the temple court, and depicted the consecration of the entire Israelite assembly—a holy convocation—to which the special burnt offerings are witness.²³ The spiritual character of these two feasts necessarily demanded two wholly different

²³ Num. 28: 18 f.

dates, and it is as essential to demonstrate the calendar difference between them as to state the symbolic difference. The following diagram illustrates:



Three time specifications relate to the passover sacrifice: (1) in the fourteenth day; (2) at sunset; and (3) בין הערבים. Obviously, the time X, at the beginning of the fourteenth, is the only period where all three stipulations could meet. At X', the whole paschal ceremony—for the individual—would occur on the fifteenth, a holy feast for the entire camp!

Pentateuchal application of the dual phrase בין הערבים is in harmony with the foregoing interpretation. This festal term is found nine times in the books of Moses,²⁴ and corresponds to a limited

²⁴ Cf. Outline, ref. 17.

sacrificial period between two adjacent days. This two or three hour interval was called "the time of the evening oblation."²⁵ It began at the ninth hour

²⁵ Dan. 9: 21.

of the Jewish day, but was also reckoned as the actual ending of the day,²⁶ and at

²⁶ Ant. VI.ix.3; III.x.1. B.

this time the worshipers were kneeling in prayer without the temple.²⁷ This

²⁷ Luke 1: 10.

period was continued by Christianity as the hour of prayer.²⁸ Anciently in this

²⁸ Acta 3: 1; 10: 30.

interval (1) the lamb for the evening burnt offering was sacrificed;²⁹ (2) the

²⁹ Num. 28: 4.

evening incense was burned and the lamps lighted;³⁰ and (3) annually the

³⁰ Ex. 30: 8; Ant. III.viii.2.

paschal lamb was slain at sunset.³¹

³¹ Deut. 16: 6. Cf. Joseph Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth*, New York, 1925, 326. For sunset sacrifice among Karaites, Samaritans and Falashas: Adrian Reland, *Antiquitates Veterum Hebraeorum*, Batavia, 1717, 275. *Palestine Exploration Fund, Quarterly Statement*, London, January, 1902, 82. Chwolson also proves from the Targumim and the Talmudic literature that in the usage of the later times בין הערבים did not mean the same space of time as is fixed by the recognized Halcha—the afternoon—but was used as the synonym of בין השמשות. *Das Letzte Passamahl Christi*, Leipzig, 1908, 37, 157 ff.

These acts of worship by both people and priest pointed toward the beginning of a new day. The burnt sacrifice represented consecration of the nation for the ensuing night;³² the burning lamps

³² Thus Philo, "for the benefactions of the night." (Vol. VII, *Special Laws* I, xxxv, 169. Tr. Colson, 1937. Loeb Classics.)

gave light for approaching darkness; the sinking sun manifestly date the new day—not the old. It was therefore an event of calendar significance when the paschal lamb was slain in בין הערבים at sunset; and the offering unquestionably must have been dated with the new day—either just begun, or about to begin. And this new day, according to the Pentateuch, Philo, and Josephus, was the fourteenth of the first Jewish month.³³

³³ Cf. ref. 8, and Ant.II.xiv.6, which also dates the paschal feast on the fourteenth.

Consequently, the slaying of the paschal lamb on the Jewish fourteenth could occur only at sunset *ineunte* of the passover day, and still maintain its calendar and spiritual significance. On this account, the favorite conception that the national paschal lambs were being slain at the hour of the death of Jesus is both contrary to ancient Jewish law, and to the earliest known Jewish cycle as well—that which is based upon the commentary of Aristobulus.³⁴ Instead, the

³⁴ Aristobulus was a learned Jew of Alexandria in the time of Ptolemy Philometor, to whom he wrote a series of commentaries on Moses (*Eusebii Pamphili Chronici Canones*, ed. Fotheringham, Londoni, 1923, 221), in which he locates the paschal month in relation to the equinox, and describes the exact position of the paschal moon in relation to the sun (*Nicolai Nancelii, Analogia Microcosmi ad Macrocosmon, Sec. Pars.* Lutetiae Parisiorum, 1611, col. 1204). Anatolius of Laodicea based his paschal cycles upon the teaching of Aristobulus (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Sec. Series*, Vol. I. New York, 1890, 319).

customary evening burnt sacrifice was obviously being offered by the temple priest. The ninth hour, when Jesus died, was three hours too early for the passover offering, according to Deuteronomic law, and the Talmudic law that times the offerings several hours earlier on a Friday afternoon,³⁵ was a later

³⁵ Herbert Danby, *Mishnah*, Pes.5.1; Sab. 1: 11. Oxford, 1933.

redaction. As recent as 200 A.D., the Mishna acknowledges that the paschal lambs had customarily been slain at dusk.³⁶

³⁶ *Ibid.* Pes.5.10. Cf. Daniel Chwolson, *Das Letzte Passamahl Christi*, Leipzig, 1908, 163, 164.

The Greek text here is very revealing.

Let us attempt identification of the day on which Jesus died. *First:* With some, it was Wednesday; with a few, Thursday. But all four gospel writers call the crucifixion day *παρασκευή*.³⁷ And

³⁷ Matt. 27: 62; Mark 15: 42; Luke 23: 54; John 19: 42.

all four limit the term to the sixth day of the week—the day before the Jewish Sabbath.³⁸ Josephus likewise,³⁹ and also

³⁸ Besides the texts in ref. 37, cf. Matt. 28: 1.

³⁹ Ant. XVI. VI. 2. Greek text.

also the Syriac church and the Greek church.⁴⁰ Talmudic MSS, with a pass-

⁴⁰ Charles C. Torrey, "Date of the Crucifixion According to the Fourth Gospel," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Vol. L, 1931, 234, 235.

over on the fifteenth, further declare that Yeshu "the Nazarean" was hanged on the eve of the passover, and an ancient Florentine MS reads, "on the eve of the Sabbath."⁴¹ *Second:* Was this crucifix-

⁴¹ San. 43a, cf. Note.

ion Friday the ancient Jewish passover day, that is, the day of slaying the lamb?

The Synoptists each report that disciples were sent by the Lord to prepare τὸ πάσχα, and in each instance one and the same simple conclusion is stated—"and they made ready τὸ πάσχα." In addition in these same texts, Jesus Himself is cited four times as speaking of the preparation of τὸ πάσχα. Moreover,

John, according to Luke, was one of those sent to prepare τὸ πάσχα;⁴² and

⁴² Luke 22: 8.

when, decades later, John writes his account of the passion, he mentions a point of time immediately preceding the actual supper he had helped to prepare, and describes it as πρὸ δὲ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα.⁴³

⁴³ John 13: 1.

Further evidence is also forthcoming from the fact that on Tuesday evening, at the end of the day, when all were seated upon the mount of Olives,⁴⁴ the

⁴⁴ Matt. 24: 3; Mark 13: 3.

disciples, all keenly intent upon the words of their Master, must all have heard Him say, "Ye know that after two days is τὸ πάσχα." This could not have been other than the sunset beginning of Friday and give place for all the episodes of passion week (cf. Outline). Matthew reports this incident, and Mark confirms it.⁴⁵ And, together with John

⁴⁵ Matt. 26: 2; Mark 14: 1.

12: 1, when, six days before, John had pointed to the ensuing Friday as τὸ πάσχα, we have accordingly at least fifteen different assertions by Jesus, John, Matthew, Mark and Luke that Friday of the crucifixion—Jewish time, from Thursday evening sunset to Friday at sunset—was the day of the passover, that is, the day for slaying and eating the paschal lamb. To this sacrificial ceremony the death of Jesus corresponds in meaning, and therefore necessarily in date.

Third: The passover sacrifice is the chief fact upon which astronomy must needs base the reckoning of the crucifixion, for OT law and custom supply the Jewish date to each undated NT passover, namely, the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month, and not the Talmudic fifteenth. And when the Synoptists obviously equate the paschal sacrifice of the "fourteenth" with the complex τὰ ἄζυμα, chronology has to accept the festal term chosen, and not confuse it with the OT "fifteenth," on which no paschal lamb was ever slain.

It therefore follows that after the death of Christ, first century changes in the Jewish sacrificial calendar were naturally accompanied by the appearance of festal terms which could not exist in the strict OT sense and its pentateuchal ceremonies. The discard of the slaying of the passover lamb on the Jewish fourteenth obviously gave way to the observance only of the ancient feast of the fifteenth, which came to be describe by both Christians and Jews as the "days of unleavened bread." With the Christian church, however, this remnant of the passover ceremony took on renewed spiritual meaning, but adopted a general terminology that was not as specific as that pertaining to the OT feasts, which were based upon three agricultural harvests—those of the "floor and winepress."⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Deut. 16: 13. Heb.

Pursuant of the argument thus far presented, several additional facts make it obvious and apparent that Matthew, Mark and Luke did not reckon Friday of the crucifixion to be the holy feast of unleavened bread of the OT "fifteenth" of the Jewish first month.

First: The Tuesday evening episode has already been mentioned that Jesus, Matthew and Mark each counted the passover as "after two days," which would be the sunset beginning of the Jewish sixth day of the week.

Second: Further evidence lies in the fact that each Synoptist—not John—reports the incident with reference to Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the field—ἀπ' ἀγροῦ—when he was compelled to bear the cross. If, in the minds of the Synoptists, Friday had actually been the sacred feast of unleavened bread, the "high day" of the festival, during which all work was anctively forbidden,⁴⁷ the Simon in-

⁴⁷ Lev. 23: 7.

cident would have at least provoked inquiry and comment. But there is no intimation at all by these NT writers that this circumstance was not in full harmony with Jewish law.

Third: In each of the two rival crucifixion years—30 and 31 A.D.—when in both cases the paschal new moon was passing through apogee—a Jewish fifteenth on Friday of passover week would shorten the moon's translation period one day, and thereby cause the month Nisan to begin a whole day before the moon could actually be seen.⁴⁸ It is altogether in-

⁴⁸And so Fotheringham, for the year 30 A.D., dates the Nisan new moon phase one day later than the Schoch calculation (*Journal of Philology*, Vol. XXIX, No. 57. London, 1903, 107).

consistent that Jesus should be represented by the Synoptists as consenting to a questionable form of calendar in the preparation of τὸ πάσχα.

Fourth: Hebrew scholarship would naturally see in the three Synoptic references—Matt. 26: 17, Mark 14: 12, Luke 22: 7—an allusion to the "feast of unleavened bread." Thus Delitzsch, Salkinson, Chowlson, and others. Both Delitzsch and Salkinson insert ἄρτος in their translation of Matthew and Mark, although there is no word for "feast" in the original Greek. But such an interpretation distorts the chronology. On the contrary, NT scholarship presents τὰ ἄζυμα as its general term for the paschal season, the first day of which had literally come, according to the foregoing texts. Josephus goes further in calling the "fourteenth" the "day of unleavened bread." (Cf. ref. 5.) Thus we see this NT festal term in common use when the Gospels were written, and when Josephus wrote "Wars."

These facts seem more consistent than an emendation of Luke 22: 7⁴⁹ to agree with a

⁴⁹Samuel I. Feigin, "The Date of the Last Supper," *Anglican Theological Review*, Vol. XXV, No. 2, April, 1943, 214 ff.

hypothetical translation of Matthew and Mark. Moreover, the records of Matthew and Mark include an indisputable earmark of the paschal nature of their supper, namely, the mention of the Hallel, which was only sung on one night of the year—after the paschal supper.⁵⁰

⁵⁰Matt. 26: 30 and Mark 14. 26. Cf. Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth*, 1929, 104, 122, 329.

Fifth: If John and the other gospel writers had been discordant in their computation of the passover date, how does it come about that not only all the disciples, but Jews too from every part of the Near East, were in full agreement over the date of Pentecost, which they were observing on the same day. If there had been difference of opinion over the passover date, there was bound to have been variance over the date of Pentecost, which was reckoned from the offering of the wave sheaf on the sixteenth.

The foregoing circumstances lead but to agreement only with the gospel writers—not to disagreement.

II

And now as to other texts that are supposed to represent discord in the NT chronology. If in John 18: 28, for example, all had eaten the passover the night before, what was the "passover" which the Jewish priests and officers were still planning to eat? The OT answers this question.

The OT law is specific with regard to its use of the word "passover," which does not always refer to the paschal lamb. Moses speaks of the passover of the flock,⁵¹ and the passover of the

⁵¹Deut. 16: 2. צֹאן, a collective noun, *flocks, sheep and goats* (Gesenius).

herd.⁵² This same distinction is illus-

⁵²Ibid. בקר, collective, signifying *oxen or cattle* (Gesenius).

trated in particular in the passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah.⁵³ In both feasts

⁵³2 Chron. 30: 24 and 35: 7, 9. Note the sprinkling of the blood in 30: 16, and 35: 11. The blood of the passover lamb was applied to the offerer's door in Jerusalem.

bullocks and oxen are mentioned, and in the passover of Josiah they are cataloged as "passover offerings."⁵⁴ This

⁵⁴2 Chron. 35: 7, 9.

special offering of the "herd" was a peace offering—הַבְּנִיָּה.⁵⁵ Philo mentions

⁵⁵הַבְּנִיָּה, signifying festal joy (A. W. Streane, *Chagigah*, Glossary. 1891).

it as the sacrifice τὸν σωτηρίου, signifying *deliverance*.⁵⁶ The peace offering had to

⁵⁶Philo, Vol. VII, *Special Laws* I, xxxix, 212 ff. Tr. Colson, 1937. Loeb.

be offered in the temple, and the blood sprinkled upon the altar.⁵⁷ Further de-

⁵⁷Lev. 3: 2.

scription is given by Maimonides:

On the fourteenth day of the first month, when the paschal sacrifice was offered, peace offerings were made at the same time: and these indeed in the same manner as all the peace offerings of the herd and the rest of the flock, large and small, male and female: this obviously is that which is commonly called the festal offering of the fourteenth day, for in this manner the divine law regards it, "Therefore slay the passover to the Lord thy God—of the sheep, goats and beeves. . . ." ⁵⁸

⁵⁸Moses Maimonides, *Tractatus Primus de Sacrificio Paschali*, c. dec. XII. Tr. Compiegne de Veil. London, 1683.

Lightfoot also gives a similar account of the passover peace offering, and thereby explains John 18: 28:

The peace offerings for the solemnity of the time were called the Hagigah, and they were to be of some beast, bullock or sheep. Hereupon in 2 Chron. 30: 24 and 35: 7, 8, there is mention of Bullocks and Oxen for the Passover; and in Deut. 16: 2, there is speech of sacrificing the Passover of the heard; which cannot be understood of the Passover that was to be eaten on the fourteenth day at even, for that was punctually and determinately appointed to be of Lambs and Kids, Ex. 12: 5; but it is to be construed of these peace offerings which were for the solemnity of the time. And this is that which the Evangelist John calleth the Passover, when he saith, "The Jews went

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 not into Pilate's judgement Hall, lest they
 should be defiled, but that they might eat the
 Passeever," John 18: 28. For they had eaten
 the Paschall Lamb the night before.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ John Lightfoot, *The Temple Service as it
 Stood in the Dayes of Our Saviour*, London,
 1650, 162.

From Edersheim we have the same in-
 terpretation as the foregoing with refer-
 ence to John 18: 28 and its implied
 peace-offering.⁶⁰ He adds that a *second*

⁶⁰ Cf. Albert Edersheim, *The Temple*, 218,
 219. Hodder and Stoughton, New York.

Chagigah was offered on the day of the
 feast of unleavened bread, and that this
 was the offering which the Jews were
 afraid that they might be unable to eat
 if they contracted defilement. From the
 Talmud we learn that the Chagigah of a
 high holiday such as the "first day of
 the Passover," was compulsory, while
 that of the fourteenth was not.⁶¹

⁶¹ A. W. Streane, *Translation of the Trea-
 tise Chagigah*, Cambridge, 1891, 36. Strack-
 Billerbeck *Kommentar*, Vol. II. München,
 1924, 837 ff.

The peace sacrifice, that signified fes-
 tal joy, peace and thanksgiving for the
 mercy and forgiveness of Jehovah was a
 fit accompaniment to the feast of un-
 leavened bread. Hence the absurdity in
 the scene in John 18: 28, lies not in the
 chronology, but in the fact that the ac-
 tors were desiring to eat the passover
 peace offering, but at the same time
 were trying to kill the Author of peace.

III

In conclusion let us summarize the
 various texts which are supposed to offer
 so much opposition to harmony between
 John and the other writers:

1. In John 13: 1, the beginning of the scene
 is "before the feast of the passover"; but
 after the supper—consistently paschal—another
feast is imminent (verse 29), which naturally
 is the feast of unleavened bread on the fif-
 teenth.
2. In John's expression "preparation of the
 passover" (John 19: 14) occurs the precise
 confirmation of Luke's statement that the feast
 of unleavened bread was also called *Passover*.
 John calls it such. At the same time he im-
 plies that a passover was but the preparation
 for the feast of the fifteenth, all of which is
 consistent OT theology. And it should be re-
 membered that John never employs the festal
 term *τὰ ἄζυμα*.
3. In John 18: 28, as has just been demon-
 strated, the "passover" yet to be eaten was
 the passover peace offering of the Jewish *fif-
 teenth*.
4. In Matt. 26: 17, Mark 14: 12 and Luke
 22: 7, the "unleavened bread" mentioned is
 not the *feast* of unleavened bread, but instead
 Christianity's name for the paschal season just
 then beginning, and a festal term in harmony
 with OT law, and first century practice.

In the Johannine language of the fore-
 going texts, emphasis is placed upon the
 feast of the fifteenth which was immi-
 nent—the "high day" of the Jewish
 Sabbath. The fourteenth therefore was
 then in progress. In the language of
 the Synoptists, the emphasis is upon the
 opening event of the paschal season—
 the sacrifice of the lamb. The point of
 time, according to the OT, Philo, and
 Josephus, was sunset *בין הערבים* at the be-
 ginning of the fourteenth; and this must
 necessarily have been what Luke meant
 when he wrote, "Then came the day of
 unleavened bread when the passover
 must be slain." The sunset beginning
 of a new day had come—even the cru-
 cifixion fourteenth.

The important texts that definitely
 fix the chronology of passion week are
 (1) the five *παρασκευῆ* references that
 establish the day of the week; and (2)
 John 12: 1, 13: 1, Matt. 26: 2, Mark 14:
 1, Luke 22: 15—two Johannine and
 three Synoptic—that point to death
 Friday as the day of slaying, preparing
 and eating *τὸ πάσχα*. This is the only
 date to which the calendar can tie.

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 THE JOHANNINE-SYNOPTIC ARGUMENT
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Jewish

THE JOHANNINE-SYNOPTIC ARGUMENT

The question of the Jewish date of the crucifixion passover is of even greater importance than the Julian date, which is obviously based upon it. The problem appears primarily to depend upon understanding the festal terms employed--first in the time of Moses, then in the crucifixion century, and later on in the period of the Talmudic recension. Inasmuch as many diverse conclusions concern the death passover of Christ, the argument here presented is closely connected with the events of passion week and their corresponding outline. We are attempting to demonstrate (1) harmony between the Johannine and Synoptic passovers, and to offer (2) interpretation of the texts commonly set forth as evidence of chronological disagreement between John and his associate gospel writers.

I

A study of the Outline of passion week on page 95 will reveal the fact that the NT phrase τὰ ἄζυμα ("unleavened bread"), commonly found in the genitive, occurs in several of the gospel references to the paschal season. This expression is a typical Synoptic term; and yet, both Mark and Luke apparently would have it understood that at the time of their writing, the festal names τὸ πάσχα and τὰ ἄζυμα were being used interchangeably in a general sense.¹ However, the ^{second} ~~first~~ of these seems to have been Luke's favorite in represent^{ing} the passover season,² and probably Matthew's as well.³ Josephus also recognizes the alternative use of these two festal terms in his own day.⁴ He even calls the "fourteenth" the "day of unleavened bread."⁵ But with Jesus and John, the passover was always τὸ πάσχα, although John frequently added τῶν Ἰουδαίων.⁶ His terminology is consistent, for John himself taught his communicants in Asia the original form of Jewish passover observance, in contrast to a different type adopted by the European

¹ Mark 14:1; Luke 22:1.

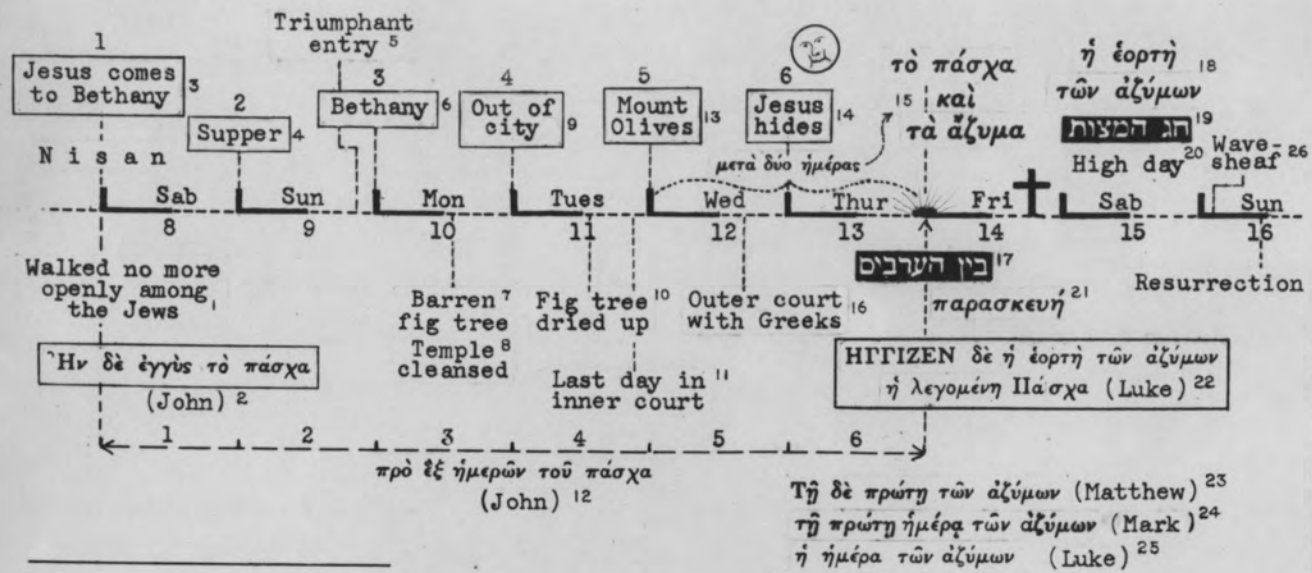
² Acts 12:3; 20:6.

³ Matt. 26:17.

⁴ Ant. XVII. IX. 3; B. II. I. 3, etc.

⁵ B. V. III. 1. Thackeray: "When the day of unleavened bread came round on the [fourteenth, etc.]

⁶ John 2:13; 6:4; 11:55.



1 John 11:54	Luke 19:35ff	Luke 19:45	13 Luke 21:37, 38	Num.28:4	Mark 15:42
2 John 11:55	John 12:12ff	9 Mark 11:19	14 John 12:36	Num.9:3	Luke 23:54
3 John 12:1	6 Matt.21:17	10 Matt.21:20	15 Matt.26:2	Num.9:5,11	John 19:42
4 John 12:2	Mark 11:12	Mark 11:20	Mark 14:1	Lev.23:5	22 Luke 22:1
Matt.26:6	7 Matt.21:19	11 Matt.23	16 John 12:20	18 Lev.23:6 LXX	23 Matt.26:17
Mark 14:3	Mark 11:13,14	Mark 12	17 Ex.12:6	19 Ibid. MT	24 Mark 14:12
5 Matt.21:6-11	8 Matt.21:12,23	Luke 20	Ex.16:12	20 John 19:31	25 Luke 22:7
Mark 11:7-10	Mark 11:15	12 John 12:1	Ex.30:8	21 Matt.27:62	26 Lev.23:10,11

churches.⁷ And in addition, as is well known, the so-called Christian passover in early times had many variations that were founded upon many different cycles, so that the feast in Europe was commonly observed in a different month and on another date from that of the Johannine passover, as represented by Scaliger.

These circumstances may account in part for the appearance of a general name for the paschal period in the first century. Nevertheless, the phrase *τὰ ἄζυμα* without any doubt had origin from OT practice, whose primitive laws stipulated that unleavened bread should be eaten with the roasted lamb on the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month.⁸ Such was the case with the passover both for the clean, and for the unclean.⁹ Ceremonial regulation made sharp distinction between the passover itself, which Jehovah called "my sacrifice," and "my feast,"¹⁰ and which was also termed the "feast of the passover,"¹¹ and the consecrated unleavened-bread festival of the fifteenth, which Christianity understood to be the symbol of purity,¹² and not a sin-offering.

In harmony with this special significance, OT law ascribed to each of these feasts a different date, commanding that the passover was to be slain at sunset,¹³ "in the fourteenth day . . . between the two evenings;"¹⁴ but that on the fifteenth day of the same month was to be the "feast of unleavened bread."¹⁵ This fifteenth-day feast, therefore, was not the passover

⁷ Joseph Scaliger, *De Emendatione Temporum*, Francofurt, 1593, 105.

⁸ Ex.12:8,16; 23:18; Num.9:3,11; Deut.16:3. Thus Philo: "The victim is then slaughtered and dressed for the festal meal which befits the occasion. The guests assembled for the banquet have been cleansed by purificatory lustrations, and are there . . . to fulfil with prayers and hymns the custom handed down by their fathers. The day on which this national festivity occurs may very properly be noted. It is the 14th of the month . . ." (*Vol. VII, Special Laws II, XXVII, 149. Tr. Colson, 1937. Loeb.*) Cf. also *Vol. VI, De Vita Moris II, sec. 228.*

⁹ Num.9:11.

¹⁰ Ex.23:18.

¹¹ Ex.34:25.

¹² 1 Cor.5:7,8.

¹³ Deut.16:6. Cf. Gesenius *שׁוּב* on this text--interpreted as sunset.

¹⁴ Lev.23:5.

¹⁵ Lev.23:6; Num.28:17.

(τῆς πανδήμου εὐωχίας)

festival, according to OT command, and could not consistently coincide with the eating of the paschal sin-offering, because it (the feast of the fifteenth) was accompanied by a prescribed sin-offering of its own.¹⁶ But under Talmudic law, "the fifteenth day of Nisan was the first day of the Passover,"¹⁷ and the fourteenth as such is no longer observed.

It is commonly understood that the fourteenth of the first Jewish month was an ordinary day--one on which a man could buy and sell, and work. ^{And} ~~but~~ it was also a day, as Philo puts it, on which each Israelite household became the symbol of a temple,¹⁸ where the offerer brought his innocent paschal sacrifice to Jehovah as a substitute offering for sin, and where the blood was originally brushed upon the lintel with hyssep,¹⁹ instead of being sprinkled upon an altar. On the contrary, the fifteenth was set apart as a holy day because, as is obvious, the entire camp of Israel had thereupon become free from the leaven of sin, and hence was commanded to keep a feast of purity for seven days.²⁰ But not, however, without customary atonement through the sacrifice of the special sin-offering,²¹ which was eaten by the priest in the holy place.²¹

The lesson for the fourteenth day was impressive. It was for the individual as Philo implies. Thus once a year an Israelite was specially reminded that atonement through sacrifice could be made at his own door,²² though in sight of the temple. Along with the sacrificial meal was to be eat-

¹⁶ Num.28:22.

¹⁷ A.W. Streane, *Translation of the Treatise Chagigah*, Cambridge, 1891, 36 n.

¹⁸ Philo, Vol. VII, *Special Laws II*, XXVII, 145. 1937. Loeb Classics.

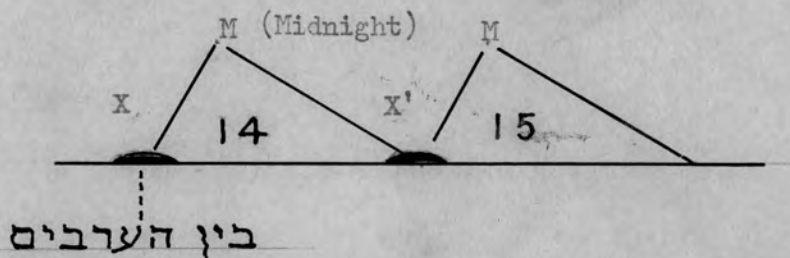
¹⁹ Ex.12:22; Heb.11:28.

²⁰ Ex.12:15; 23:15; Num.28:17.

²¹ Num.28:22; Lev.6:25,26; *Ant.* III.X.5.

²² Regarding "private altars:" Philo, Vol.VII, *Special Laws II*, XXVII, 145, 146, 148. 1937. Loeb. Maimonides, *De Sacrificiis Liber*, tr. Compiegne de Veil. Londini, 1683, 4. *Ant.* XVII.IX.3; B.II.II.3. Edward Greswell, *Dissertations*, Vol.I, Oxford, 1830, 80. Joseph Klausner: "According, however, to an earlier ruling, which held good among the priestly party almost to the close of the period of the Second Temple, the Passover was regarded as a private sacrifice, and one which might not abrogate the Sabbath rules." --*Jesus of Nazareth, His Life, Times, and Teaching*. Tr. Herbert Danby from the original Hebrew. New York, 1925, 326.

en the unleavened bread representing purity and truth. But the contrasting sacrifices of the fifteenth day were always offered in the temple court, and depicted the consecration of the entire Israelite assembly, ^{- a holy convocation -} to which the special burnt offerings are witness.²³ The spiritual character of these two feasts necessarily demanded two wholly different dates, and it is as essential to demonstrate the calendar difference between them as to state the symbolic difference. The following diagram illustrates:



Three time specifications relate to the passover sacrifice: (1) in the fourteenth day; (2) at sunset; and (3) **בין הערבים**. Obviously, the time X, at the beginning of the fourteenth, is the only period where all three stipulations could meet. At X', the whole paschal ceremony--for the individual--would occur on the fifteenth, a holy feast for the entire camp!

Pentateuchal application of the dual phrase **בין הערבים** is in harmony with the foregoing interpretation. This festal term is found nine times in the books of Moses,²⁴ and corresponds to a limited sacrificial period between two adjacent days. This two or three hour interval was called "the time of the evening oblation."²⁵ It began at the ninth hour of the Jewish day,²⁶ and at this time the worshipers were kneeling in prayer without the temple.²⁷ This period was continued by Christianity as the hour of prayer.²⁸ Anciently in this interval (1) the lamb for the evening burnt offering was sacrificed;²⁹ (2) the evening incense was burned and the lamps lighted;³⁰

18,
 23 Num.28:19-17
 24 Cf. Outline, ref. 17.
 25 Dan.9:21.
 26 Ant.VI.IX.3; **III.VIII.2.** Ant. III.X.1.
 27 Luke 1:10.
 28 Acta 3:1; 10:30.
 29 Num.28:4.
 30 Ex.30:8. ✓

but was also reckoned as the actual ending of the day.²⁶

Insert to ref. 31 -- כ. 6.

Chwolson also proves from the Targumim and the Talmudic literature that in the usage of later times, בין הערבים did not mean the same space of time as is fixed by the recognized Halacha--the afternoon--but was used as the synonym of בין השמשות. Das Letzte Passamahl Christi, Leipzig, 1908, 37, 157ff.

and (3) annually the paschal lamb was slain at sunset.³¹

These acts of worship by both people and priest pointed toward the beginning of a new day. The burnt sacrifice represented consecration of the nation for the ensuing night;³² the burning lamps gave light for approaching darkness; the sinking sun manifestly dated the new day--not the old. It was therefore an event of calendar significance when the paschal lamb was slain ~~in~~ בֵּין הָעֶרְבִים at sunset; and the offering unquestionably must have been dated with the new day--either just begun, or about to begin. And this new day, according to the Pentateuch, Philo, and Josephus, was the fourteenth of the first Jewish month.³³

Consequently, the slaying of the paschal lamb on the Jewish fourteenth could occur only at sunset ineunte of the passover day, and still maintain its calendar and spiritual significance. On this account, the favorite conception that the national paschal lambs were being slain at the hour of the death of Jesus is both contrary to ancient Jewish law, and to the earliest known Jewish cycle as well--that ^{which is} based upon the ^{pentateuchal} commentary of Aristobulus.³⁴ Instead, the customary evening burnt sacrifice was obviously being offered by the temple priest. The ninth hour, when Jesus died, was three hours too early for the passover offering, according to Deuteronomic law, and the Tal-
(Cf. Joseph Klausner, Jesus of Nazareth, New York, 1925, 326.)

³¹ Deut.16:6. For sunset sacrifice among Karaites, Samaritans and Falashas: Adrian Reland, Antiquitates Veterum Hebraeorum, Batavia, 1717, 275. Palestine Exploration Fund, Quarterly Statement, London, January, 1902, 82.

³² Thus Philo, "for the benefactions of the night." (Vol.Vii, Special Laws I, XXXV, 169. Tr. Colson, 1937. Loeb Classics.)

³³ Cf. ref. 8, and Ant.II.XIV.6, which ^{also} date^s the ^{(paschal} feast ~~is~~ on the fourteenth.

³⁴ Aristobulus was a learned Jew of Alexandria in the time of Ptolemy Philometer, to whom he wrote a series of commentaries on Moses (Eusebii Pamphili, Chronici Canones, ed. Fotheringham, London, 1923, 221), in which he locates the paschal month in relation to the equinox, and describes the exact position of the paschal moon in relation to the sun (Nicolai Nancelii, Analogia Microcosmi ad Macrocosmon, Sec. Pars. Lutetiae Parisiorum, 1611, col. 1204.)

Anatolius of Laodicea based his paschal cycles upon the teaching of Aristobulus (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Sec. Series, Vol. I. New York, 1890, 319.)

mudic law that times the offerings several hours earlier on a Friday afternoon,³⁵ was a later redaction. As recent as 200 A.D., the Mishna acknowledges that the paschal lambs had customarily been slain at dusk.³⁶

Let us attempt identification of the day on which Jesus died. First: With some, it was Wednesday; with a few, Thursday. But all four gospel writers call the crucifixion day παρασκευή.³⁷ And all four limit the term to the sixth day of the week--the day before the Jewish Sabbath.³⁸ Josephus likewise,³⁹ and also the Syriac church and the Greek church.⁴⁰ Talmudic MSS, with a passover on the fifteenth, further declare that Yeshu 'the Nazareen' was hanged on the eve of the passover, and an ancient Florentine MS ^{adds} ~~reads~~, "on the eve of the Sabbath."⁴¹ Second: Was this crucifixion Friday the ancient Jewish passover day, that is, the day of slaying the lamb? The Synoptists each report that disciples were sent by the Lord to prepare τὸ πάσχα, and in each instance one and the same simple conclusion is stated--"and they made ready τὸ πάσχα." In addition, in these same texts, Jesus Himself is cited four times as speaking of the preparation of τὸ πάσχα. Moreover, John, according to Luke, was one of those sent to prepare τὸ πάσχα;⁴² and when, decades later, John writes his account of the passion, he mentions a point of time immediately preceding the actual supper he had helped to prepare, and describes it as πρὸ δὲ τῆς ἑορτῆς τοῦ πάσχα.⁴³

Further evidence is also forthcoming from the fact that on Tuesday evening, at the end of the day, when all were seated upon the mount of Olives,⁴⁴

Insert below.

³⁵ Herbert Danby, Mishnah, Pes.5.1; Sab.1:11. Oxford, 1933.

³⁶ Ibid. Pes.5.10. Cf. Daniel Chwolson, Das Letzte Passemahl Christi, Leipzig, 1908, 163, 164.

³⁷ Matt.27:62; Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54; John 19:42.

³⁸ Besides the texts in ref. 37, cf. Matt.28:1.

³⁹ Ant.XVI.VI.2. Greek text.

⁴⁰ Charles C. Torrey, "Date of the Crucifixion According to the Fourth Gospel," Journal of Biblical Literature, Vol. L, 1931, 234, 235.

⁴¹ San. 43 a, cf. Note.

⁴² Luke 22:8. This preparation could not have been other than on Thursday evening in

⁴³ John 13:1.

⁴⁴ Matt.24:3; Mark 13:3.

and "We must, at all costs, avoid the error of depicting the spiritual conditions of Jesus' day in colours derived from late Talmudic literature." (Klausner, 132.)

It therefore follows that after the death of Christ, first century changes in the Jewish sacrificial calendar naturally were accompanied by the appearance of festal terms which could not exist in the strict OT sense and its pentateuchal ceremonies. The discard of the slaying of the passover lamb on the Jewish fourteenth obviously gave way to the observance only of the ancient feast of the fifteenth, which came to be described by both Christians and Jews as the "days of unleavened bread." With the Christian church, however, this remnant of the passover ceremony took on renewed spiritual meaning, but ^{adopted} a general terminology that was not as specific as that pertaining to the OT feasts, which were based upon three agricultural harvests--those of the "floor and winepress."⁴⁶

the disciples, all keenly intent upon the words of their Master, must all have heard Him say, "Ye know that after two days is τὸ πάσχα. This could not have been other than the sunset beginning of Friday and give place for all the episodes of passion week (cf. Outline). Matthew reports this incident, and Mark confirms it.⁴⁵ And, together with John 13:1,² when, six days before, John had pointed to the ensuing Friday as τὸ πάσχα, we have accordingly at least fifteen different assertions by Jesus, John, Matthew, Mark and Luke that Friday of the crucifixion--Jewish time, from Thursday evening sunset to Friday at sunset--was the day of the passover, that is, the day for slaying and eating the paschal lamb. To this sacrificial ceremony the death of Jesus corresponds in meaning, and therefore necessarily in date.

Third: The ^{passover sacrifice} is the chief fact upon which astronomy must needs base the reckoning of the crucifixion, for OT law and custom supply the Jewish date to each undated NT passover, namely, the fourteenth day of the first Jewish month, and not the Talmudic fifteenth, ~~which, in ancient Jewish law, never did correspond to the slaying of the paschal lamb.~~ And when the Synoptists obviously equate the paschal sacrifice of the "fourteenth" with the complex τὰ ἄζυμα, chronology has to accept the festal term chosen, and not confuse it with the OT "fifteenth," *on which no paschal lamb was ever slain.*

Insert I ~~It is therefore conclusive that, after the death of Christ, an increasing first century change^s in the Jewish sacrificial calendar were naturally accompanied by the appearance of festal terms that did not exist in the strict OT sense, whose terminology is always that of the pentateuch. The OT festal phrases are based upon three agricultural harvests--those of the "floor and winepress"⁴⁶ ^{they} and are commonly specific in meaning.~~

Pursuant of the argument thus far presented, several additional facts make it obvious and apparent that Matthew, Mark and Luke did not reckon Fri-

⁴⁵ Matt. 26:2; Mark 14:1.

⁴⁶ Deut. 16:13. Heb.

day of the crucifixion to be the holy feast of unleavened bread of the OT "fifteenth" of the Jewish first month.

First: The Tuesday evening episode has already been mentioned that Jesus, Matthew and Mark each counted the passover as "after two days," which would be the sunset beginning of the Jewish sixth day of the week.

Second: Further evidence lies in the fact that each Synoptist--not John--reports the incident with reference to Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the field-- ἀπ' ἀγροῦ --when he was compelled to bear the cross. If, in the minds of the Synoptists, Friday had actually been the sacred feast of unleavened bread, the "high day" of the festival, during which all work was anciently forbidden,⁴⁷ the Simon incident would have at least provoked inquiry and comment. But there is no intimation at all by these NT writers that this circumstance was not in full harmony with Jewish law.

Third: In each of the two rival crucifixion years--30 and 31 A.D.--when in both cases the paschal new moon was passing through apogee--a Jewish fifteenth on Friday of passover week would shorten the moon's translation period one day, and thereby cause the month Nisan to begin a whole day before the moon could actually be seen.⁴⁸ It is altogether inconsistent that Jesus should be represented by the Synoptists as consenting to a questionable form of calendar in the preparation of τὸ πάσχα.

Fourth: Hebrew scholarship would naturally see in the three Synoptic references--Matt. 26:17, Mark 14:12, Luke 22:7--an allusion to the seven-day feast of unleavened bread. Thus Delitzsch, Salkinson, Chwolson, and others. Both Delitzsch and Salkinson insert λη in their translation of Matthew and Mark, although there is no word for "feast" in the original Greek. But this interpretation distorts the chronology. On the contrary, NT scholarship presents τὰ ἄζυμα as a general term for the paschal season, the first day of which had literally come, according to the foregoing texts. Josephus goes further in calling the "fourteenth" the "day of unleavened bread." Thus we see this NT festal term in common use when the Gospels were written, and when Josephus wrote "Wars."

These facts seem more consistent than an emendation of Luke 22:7⁴⁹ to agree with a hypothetical translation of Matthew and Mark. Moreover, the records of Matthew and Mark include an indisputable earmark of the paschal nature of their supper, namely, the mention of the Hallel, which was ~~never~~^{only} sung except on passover night.⁵⁰ *one night of the year - after the paschal supper.*⁵⁰

Fifth: If John and the other gospel writers had been discordant in their chronology over the passover date, how does it come about that not only all the disciples, but Jews too from every part of the Near East, were in full agreement over the date of Pentecost, which they were observing on the same day. If there had been difference of opinion over the passover date, there was bound to have been variance over the date of Pentecost.

⁴⁷ Lev. 23:7.

⁴⁸ And so Fotheringham, for the year 30 A.D., dates the Nisan new moon phasis one day later than the Schoch calculation (Journal of Philology, Vol. XXIX, No. 57. London, 1903, 107).

⁵⁰ Matt. 26:30 and Mark 14:26. Cf. Klausner, Jesus of Nazareth, 1925, 104, 122, 329. Also E.G. White, Desire of Ages, 672. Pacific Press Pub. Co.

⁴⁹ Samuel I. Feigin, "The Date of the Last Supper," Anglican Theological Review, Vol. XXV, No. 2, April, 1943, 214ff.

The foregoing circumstances lead but to agreement only with the gospel writers--not to disagreement.

II

And now as to other texts that are supposed to represent discord in the NT chronology. If in John 18:28, for example, all had eaten the passover the night before, what was the "passover" which the Jewish priests and officers were still planning to eat? The OT answers this question.

The OT law is specific with regard to its use of the word "passover," which does not always refer to the paschal lamb. Moses speaks of the passover of the flock,⁵¹ and the passover of the herd.⁵¹ This same distinction is illustrated in particular in the passovers of Hezekiah and Josiah.⁵² In both feasts bullocks and oxen are mentioned, and in the passover of Josiah they are cataloged as "passover offerings."⁵³ This special offering of the "herd" was a peace offering-- חגיגה .⁵⁴ Philo mentions it as the sacrifice τῶν σωτηρίων, signifying deliverance.⁵⁵ The peace offering had to be offered in the temple, and the blood sprinkled upon the altar.⁵⁶ Further description is given by Maimonides:

"On the fourteenth day of the first month, when the paschal sacrifice was offered, peace offerings were made at the same time: and these indeed in the same manner as all the peace offerings of the herd and the rest of the flock, large and small, male and female: this obviously is that which is commonly called the festal offering of the fourteenth day, for in this manner the divine law regards it, 'Therefore slay the passover to the Lord thy God-- of the sheep, goats and beeves . . .'"⁵⁷

Lightfoot also gives a similar account of the passover peace offering, and thereby explains John 18:28:

"The peace offerings for the solemnity of the time were called the Hagigah, and they were to be of some beast, bullocke or sheep. Hereupon in

51 Deut.16:2. צא, a collective noun, flocks, sheep and goats (Gesenius).

52 Ibid. בקר collective, signifying oxen or cattle (Gesenius).

53 2 Chron.30:24 and 35:7,9. Note the sprinkling of the blood in 30:16, and 35:11. The blood of the passover lamb was applied to the offerer's door in

54 2 Chron.35:7,9. [Jerusalem.]

55 חגיגה, signifying festal joy (A.W. Streane, Chagigah, Glossary. 1891).

56 Philo, Vol. VII, Special Laws I, XXXIX, 212ff. Tr. Colson, 1937. Loeb.

57 Lev.3:2

58 Moses Maimonides, Tractatus Primus de Sacrificio Paschali, c. dec. XII.

Tr. Compiegne de Veil. London. 1683.

2 Chron.30:24 and 35:7,8, there is mention of Bullocks and Oxen for the Passeeover; and in Deut.16:2, there is speech of sacrificing the Passeeover of the heerd; which cannot be understood of the Passeeover that was to be eaten on the fourteenth day at even, for that was punctually and determinately appointed to be of Lambs and Kids, Ex.12:5; but it is to be construed of these peace offerings which were for the solemnity of the time. And this is that which Evangelist John calleth the Passeeover, when he saith, 'The Jews went not into Pilate's judgement Hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passeeover,' John 18:28. For they had eaten the Paschall Lamb the night before."^{58 59}

From Edersheim we have the same interpretation as the foregoing with reference to John 18:28 and its implied peace-offering.^{59 60} He adds that a second Chagigah was offered on the day of the feast of unleavened bread, and that this was the offering which the Jews were afraid that they might be unable to eat if they contracted defilement. From the Talmud we learn that the Chagigah of a high holiday such as the "first day of the Passover," was compulsory, while that of the fourteenth was not.^{60 61}

The peace sacrifice, that signified festal joy, peace and thanksgiving for the mercy and forgiveness of Jehovah was a fit accompaniment to the feast of unleavened bread. Hence the absurdity in the scene in John 18:28, lies not in the chronology, but in the fact that the actors were desiring to eat the passover peace offering, but at the same time were trying to kill the Author of peace.

III

In conclusion let us summarize the various texts which are supposed to offer so much opposition to harmony between John and the other writers:

1. In John 13:1, the beginning of the scene is "before the feast of the passover;" but after the supper--consistently paschal--another feast is imminent (verse 29), which naturally is the feast of unleavened bread on the fifteenth.

2. In John's expression "preparation of the passover," (John 19:14) ^{occurs} ~~the~~ the precise confirmation of Luke's statement that the feast of unleavened bread was also called Passover. John calls it such. At the same time he implies that a passover was but the preparation for the feast of the fifteenth,

⁵⁹ John Lightfoot, The Temple Service as it Stood in the Dayes of Our Saviour, London, 1650, 162.

⁶⁰ Albert Edersheim, The Temple, 218, 219. Hodder and Stoughton, New York.

⁶¹ A.W. Streane, Translation of the Treatise Chagigah, Cambridge, 1891, 36.
cf. Strack-Billerbeck Kommentar, 837ff. Vol. II. München, 1924.

all of which is consistent OT theology. And it should be remembered that John never employs the festal term τὰ ἄζυμα.

3. In John 18:28, as has just been demonstrated, the "passover" yet to be eaten was the passover peace offering of the Jewish fifteenth.

4. In Matt.26:17, Mark 14:12 and Luke 22:7, the "unleavened bread" mentioned is not the feast of unleavened bread, but instead Christianity's name for the paschal season just then beginning, and a festal term in harmony with OT law, and first century practice.

In the Johannine language of the foregoing texts, emphasis is placed upon the feast of the fifteenth which was imminent--the "high day" of the Jewish Sabbath. The fourteenth therefore was then in progress. In the language of the Synoptists, the emphasis is upon the opening event of the paschal season--the sacrifice of the lamb. The point of time, according to the OT, Philo, and Josephus, was sunset בֵּין הָעֶרְבִים at the beginning of the fourteenth; and this must necessarily have been what Luke meant when he wrote, "Then came the day of unleavened bread when the passover must be slain." The sunset beginning of a new day had come--even the crucifixion fourteenth.

The important texts that definitely fix the chronology of passion week are (1) the five παρασκευῆ references that establish the day of the week; and (2) John 12:1, 13:1, Matt.26:2, Mark 14:1, Luke 22:15--two Johannine and three Synoptic--that point to death Friday as the day of slaying, preparing and eating τὸ πάσχα. Where therefore is the discord in the Johannine-Synoptic texts? On any other basis, the astronomical argument disagrees with the motion of the crucifixion moon!

Grace Anadon,
Washington, D.C.

Aug. 27, 1943.

day of the crucifixion to be the holy feast of unleavened bread of the OT "fifteenth" of the Jewish first month.

First: The Tuesday evening episode has already been mentioned that Jesus, Matthew and Mark each counted the passover as "after two days," which would be the sunset beginning of the Jewish sixth day of the week.

Second: Further evidence lies in the fact that each Synoptist~~s~~--not John-- reports the incident with reference to Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the field-- ἀπὸ ἀγροῦ--when he was compelled to bear the cross. If, in the minds of the Synoptists, Friday had actually been the sacred feast of unleavened bread, the "high day" of the festival, during which all work was anciently forbidden,⁴⁷ the Simon incident would have at least provoked inquiry and comment. But there is no intimation at all by these NT writers that this circumstance was not in full harmony with Jewish law.

Third: In each of the two rival crucifixion years--30 and 31 A.D.--when in both cases the paschal new moon was passing through apogee--a Jewish fifteenth on Friday of passover week would shorten the moon's translation period one day, and thereby cause the month Nisan to begin a whole day before the moon could actually be seen.⁴⁸ It is altogether inconsistent that Jesus should be represented by the Synoptists as consenting to a questionable form of calendar in the preparation of τὸ πάσχα.

Fourth: Hebrew scholarship would naturally see in the three Synoptic references--Matt.26:17, Mark 14:12, Luke 22:7--an allusion to the "feast of unleavened bread." Thus Delitzsch, Salkinson, Chwolson, and others. Both Delitzsch and Salkinson insert ἀπ in their translation of Matthew and Mark, although there is no word for "feast" in the original Greek. But such an interpretation distorts the chronology. On the contrary, NT scholarship presents τὰ ἄζυμα as its general term for the paschal season, the first day of which had literally come, according to the foregoing texts. Josephus goes further in calling the "fourteenth" the "day of unleavened bread." (Cf. ref. 5.) Thus we see this NT festal term in common use when the Gospels were written, and when Josephus wrote "Wars."

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Fifth: If John and the other gospel writers had been discordant in their computation of the passover date, how does it come about that not only all the disciples, but Jews too from every part of the Near East, were in full agreement over the date of Pentecost, which they were observing on the same day? If there had been difference of opinion over the passover date, there was bound to have been variance over the date of Pentecost, which was reckoned from the offering of the wave sheaf on the sixteenth.

⁴⁷ Lev.23:7.

⁴⁸ And so Fotheringham, for the year 30 A.D., dates the Nisan new moon phasis one day later than the Schoch calculation (Journal of Philology, Vol. XXIX, No. 57. London, 1903, 107).

⁴⁹ Samuel I. Feigin, "The Date of the Last Supper," Anglican Theological Review, Vol. XXV, No. 2, April, 1943, 214ff.

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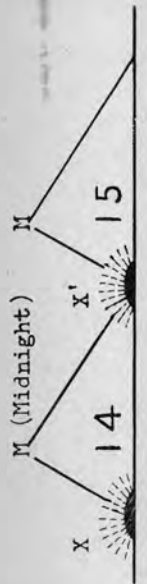
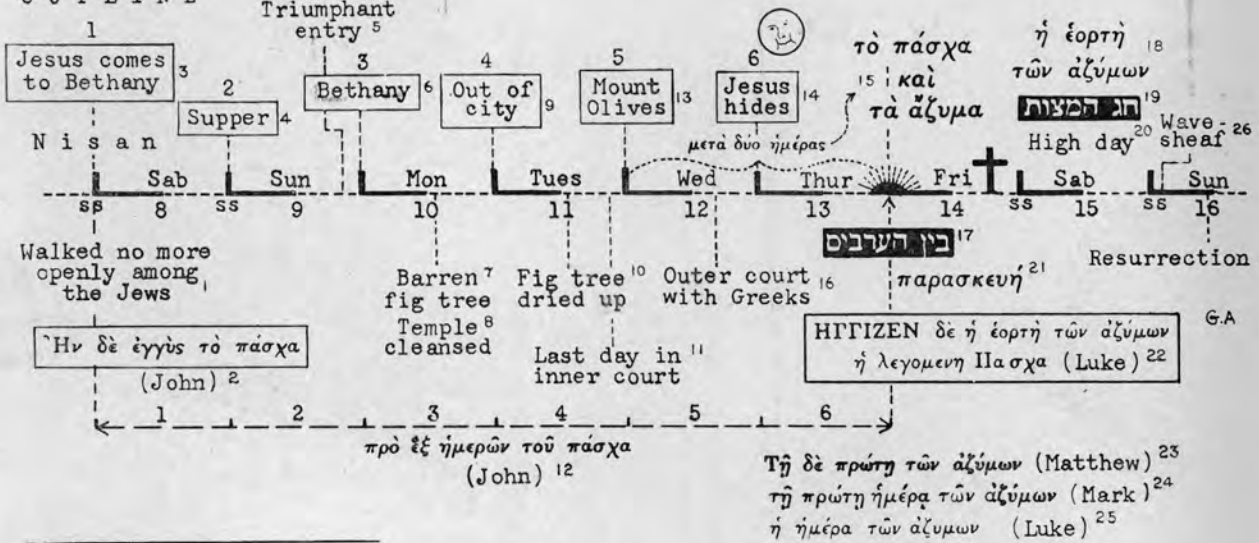
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⁴⁹ Samuel I. Feigin, "The Date of the Last Supper," Anglican Theological Review, Vol. XXV, No. 2, April, 1943, 214ff.

Corrections for "The Johannine-Synoptic Argument"

1. On page 4, place the reference figure "21" at the end of the paragraph after the word "place." Below, add Ant.III.X.5 to ref. 21.
22. On page 5, line 3, after the word "assembly," add --a holy convocation--.
Note the dashes.
In ref. 23, same page, add verse "18."
3. In fourth line from the bottom, same page, after the word "day," insert
3. the sentence; but was also reckoned as the actual ending of the day.²⁶
To ref. 26 below, add Ant.III.X.1.
3. On page 9, change last clause of Fourth paragraph to read: which was only sung on one night of the year--after the paschal supper.⁵⁰
4. On page 10, ninth line down, cut out the reference figure "50" after the word "flock."
5. On page 12, delete the last ^{two} sentences and substitute: this is the only date to which the calendar can tie.

OUTLINE



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IMPORTANT PASSOVER TEXTS IN JOSEPHUS AND PHILO

By Grace Amador
Washington, D.C.

In order that the passover statements by first century writers may be understood, it is essential that their festal terms be cataloged and interpreted. Generally speaking, these ritual words and phrases are an unknown language, and may be of quite different meaning from their English translations. For example, the Greek word πάσχα, or φάσκα, as sometimes occurs, is found about twelve times in Josephus. We translate it passover, commonly meaning the paschal supper. But commonly, ^{with Josephus,} the word is interchangeable with the eight-day feast of unleavened bread, and only three times does it refer directly to the 14th day of Nisan, while certainly only three times does it signify the paschal lamb. And apparently no place has as yet come to light where πάσχα designates the supper alone, although it may refer to paschal sacrifice and supper together. In Josephus, there are about twenty-five references to this sacrificial ceremony.

Again, a writer is sometimes speaking of ceremonies throughout (καθ' ἡν) the feast of unleavened bread. Again not. But in any event, the analyst must carefully compare any one statement with all the other cognate records before valid conclusions can be drawn. Therefore every πάσχα sentence must be seriously examined, for a writer by no means invariably, as some conclude, thereby refers to a sacrificial supper on a specific date. ^{Moreover, with Josephus, it is easy to overlook details.} Consequently it seems worth while to analyze a few important passages from these authoritative witnesses in the first century -- statements which have provoked much discussion. For convenience the original texts will be recited.

I Wars II.1.1-3 and Ant. XVII.IX.1-3

The circumstances underlying these ^{two} Josephus texts appear to be as follows: The seven days of public mourning for Herod the Great ended at evening, apparently at the evening ineunte of 14 Nisan, at which time a sedition arose among the Jews. The time is indicated in Section 3 of the first text:

3 ignore including
2 Greek -
it does not mean
it does



Translation (mine)--

And now that the feast of unleavened bread had already come, which is called pascha by the Jews, one that contributes such a large number of sacrifices, countless people, on the one hand, stream in from the country for the ceremony, while, on the other hand, those mourning for the doctors stood in the temple procuring recruits for their faction.

Josephus adds that

The foregoing sentence merely outlines the situation. ¹ the clamors of the temple party were heard all over Jerusalem. At the same time the masses had lodged in the plain and were ready to offer their paschal lambs. ² It was his conduct that caused the sedition. He had to counter at once by sending his general, but the Jews drove him away with stones. Then a tribune with a cohort of soldiers was sent. These were killed. After this the people "betook themselves to their sacrifices as if they had done no mischief." Finally Archelaus sent his whole army--the footmen into the city, and the horsemen into the plain, who fell upon the people as they were offering their sacrifices, and killed three thousand.

It is quite obvious that this series of episodes points to one evening only--that of the paschal sacrifice. Antipater also identifies the sedition as occurring at this time. ³ Moreover, he catalogs this sacrifice as a private offering (idiaus dvoiaus). Similarly Philo. ⁴ We know from the date--14 Nisan--that the moon had come to her full, and on this evening rose "full" in the east as the sun set in the west. The people actually made the assault with their lambs in one hand and stones in the other, while the wailers in the temple urged them on. ⁵ The description is significant in showing (1) that the passover lambs were at this time being slain in the evening, and (2) that they were being offered in the outskirts of the city, "around the sanctuary," not in it.

Such was the temper of the age in which Jesus was born.

¹ Wars II.13.3.
² Wars II.11.5. ec.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Philo, Vol. VII, De Decalogo XXX.159. Tr. by Colson. London, 1937.
⁵ Ant. XVII.1X.3. ec.

II Ant. II.XIV.6, III.X.5, and XI.IV.8

It seems inconsistent to make Josephus say in one place that the paschal lambs were being slain from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., with the supper necessarily occurring on the subsequent evening, when in several other passages he describes the whole passover ceremony--sacrifice, feast, and burning of the remnants--as taking place on one day only, the 14th of Nisan. Let us examine ~~one of his descriptions~~ one of his descriptions⁵ of the 14th day:



Translation (Thackeray)--

Then when the fourteenth day was come the whole body, in readiness to start, sacrificed, purified the houses with the blood, using bunches of hyssop to sprinkle it, and after the repast burnt the remnants of the meat as persons on the eve of departure. Hence comes it that to this day we keep this sacrifice in the same customary manner, calling the feast Pascha. . .⁶

In this passage three principal acts are tied to the 14th of Nisan--the sacrificing, the purifying, and the burning of the remnants after the supper. The ceremony is confined to one complete sentence with καί ^{as the} connectives, and consequently the conclusion is inconsistent that up to the word ἡγουμενον, it is 14 Nisan, but that from there on, it is 15 Nisan. And please note that Josephus adds, "to this day we keep this sacrifice in the same customary manner."

A text similar to the foregoing is found in Philo, and for it is also made the claim that it represents two dates. I quote Dr. Colson's translation of this passage:

On this day every dwelling-house is invested with the outward semblance and dignity of a temple. The victim is then slaughtered and dressed for the festal meal as befits the occasion. The guests assembled for the banquet have been cleansed by purificatory lustrations, and are there not as in other festive gatherings, to indulge the belly with wine and viands, but to fulfil with prayers and hymns the custom handed down by their fathers. The day on which this national festivity (πανδημου ευχιας) occurs may very properly be noted. It is the 14th of the month, etc.

⁶ Ant. II.XIV.6, Loeb Classical Series. ^{Library}
⁷ Philo, Special Laws II.XVII.148, 149. Tr. by Colson. Loeb Classical Series. ^{Library}
Volume VII.

In this description both sacrifice and supper are featured. The word εὐ-
ωχία means feast. And in addition, it is the national feast about which Philo is discoursing, and he says plainly that it was kept (ἄγεται) on the 14th of the month. There appears to be no place for any 15th-day supper in this text!

the first of which we have already discussed.

In Antiquities Josephus has three descriptions of a 14th-day passover, [^] and ^{καὶ} the second text is as follows:



Translation (mine)--

And we were ^{indeed} commanded to offer every year the sacrifice called πάσχα, which = I said before we offered upon leaving Egypt, in the month Xanthicus, which by us is called Nisan and begins the year, on the 14th day according to the moon, the sun then standing in Aries--for in this month we were freed from Egyptian bondage--and now we do keep it in companies, nothing of the victim being kept until the next day.

The principal verbs in this sentence are two-- ἐνόμισεν καὶ τελοῦμεν. There is no specific word here for paschal supper, but the one word θύσῖα is called πάσχα, and in this long sentence apparently represents the whole ceremony, ^{and that} taking place on the 14th of Nisan. For in the concluding clause, Hence it must have been eaten on the 14th. emphasis is made that no piece of the victim was kept until the next day. ^{Jo-}sephus must therefore have had in mind not only the sacrifice, but also the ^{in the equation} θύσῖα = πάσχα. eating of the same. [^] Furthermore, in his subsequent sentence he goes on to describe the service of the 15th day, which he says succeeds the πάσχα. How therefore could the supper have been part of the 15th? It surely ^{would} appear out of turn ^{here} [^] to date the sacrifice and supper other than the 14th of Nisan!

The genitive absolute τοῦ ἡλίου καθεστῶτος is not merely an aside in this important sentence. By these words Josephus actually tells us that at the time of the exodus the lunar year was common, not embolismic. For if it had

⁸ Ant. III, X, 5
Rec.

been a leap year, then the 14th of Nisan would have occurred either the last week in April or the first week in May, when the sun is never in Aries, but has advanced into Taurus. Thackeray has caught the exact meaning here by his translation, "the sun then being in Aries."

We therefore discover in this text a diagnostic phrase that aids in ascertaining the year of the exodus--not alone, of course, but when put with other decisive features, it may turn the scale. That such was the original meaning of our text is indicated by arguments in the early Christian church, which insisted that the exodus passover, upon which Easter was to be based, must ^{have} occur ^{red} after the vernal equinox, that is, after the sun had entered Aries. ⁹

The third 14th-day passover of Josephus relates to the time of Darius I, when the second temple had been completed. The text reads:



Translation (mine)--

And they kept the feast in a state of purity with women and children, according to the law of their fathers, and having fulfilled the sacrifice named πάσχα on the 14th day of the same month, they feasted for seven days, sparing no expense, but bringing whole burnt offerings to God, and offering sacrifices of thanksgiving. . .

In this text Josephus makes a difference between the feast of unleavened bread as a whole (έορτή) and the sacrifice named πάσχα, which he says was completed on the 14th day. We should not therefore expect the πάσχα ceremony to extend over into the 15th day. The offerings called όλοκαυτώσεις and χαριστήριαι θυσίαι will be referred to later--the sacrifices pertaining to the seven-day feast.

Why therefore should we expect either Philo or Josephus to present a changed emphasis regarding the 14th-day passover hereto described? Apparently they do

⁹ Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series (New York, 1890), Volume I, p. 319.

¹⁰ Ant. XI. IV. 8

¶ III.

not do this, but their festal terms are not always understood. We wish to compare two more texts--one each from Josephus and Philo, and both of similar trend. With reference to these two passages, the claim has been made that the writers thereby place the paschal sacrifice on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan, and the supper on the subsequent evening of the 15th. The text by Josephus reads:



Translation (mine)--

So, when the festival had come--it is called πάσχα --during which, on the one hand [μὲν] they sacrifice from the ninth hour to the eleventh, but on the other hand [δὲ] as it were a little company of not less than ten gathers [γίνεται] around the offering, for it is not permissible to dine alone, and often as many as twenty are numbered, these high priests counted as many as 250,000 of sacrifices, etc.

In this scene there are two contrasting sacrificial occasions. (1) The μὲν clause, or afternoon sacrifices, involved the whole eight-day feast, so often called πάσχα by Josephus, ^{as in this text.} The ^{therefore} offerings included the ὀλοκαυτώσεις, χαριστήριοι θύσια ^{and} σωτήρια --burnt offerings, thank offerings and the peace offerings. ¹² These sacrifices began in the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan, ¹³ and ^{continued throughout the festival.} The peace offerings on the ^{14th} day were also called passovers. ¹⁴ Not all the people necessarily took part in the afternoon sacrifices. (2) The δὲ ^{on the other hand,} clause ^s represents the paschal sacrifice and supper, around whose table ^s the small group ^s of ten or twenty assembled. These companies embraced the whole nation, and hence it was only at the time of this ceremony that ^{a strict} the count could have been made. In this text Josephus does not state at what time of day the small group sacrifice ^{customarily} occurred; but in Wars II.I.2 and II.II.5 he has already featured it as an evening episode; and later, in Antiquities, ¹⁵ he several times describes both sacrifice and supper as belonging to one and the same day--the

11 Wars VI.IX.3
12 Ant. XI.IV.8 and Wars IV.VII.2
13 Maimonides, De Sacrificiis Liber, cap. dec., sec. 12. Tr. Compiegne de Veil.
14 Deut. 16:2; 2 Chron. 30:16,17; 2 Chron. 35:11.
15 It was the evening drunkenness of Archelaus that started the Jewish sedition.

[Londini, 1683.]

accompanying the paschal ceremony.

These texts have already been discussed.
14th of Nisan. Hence the paschal ceremony was obviously an evening event during the life of Josephus.

This incident took place in the time of Nero, whom Cestius Gallus wished to inform of the number of Jews in Jerusalem when the Jewish revolt was just beginning--probably about 65 A.D.¹⁶

The companion text from Philo is equally significant:



Translation (mine)--

After the new moon festival is the fourth feast--the Crossing-feast--which the Hebrews call Πάσχα in their native tongue, in which all the people, old and young together, honored on that day with the dignity of the priesthood, sacrifice many myriads of victims from noon until evening.

This text is based upon a specific day of the festival-- ^{κατ'} ἐκείνην τὴν ἡμέραν --a day on which old and young alike, Philo insists, were honored with the office of priest. The feast as a whole was called πάσχα, but the day in point was 14 Nisan, when the paschal lambs were offered. However, it is claimed by some that the "myriads of victims" included the paschal sacrifices, and hence that these were slain in the afternoon of the 14th, ^{with the supper on the eve of the 15th.} But the whole of chapter XXVII, in which this text is found, is a description of the πάσχα ceremony, and at the end Philo declares with emphasis that both passover sacrifice and banquet were celebrated on the 14th day. He could not therefore have numbered the πάσχα with the afternoon victims, for with this understanding, the banquet would necessarily have occurred on the evening of the 15th.

Moreover, in De Vita Mosis Philo again states that the 14th day was clearly appointed for the paschal rite.¹⁸ And he further marks the paschal day astronomically when he says--

¹⁶ Wars II.XIV.3. Loeb Classical Series (margin).
¹⁷ Philo, Volume VII, Special Laws II.XXVII.145. Tr. by Colson. Harvard University Press, 1937. Loeb Classical Series.
¹⁸ Philo, Volume VI, De Vita Mosis XLI.224,228. Loeb Classical Series.

ἡλίου καὶ σελήνης κατ' ἐκείνην τὴν ἡμέραν ἀλλήλοισ ἐπ-ἀνατελλόντων
τῶν αὐγαῖς ἀδιαστάτοις... 19

Translation (mine)--

oh,
app.

☐ When sun and moon on that day appear upon [ἐπί] and up [ἀνά] to each other in undivided rays of light.

Now the "upon and up" appearance of sun and moon always occurs after the moon has full, and therefore at the very beginning of the 14th of Nisan when at sunset the sun is lowering upon the western horizon while in the east the moon, now full, is rising up simultaneously. In near eastern countries the Nisan moon regularly fulls on the 13th of the ^{lunar} month.²⁰ But not so in the seventh month, whose feast of Tabernacles in this text, Philo is comparing with the paschal 14th. He states that the autumn feast (206) came on the 15th for the same reason that the spring feast occurred on its date, namely, because the world was then full of light. The sun shone all day, and the moon shone all night.²¹ In the autumn, however, the astronomical conditions are quite different from those in the spring on account of the Harvest moon, which rises full about sunset for several evenings in succession--toward the middle of the ^{Jewish} seventh month.²² But in the spring month Nisan, the moon rises full at sunset only once, and that at the beginning of the paschal 14th. Thereafter the moon appears about an hour later each successive night. Hence the feast of Tabernacles began in fullness of light, even though the moon may have full, several days earlier, and was actually waning.

Cut

^{con} Our text shows that Philo definitely understood the astronomy of the Jewish feasts. It therefore seems very inconsistent to charge him with confused and contradictory statements as we shall have to do if we are to conclude that his afternoon sacrifices included the passover lambs. He is in agreement with the OT when he assumes that on the paschal 14th the nation was honored with the

¹⁹ Philo, Special Laws II. XXXIII, 210. Tr. by Colson. Loeb Classical Series.

²⁰ Journal of Biblical Literature, Vol. LXIII, Part II, 1944, 183.

²¹ Philo, Id., XXVIII.155.

²² In the season of Tabernacles, both sun and moon course so low against the horizon that for several evenings together the full moon rises with very little difference of time.

dignity of the priest's office. This dignity, as he implies, seems to have been respected throughout the whole 14th day, and is alluded to in 2 Chron. 30:16,17. Here, on account of levitical uncleanness, some of the people did not offer their peace offerings in the temple^{where the blood was sprinkled}--a statement suggesting that there were some who did, as in 2 Chron. 35:11. Hence there is no reason why Philo ~~should~~^{as to} not also agree with the OT ~~in~~ⁱⁿ the time of the paschal rite.

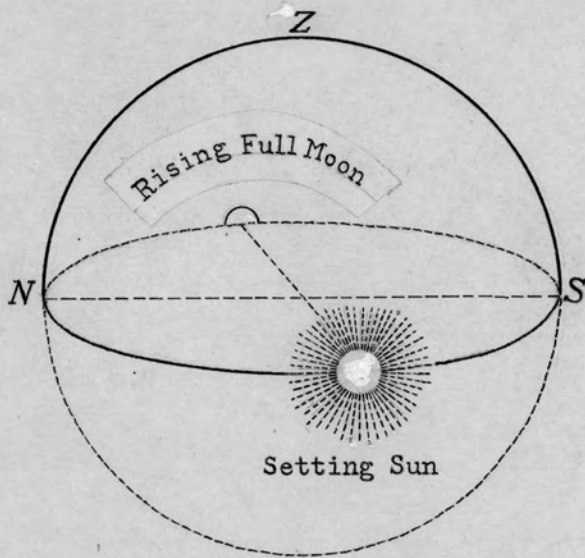
No confusion in any way arises in our Philonic text by the interpretation that the "myriads of victims" comprised the burnt offerings, thank offerings, and peace offerings as we have explained for Wars VI.IX.3. With this understanding, the paschal ceremony had already been celebrated at the sunset beginning of the paschal 14th. This simple exposition is in harmony with the OT feast schedule, and it implies that in the time of Philo and Josephus the ancient ceremonies were still in operation. If such were not the case, then why should Josephus say, several times over, that in his own day the people kept the paschal rite the same as at the time of the exodus?²³

The difficulty which has arisen over these texts largely comes from the assumption that in Philo and Josephus the word πάσχα always refers to the paschal ceremony on 14 Nisan. On the contrary, as has been pointed out, this word commonly refers to the whole feast of unleavened bread. And no different meaning should be ascribed to it unless represented in the text.

Grace Amadou
Washington, D.C.
Dec. 12, 1944.

²³ Ant. II. XIV. 6; III. X. 5; Against Apion I. 8.





Beginning of 14 Nisan on the
Jerusalem Meridian



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