

# CHRONOLOGY OF THE “LORD’S SUPPER”

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These are the events leading up to, during, and just after what is commonly called the “Lord’s supper” or “last supper”. I have put them in what I believe is the proper chronological order (At least to my best understanding). My commentary throughout is about the events and explanation on why I believe this meal was NOT a Passover meal. In the Old Testament of the bible, the Passover is not a day, it is a sacrifice that was killed at twilight at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month (The month of the Aviv or Abib). It was then eaten after it became dark on the early portion of the 15<sup>th</sup>, which started the seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. (**Exodus 12:2,5-8, 23:15, Lev 23:5-6**) This is to be kept this way FOREVER. (**Exodus 12:14-17**)

Additionally, that is the same timing and manner that everybody else kept in the New Testament. The chief priests and elders took Jesus to Pontius Pilate in the early morning after they spent all night mocking and beating Him. This was after His arrest which happened after His supper with the His disciples. However, they refused to go into the judgement hall for it would make them defiled and unclean and therefore unable to eat the Passover which was the next night. (**John 18:28**) Therefore, what Jesus does with His disciples is on the day before Passover, so right out of the gate it would appear to not be the Passover meal, but we’ll go thru it further.

Aviv or Abib is the word used to describe the stage of ripening of the barley that was used to determine the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month. The month is then just commonly referred to as Aviv. It is also known as Nisan, but that is the Babylonian name for the month.

It is of great importance to know what the bible says, and what it does not say. So, I will point out that the bible never refers to this meal as the “Last Supper” or the “Lord’s Supper”. Some people take great issue with the use of these terms because it’s not in scripture. I personally don’t have a problem with the terms as they’re just descriptions that everybody knows. Jesus IS referred to as Lord, and it was, in fact, His last supper as a human being. But, like I said, it’s important to know what the bible says, and what it does not. And that is what I’m hoping to bring out about this night.

I formulated the day of the week as follows:

- Them making haste to get His body prepared on the preparation day before the high day began, which was the 1<sup>st</sup> Day of Unleavened Bread, the 15<sup>th</sup>, (**John 19:31, Lev 23:6**)
- Jesus being in the grave for 3 days and 3 nights, (**Matt 12:40**)

- Mary seeing Him already risen while it was still dark during the early hours of the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the week, what we call Sunday. (**Matthew 28:1-2, Mark 16:1-2, 9, Luke 24:1, John 20:1, 11-17**)
- Just count backwards from this known day.

Jesus was on the cross Wednesday afternoon. He was put into the grave before the next day began. He was in the grave Wednesday night (1 night), Thursday (1 day), Thursday night (2 nights), Friday (2 days), Friday night (3 nights), Saturday (3 days) and was up and about before dawn on Sunday. Or you could simplify it to Him being in the grave for all of Aviv 15, 16 and 17.

## AVIV 13 – TUESDAY

- **Matthew 26:17-19, Mark 14:12-16, Luke 22:7-13**
  - Jesus' disciples ask Him where He would like them to prepare for Passover and Unleavened Bread.
  - Jesus tells them to go into the city (Jerusalem) and find a man with a pitcher of water.
  - That man takes them to an upper room that was furnished, and the disciples make ready.

*[Matthew and Mark call it the "first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread", but that is impossible. The word translated as "first" (protos) either means prior, or possibly the first day of preparations. Take note that Mark says that Unleavened bread is when the Passover is to be killed.]*

## AVIV 14 – TUESDAY EVENING

- **Matthew 26:20, Mark 14:17, Luke 22:14-16**
  - Jesus joins the disciples in the upper room and when evening arrives, (starting the next day) He kicks back with them for supper. Notice the first thing they do is recline and eat.
  - He explains to them how much He desires to eat the Passover with them, but tells them He won't be able to until He eats it again in His Father's kingdom.

*[Jesus won't be able to eat the Passover again with the disciples because He will be dead by the time that happens, the following evening. **John 13:1-2**]*

- **LUKE 22:17-18**

- Jesus passes around a cup of presumably wine and tells the men to divide it among themselves.  
[*Most likely just wine for dinner*]
- He explains He will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God, possibly indicating He did not have any wine Himself.

- **MATTHEW 26:26, MARK 14:22, LUKE 22:19**

- As they ate, Jesus took bread and gave thanks.
- He broke the bread and gave it to the disciples telling them it represented His body which He gave to them, and to eat it in remembrance of Him.

[Something to notice, nowhere does it mention this bread is unleavened. There are always arguments on both sides, but the point here is it simply calls it “artos”. There is one instance where this word is used during Unleavened Bread, but it overwhelmingly refers to normal leavened bread. And that’s interesting since it mentions the Feast of Unleavened Bread (“azumos”) numerous times and that Unleavened Bread is also called Passover (**Luke 22:1**). Why not use the same terminology? Also, it is the day before Unleavened Bread, so there’s not a commandment against leavening during this supper, regardless of somebody’s extra-biblical reasoning. (Such as Christ was unleavened, and therefore the bread had to be also.)

Additionally, they were dipping the bread. Not all unleavened bread is a hard crispy cracker, but you don’t normally dip it.]

- **MATTHEW 26:21-25, MARK 14:18-21,**

- Also, as they ate, Jesus tells them that one of them will betray Him, and that it would be better for that person if they had never been born.
- The disciples become distressed about this and each one asks Jesus if it is them.
- Jesus’ only gives one vague answer; that it is one that is dipping and eating with Him at the table.
- However, when Judas asks, it prompts Jesus to reply, “you got it”. If for some reason Judas didn’t know it before hand, he knows it now.

- **MATTHEW 26:27-28, MARK 14:23-24, LUKE 22:20**

- Towards the end of supper, or perhaps shortly after, Jesus gives thanks and offers what seems to be a second cup.
- He tells them this represents His shed blood for the RENEWED covenant (Not new), and they all drank from it.

[For those that insist that Jesus was instituting a new covenant (as in different) and instituting new covenant/testament Passover symbols; Jesus was RENEWING the blood covenant that was broken by man. If a married couple renews their vows, do they refer to their life together before this as their “old marriage” and now they have a “new marriage” with different rules and guidelines? Also, the “symbols” He uses were not instituted here, they are in fact quite old. Melchizedek and Abraham old. (**Genesis 14:18-20**)

Jesus mentions not “drinking from the fruit of the vine...”, which would indicate they were drinking wine. However, and this usually gets an adverse reaction, you will not find the word wine anywhere in these accounts. Again, I’m not arguing that it wasn’t wine, (I believe it was) I’m just pointing out that it’s not stated. So, for those that want to have hard and fast rules about the proper wine, whether it’s fortified or not, the alcohol content, proper disposal of and anything else... notice that it’s not even mentioned.

What is mentioned is the cup. I feel this is the emphasis. It falls into the same vein as Jesus asking the sons of Zebedee if they were able to drink from the same cup as He is and be baptized in the same baptism. (**Matthew 20:22, Mark 10:38**). Likewise, when Jesus was praying to His Father and asked if there was anyway that this cup could pass before Him (His crucifixion). (**Matthew 26:39**)

Since the word “cup” can be a metaphor for a “lot” or someone’s “fate”, I think it leans more in that direction here. It is the imbibing of the same spiritual cup, not the physical contents of the cup.]

- **LUKE 22:24-30, JOHN 13:1-22**

- After supper, there was a discussion-turned-argument among the disciples as to who would be the greatest among them. (Most likely kick-started by them murmuring with each other about who would betray Jesus)
- Jesus gets up, washes the disciples’ feet, and teaches them about being a servant. The greatest among them should be as the least.
- It gives an indication that Jesus again mentions that someone there would in fact betray Him, albeit with a more troubled tone. This further perplexes the men.

[A few things to consider here. No real commandment is given for the washing of feet. It was a demonstration to teach the disciples about being a servant and having a servant’s attitude. He tells these specific men to do likewise to each other (have a servant attitude) because they were just bickering about who was greater. The other 3

gospels make no mention of it and not one of the gospels mention any of the men washing each other's feet, anybody washing Jesus' feet, nor does any other book speak of anybody washing another persons' feet anywhere else in the bible after this event.

Also note they were arguing so much Jesus had to intervene. Would they be fighting like this on the somber Passover service?

Further, for those that believe foot washing is a crucial part of a ceremony and salvation, notice the timing. Nearly everybody that performs this vehemently does it first, but **John 13:1-2** couldn't have been more precise. It happened AFTER supper and BEFORE Passover. The bread and cup were given out during the supper. You have to put some real effort into misconstruing that.]

- **JOHN 13:23-30**

- Jesus and John are reclining and relaxing on their own while most of the others appear to still be around the table.
- Peter pressures John to ask Jesus who the betrayer is. John leans back on Jesus and in a more private manner simply asks, "who is it".
- Jesus privately answers John that it would be the one that He would give a piece of bread to after dipping it.
- Jesus gets up and dips a sop of bread and gives it to Judas Iscariot, which seems as though Satan used as a vessel to enter Judas.
- Jesus basically tells Judas, "let's get on with it".
- Nobody at the table knew why and figured, since Judas had the money box, he went out to buy more feast needs or to help the poor.
- It's a safe bet that both John and Peter now know.
- Judas immediately scurries off into the night.

[Another list of things to consider. Again, with dipping a sop. Unleavened bread would not typically be used in this manner. Those that believe it was unleavened, reserved for a special, sacred purpose and any that remains must be disposed of in a proper manner (burned or buried), notice that no instruction whatsoever is given, and Jesus gives some of, if not the entirety of the rest of it to Judas of all people, which is the moment Satan entered him. How does that fit into the equation?

Take note that Judas then takes off and the other men just thought Jesus must have sent him off to the nearest drug store to buy more things. On Passover?]

- **LUKE 22:31-34, JOHN 13:36-38**

- Jesus approaches Peter and tells him that Satan has asked for him by name and how He had prayed for him.
- Peter wants to go with Jesus and promises to follow Him to prison or death.
- Jesus tells him that he can't, and humbles him down by explaining that Peter will betray Him three times before the night is thru.

[Speculating here, once Peter found out the betrayer was Judas, He might have gotten a little haughty about how *he* would never do such a thing. Jesus then humbles that attitude.]

- **LUKE 22:35-38**

- Jesus tells the disciples that up until now, they did not need a money bag or other provisions.
- He then explains that now, they are going to have to take provisions and buy swords.
- The men explain that they already have two and Jesus says that that is sufficient.

[Jesus instructs the men to go out with provisions and, if needed, sell their garments so they can buy swords. Again, on Passover?]

- **JOHN 13:31-3, JOHN 14, 15, 16**

- Jesus then gives the men lengthy teachings, instructions, and reassurances.
- Since at the end of John 13 says they departed, I'm assuming a large portion of these instructions were given on the move after leaving the room.

- **MATTHEW 26:30, MARK 14:26, LUKE 22:39, JOHN 14:31**

- Jesus and the eleven disciples leave the upper room.

[During a typical early 14<sup>th</sup> Passover ceremony that many people keep, it is capped off by singing a hymn. Matthew and Mark mention it, but it has been studied that that is most likely a scriptural error that I'm not going to get into here. Whether they did or did not seems irrelevant and whether people continue to do it or not is personal choice. I'm just pointing out that there is evidence that it didn't happen and seems inappropriate to make it law.]

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

This concludes the supper. The following events are history and not part of the scope of this paper.

Earlier I mentioned how important it is to know what the bible says and what it does not. We've gone thru the entirety of the gospel accounts on this supper and almost none of it agrees with those that keep an early 14<sup>th</sup> New Testament Passover service. It was not a service, it was a meal, and it was not a Passover meal. Nowhere is lamb spoken of and the rest of the Passover keeping universe was keeping it the next night.

Those that argue that the Jews have the nights mixed up and they wrongfully lump Passover and Unleavened Bread together apparently don't realize that Jesus and His disciples were Jews, they all kept it the same way, and that is strongly backed up biblically.

What early 14<sup>th</sup> New Testament Passover keepers have done is erroneously interpret the "last supper" as the Passover and wrongfully create a sacred and salvation-hinging ceremony out of it. They then use that false interpretation to falsely interpret the Old Testament Passover timing and accuse everybody else of lacking understanding.

Some nuances in my chronological timing on this night are admittedly interpretive as none of us can know for sure. But by far the general order of events is biblically sound if not explicitly stated. However, me doing this study has allowed this night and story to really take shape and come to life. It's extremely easy to lose track of the fact that these were real events that happened to real people, especially if your Passover observance is a staunch, dry, depressing, automated, robotic, going-thru-the-motions ceremony filled with man-made rituals.