

REMEMBERING JESUS

PART 1 - CELTIC CHRISTIANITY

Despite what mankind has done to the true Christian religion, there is only one such genuine religion depicted within canonized scripture. Christianity, as an overall umbrella for all of the religions that claim Jesus as their Savior, has become a confusion of a little scripture mixed with various traditions and practices from other religions. Very few persons who perceive the need for religion in our lives, really know or understand where the practices of their church come from, Few find it important enough to verify what they practice as appropriately ordained by the God that they worship. Here we will investigate the subject of the Spring festival, incorporated into most Christian type religions, which was ordained by Jesus Himself and designed for us to use as a remembrance of Him and His sacrifice which leads to our salvation, if we will allow it.

In 30 CE, Jesus was killed and resurrected during the reign of Tiberius Caesar in Rome (CE 14-37) . The duty of the Apostles and Disciples was then to take His message to “The lost sheep of The House of Israel” (Matt Chapter 10, Luke Chapter 10). A few years later, the Apostle Paul was to deliver this message to the Gentile world. The Early Church Fathers have written about these missions and where each of the faithful followers went.

The ancient writers in Britain, Ireland and Scotland have many traditions and legends about how and by whom the Gospel came to their islands. Here we will not deal with the legends, but we will rely on the Historian Gildas, who is highly regarded as accurate in his delivery of facts regarding the past.

Gildas: ‘On the Ruin of Britain’ an 1842 translation from the Latin by J. A. Giles:

Meanwhile these islands, stiff with cold and frost, and in a distant region of the world, remote from the visible sun, received the beams of light, that is, the holy precepts of Christ, the true Sun, showing to the whole world his splendour, not only from the temporal firmament, but from the height of heaven, which surpasses every thing temporal, at the latter part, as we know, of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, by whom his religion was propagated without impediment, and death threatened to those who interfered with its professors.

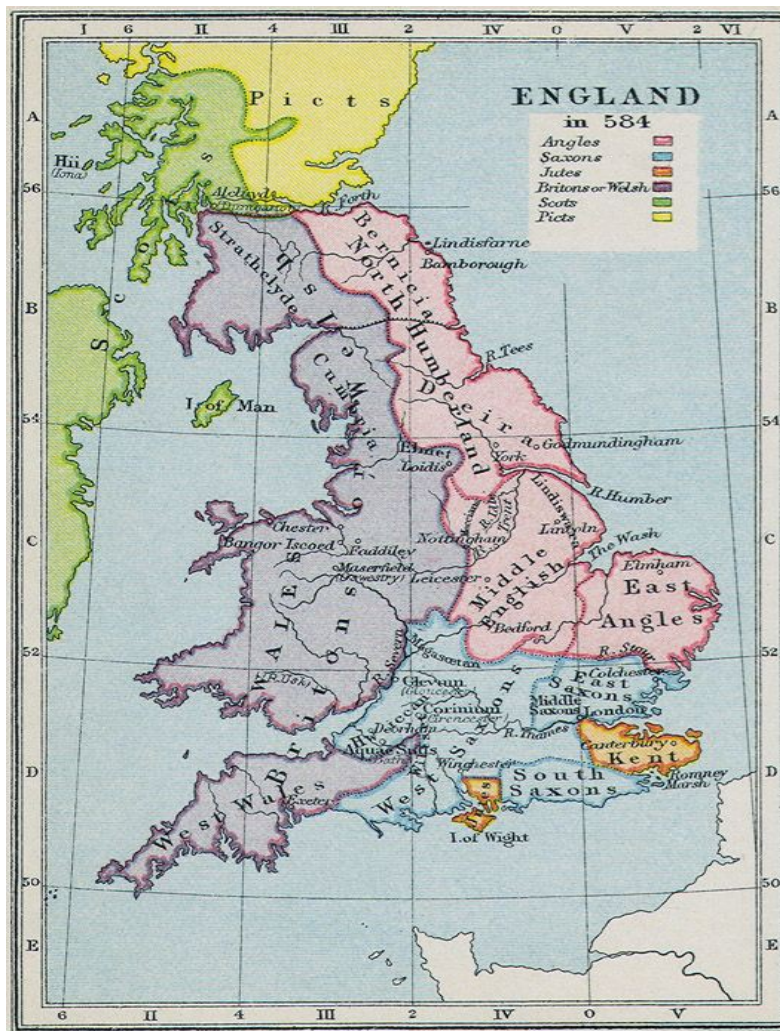
In my reading of this essay from Gildas I noticed several interesting facts beside the one just mentioned. Gildas was extremely literate in both Testaments of the Bible, not only the verbiage, but the meaning and intent of the scriptures which he uses to convict the apparent scoundrels of his time and in the past, who he charges with “The Ruin of Britain”. But it was the translator of Gildas' work that noticed that he used a version of the Bible in his quotations that must have preceded The Vulgate, written in the 4th century CE. Somewhere, at some early date in British Christianity, the Churches had access to scriptural manuscripts dating to possibly the 1st century CE, predating all other known texts available for our use today.

Additionally, Gildas will at times in the above referenced document, quote the Apostle Paul's New Testament work, and the Gospels which were probably not publicly available until the latter portion of the first century. This speaks to the purpose that there was and had been a transference of information from the Churches in the East to and from the British Isles. This fact is born out by the presence of British Bishops that participated in various church councils during the first 500 years of the Churches in Britain:

From The Church of England Web Site:

The roots of the Church of England go back to the time of the Roman Empire when a Christian church came into existence in what was then the Roman province of Britain. The early Christian writers Tertullian and Origen mention the existence of a British church in the third century AD and in the fourth century British bishops attended a number of the great councils of the Church such as the Council of Arles in 314 and the Council of Rimini in 359.

The British Isles came under invasion by Roman Legions from the 1st Century BCE, and off and on until 410 CE, when the Legions were withdrawn due to the need for them to protect Rome itself from invasion. Primarily they had occupied the southern portion of Britain, making occasional forays into what became known as Scotland and Ireland. Never gaining a foothold in either.



The Above map shows the locations of Northumbria and Iona, the church missionary headquarters, just prior to the Catholic mission of Augustine to the islands in about the year 600 CE.

The history of the Christian religion in the British Isles is difficult, and must be carefully separated from the history of the Catholic Religion in that same region. But, it would be invaluable to understand Christianity that was delivered in its Apostolic form to a far flung and remote portion of the world so that we might understand better what that form of religion actually was.

Much of what has been written about this subject has not been isolated into what we will call Celtic Christianity from now on. With no offense to my Catholic friends, but it is their Historians that have written the books that we reference today in our studies. Their religion is as important to them as ours is to us. But we need to separate to our need, historians and historical data that could not have possibly been influenced by the Roman Catholic (RC) Church. We will try to do this in a chronological sequence for clarity. All noted dates are Common Era (CE).

- 30 – Jesus The Christ died and was resurrected. On Pentecost the Holy Spirit was given to the new church.
- 37 - Tiberas Caesar Dies. Gildas indicates that the Gospel has already been preached in the British Isles. His writings show that he had access to the entire Bible as we know it now, in a very early translation form.
- 3rd Century - *The early Christian writers Tertullian and Origen mention the existence of a British church in the third century As Noted above.*
- 310 - Edict of Toleration by Constantine, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. Constantine calls for Church Councils to define the new State Religion.
- 326 -Council Of Nicine. Effective legislation against the Seventh Day Sabbath and Passover observances. Eastern Church Bishops are against this action, but are outnumbered by the Bishops of Rome and Alexandria persuasions. There is no evidence that any Bishops from the British Isles were in attendance. Effectively the RC Church is born out of this Council
- 410 Roman Legions leave Britain, approximate Angle/Saxon invasion.
- 492 – Historically accepted date of the death of Patrick of Ireland, actually from Scotland originally. Patrick's father was a Deacon in the Sabbatarian Church and that was Patrick's original practice. “History of The Scottish Nation” Volume II, By Rev. J. A. Wylie, LLD, Page 106, Paragraph 3.
- 563 - Columba came to Iona from Ireland with twelve companions, and founded a monastery. It developed as an influential center for the spread of Christianity among the Picts and Scots. From Columba's autobiography - In the last Chapter, Columba foresees his own death when speaking to his attendant:
“This day in the Holy Scriptures is called the Sabbath, which means rest. And this day is indeed a Sabbath to me, for it is the last day of my present laborious life, and on it I rest after the fatigues of my labours; “
- 570 - Gildas Dies after having written his historical accounts. Uses primitive scriptural translation.
- 596- The Gregorian mission or Augustinian mission was a Catholic mission sent by Pope Gregory the Great in 596 to convert Britain's Anglo-Saxons. The mission was headed by Augustine. By the time of the death of the last missionary in 653, the mission had established Catholicism in southern Britain. Along with the Irish and Frankish missions it converted other

- parts of Britain as well and influenced the Hiberno-Scottish missions to Continental Europe.
- 615 - Death of Colombanus, Missionary out of Iona to the “Germanic” tribes in western Europe.
- 651 - Death of Aidan who was educated at Iona. In 634, King Oswald invited Aidan to the Northumbrian court to teach the doctrines of Celtic Christianity. Oswald granted Aidan the island of Lindisfarne for a Bible school. Upon his death in 651, Aidan was succeeded by Finan and then by Colman, both of whom had been educated at Iona.
- From Northumbria, Aidan's mission spread throughout the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and similar Bible schools were established in Bernicia, Deira, Mercia and East Anglia. It is estimated that two thirds of the Anglo-Saxon population were converted to Celtic Christianity at this time.
- 664 Synod of Whitby – Northumbria accepts the Catholic religion by accepting the celebration of Easter and abandoning The Passover celebration. The mission at Lindisfarne is abandoned with the monks returning to Iona in order to maintain their ancient beliefs.
- 676 - Death of Colman.

From Wikipedia -Article - “Hiberno-Scottish Missions”

The Hiberno-Scottish mission was a series of expeditions in the 6th and 7th centuries by Gaelic missionaries originating from Ireland that spread Celtic Christianity in Scotland, Wales, England and Merovingian France. Celtic Christianity spread first within the Kingdom of Dál Riata, within Ireland and the western coast of Scotland. Since the 8th and 9th centuries, these early missions were called 'Celtic Christianity'.

Iona was the established center for educating religious teachers and missionaries based on the Christianity that had been delivered to the British Isles some 6 centuries previous. The term “Celtic Christianity” was coined after The Catholic Church's Mission of conversion in the early 7th century to describe the then existing religion in the Isles. Much fantasy has attached itself to this ancient religion that detracts from their actual practices – Druids, Wizards, Magic, etc. The writings of Gildas shows us that the Christian religion prior to the Catholic Mission was one based on the Holy Scriptures. All of the new mission schools established by the monks of Iona were called “Bible Schools”, no matter where they became located.

From quite some time before Patrick, there were Christian schools in the British Isles dedicated to the study and copying of the scriptures. Some of the men involved in this effort are noted in the chronology above. Speaking of these men, Rev. Wylie relates the following:

Many of these men, finding their labours not needed in a land so plentiful supplied with evangelists as Ireland now was, turned their steps to foreign countries. From Ireland and Iona there went forth one missionary band after another to scatter the pagan darkness where it still lingered, or to stem the incoming tide of papal arrogance and usurpation. Rome was compelled to pause in her advance before their intrepid ranks. In Gaul, in Germany and other countries, these devoted preachers revived many a dying light, refreshed many a fainting spirit, and strengthened hands that had begun to hang down, and they long delayed, though they could not ultimately prevent, the

approach of a superstition destined to embrace all Christendom in its somber folds, and darken its sky for ages. “History of The Scottish Nation” Volume II, By Rev. J. A. Wylie, LLD, Page 178, Paragraph 1.

Rev. Wylie, in his noted Volume II, traces the ancient Christian religion, from the Scottish perspective, in a well researched manner, that can only lead us to understand that the original religion transplanted to the Isles was that of “The Precepts of Christ”, as Gildas also tells us. Wylie references the practice of The Seventh Day Sabbath within that religion 10 times and Gildas mentions it 3 times in his “Ruin of Britain” work.

How are we able to define this religion that was delivered to the the people of the British Isles so soon after the Advent of our Christ? In His own words, of course. Matthew Chapters 5-7 contain a synopsis of the religion espoused by the Savior, in a nutshell, so to speak. There are no costumes, or processions or candles or incense or icons or giant church buildings. It is a religion of internal conviction, one of righteousness derived from the eternal source of that substance. It includes the directions given in the Law and the Prophets as Jesus noted. These are the “Precepts of Christ”.

Almost none of these precepts that become a portion of a person's internal being are tangible or perceptible to casual outsiders. There are no temporal origins for the true religion described in scripture. There is no hierarchy of earthly beings within that religion. In this New Covenant dispensation, the faithful are directly linked to the Heavenly Deity by means of The Holy Spirit, given through our High Priest, to those that The Father has given Him.

And this only avenue towards righteousness has only been made possible through the death and resurrection of our Savior Jesus The Christ. One of His last requests when He was on earth, was for us to keep The Passover in His remembrance. It is the Sabbath Day, which He claims Lordship over, and the Passover celebration that have become signs of the truly faithful who also follow the remainder of scriptural instructions.

And it is these signs that the opposition can use to identify those faithful, even unto their destruction and death. And it is these signs that the opposition needs to use for change, in order to define an other religion, that for all intents and purposes, eliminates our connection to the Eternal Deity, which indeed can cause our spiritual destruction.

This purpose was initiated on the Christian Churches outside of the British Isles from the Council of Nicine in 326 CE. From this and subsequent Councils, the Seventh Day Sabbath and the Passover became anathema in the newly established Catholic Church. However, these practices continued in the Celtic Churches who remained true to The Holy Scriptures. Occasional nudges by the Papal authority towards converting those in the Isles to Catholicism were either repelled or rejected until in 596, Pope Gregory decided to evangelize the “Pagans” in Britain.

The inevitable result of this evangelism would transform the existing Celtic Christianity in the Isles and eventually terminate it as a viable alternative to the traditions espoused under Papal authority. For 6 centuries the Isles had maintained scriptural and Apostolic authority within its boundaries, not being regulated by the edicts of the many and various Catholic Church Councils. About 3 hundred years previous, at the Council of Nicine, it had been decided to eliminate the “Jewish” Passover and replace it with the Easter celebration. And then in 664, the Catholic emissaries brought insistence to the King of Northumbria that he should make the change also. The Synod of Whitby was called to make this determination.

THE SYNOD OF WHITBY:

The Players:

Bede – Catholic Historian, documents the Synod about 60 years after it occurs.

King Oswald – King of Northumbria – See map above

Wilfred – Catholic representative and spokesman

Colman – Representative of the Celtic Christian Religion out of the Iona Mission School

We only have one documented account of this Synod that is given to us by the Catholic Historian Bede. When the King asked Colman, the representative of the Ionian Celtic Christians about his practice, he replied the following:

"The Easter which I keep, I received from my elders, who sent me bishop hither; all our forefathers, men beloved of God, are known to have kept it after the same manner; and that the same may not seem to any contemptible or worthy to be rejected, it is the same which St. John the Evangelist, the disciple beloved of our Lord, with all the churches over which he presided, is recorded to have observed."

It will be seen that the Celtic Christians did not really keep an Easter celebration, they kept the 7 day Passover celebration.

It was then Wilfred, the Catholic representative who spoke next on his position:

Nor does this evangelical and apostolic tradition abolish the law, but rather fulfil it; the command being to keep the Passover from the fourteenth moon of the first month in the evening to the twenty first moon of the same month in the evening; which observance all the successors of St. John in Asia, since his death, and all the church throughout the world, have since followed; and that this is the true Easter, and the only one to be kept by the faithful, was not newly decreed by the council of Nice, but only confirmed afresh; as the Church History informs us.

Unwittingly, or not, Wilfred actually defines the practice of the Celtic Christians - *keep the Passover from the fourteenth moon of the first month in the evening to the twenty first moon of the same month in the evening*:. However, he was in reality defining the acceptable range of dates for Easter to fall within.

To this Colman rejoined: "Did Anatolius, a holy man, and much commended in church history, act contrary to the law and the Gospel, when he wrote, that Easter was to be celebrated from the fourteenth to the twentieth?"

We here will not quote Anatolius and his treatise on the Passover, only we will mention that it follows exactly the scriptural instructions for the timing and extent of that celebration, just as the Apostle John would have passed to his followers.

From Wikipedia – Synod of Whitby:

Wilfrid defended the Roman position on the following grounds (according to Bede's narrative):

It was the practice in Rome, where the apostles Saints Peter and Paul had "lived, taught, suffered, and are buried".

It was the universal practice of the Church, even as far as Egypt.

The customs of the apostle John were particular to the needs of his community and his age and, since then, the Council of Nicaea had established a different practice.

Columba had done the best he could considering his knowledge, and thus his irregular practice is excusable, but the Ionan monks at present did not have the excuse of ignorance.

Whatever the case, no one has authority over Peter (and thus his successors, the bishops of Rome).

Wilfred continues to criticize the Celtic practice by indicating that they do not continue their celebration through the 21st of the moon of the first month. And this was true according to Colman's statement above. For the Celts, Passover was a 7 day celebration, which ended at sundown on the 7th day of that celebration, according to scripture, according to Anatolius, and according to the instructions of the Apostle John.

Wilfred then adds that John was a Jew steeped in the old ways, but that Peter and Paul had adopted the new Easter celebration while they were in Rome, and since Jesus had given Peter the Keys to The Kingdom of Heaven, his practice of Easter was now the proper celebration.

King Oswald bought this argument, hook, line and sinker. Easter, with all the trappings of the Catholic faith, would from then on be the practice in his kingdom. We should note that there is not a single line in scripture, nor in any secular writings about any change indicated by Peter or Paul. Had there been such evidence, it would have been introduced at the Nicene council in 326 and the eastern churches would have been satisfied with the edict given there and the Quarto-Decimian controversy would have then ended.

For 6 centuries, Passover had been the proper celebration in the Christian Churches in Britain. It survived there for 3 centuries after the Council of Nicene outlawed it. There was very little Papal authority in the Isles until the early 7th century CE.

But this Synod of Whitby gives us more information than just the change in religions in the British Isles. It shows us that the Celtic Christian religion kept the Passover strictly according to the scriptural instructions. It is a 7 day celebration. Begun at sunset on the 14th day of the first lunar sequence of the year, and runs until the sunset ending the seventh day, the 20th day of that lunar sequence.

Just as the Celtic Church had not been influenced by Catholic practices, they were never influenced by later Jewish practices, incorporated into that religion after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. There were no Holy Day postponements. No 8th day added to the Passover celebration, and no transference of the Passover meal to the evening of the 15th of the month. All was done according to the scriptures and instructions of the Apostle John. Moses and Joshua and Jesus would have recognized the practices of the Celtic Christian Church.

This essay is necessary as a witness to the Christian community, as a short study of the true Christian religion, delivered to an isolated portion of our planet, in its original Apostolic form, and then allowed to grow for centuries. It is the same religion that Paul instructed the Gentiles in, because there is only one religion defined in scripture. We have found that the Celtic Christians observed the two signs of the Christian religion – The Seventh Day Sabbath (hand in hand with all 10 Commandments) and the yearly 7 day Passover celebration. These physical manifestations of the true religion must be accompanied by all The Precepts of Christ in order to yield persons that are successful in this life according to the desires of the Heavenly Deity.

REMEMBERING JESUS

PART 2 – ANATOLIUS OF LAODICEA

We have shown, without a doubt, that there was a Christian church in the British Isles in the first 6 centuries after Jesus was killed and resurrected. We strive for at least 3 witnesses for each proof that we can then indicate as a fact, that can be built upon using other proven facts, using other witnesses to support each proven fact. Our fact derived from Part 1 is that the Celtic Church of Britain was given Apostolic instructions on the proper timing and practice for The Passover and that they maintained the same for 6 centuries, until the Church out of Rome (RC) caused adequate influence to induce a change to the practice of Easter. It can also be shown that the Celtic Church practiced the Seventh Day Sabbath although this is not the main topic of this investigation.

Some 3 centuries previous to the change in the Celtic Church, the fledgling RC church had required this same change for the eastern and central Roman Empire Churches by means of an edict letter derived out of the Nicine Council. The British Churches, not under and not seeking Papal authority, maintained the practice handed down through Apostolic authority. If for no other reason, I believe that this was done for our edification.

In defense of the Celtic practice of the Passover, Colman referenced the instructions given by Anatolius which he indicated were the same as those given by the Apostle John. These instructions may be found on various websites that contain the writings of the Ante-Nicine Church Fathers. Out takes from his treatise on the Passover are as follows:

Nor is this an opinion confined to ourselves alone. For it was also known to the Jews of old and before Christ, and it was most carefully observed by them. And this may be learned from what Philo, and Josephus, and Musaeus have written; and not only from these, but indeed from others still more ancient, namely, the two Agathobuli, who were surnamed the Masters, and the eminent Aristobulus, who was one of the Seventy who translated the sacred and holy Scriptures of the Hebrews for Ptolemy Philadelphus and his father, and dedicated his exegetical books on the law of Moses to the same kings. These writers, in solving some questions which are raised with respect to Exodus, say that all alike ought to sacrifice the Passover after the vernal equinox in the middle of the first month. And that is found to be when the sun passes through the first segment of the solar, or, as some among them have named it, the zodiacal circle.

But this Aristobulus also adds, that for the feast of the Passover it was necessary not only that the sun should pass the equinoctial segment, but the moon also. For as there are two equinoctial segments, the vernal and the autumnal, and these diametrically opposite to each other, and since the day of the Passover is fixed for the fourteenth day of the month, in the evening, the moon will have the position diametrically opposite the sun; as is to be seen in full moons. And the sun will thus be in the segment of the vernal equinox, and the moon necessarily will be at the autumnal equinox.

Naming many ancient sources, Anatolius here indicates that the Passover must be celebrated after both the sun and moon sequences pass the Vernal Equinox. The Paschal Moon is then the first full moon after this Equinox, the first day of the new year would then be the New Moon of that lunar sequence. Anatolius continues his analysis:

Accordingly, it is not the case, as certain calculators of Gaul allege, that this assertion is opposed by that passage in Exodus, where we read: "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the first month, at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread until the one-and-twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses." From this they maintain that it is quite

permissible to celebrate the Passover on the twenty-first day of the moon; understanding that if the twenty-second day were added, there would be found eight days of unleavened bread. A thing which cannot be found with any probability, indeed, in the Old Testament, as the Lord, through Moses, gives this charge: "Seven days ye shall eat unleavened bread." Unless perchance the fourteenth day is not reckoned by them among the days of unleavened bread with the celebration of the feast; which, however, is contrary to the Word of the Gospel which says: "Moreover, on the first day of unleavened bread, the disciples came to Jesus." And there is no doubt as to its being the fourteenth day on which the disciples asked the Lord, in accordance with the custom established for them of old, "Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the Passover?"

Passover is a seven day celebration where only unleavened bread may be eaten. This dietary rule begins at sunset on the 14th of the lunar sequence and continues until sundown on the 20th of that sequence, Anatolius uses both Old and New Testament scriptures to show these requirements. He shows conclusively that Passover and the Feast of Unleavened bread are one in the same festival event.

But nothing was difficult to them with whom it was lawful to celebrate the Passover on any day when the fourteenth of the moon happened after the equinox. Following their example up to the present time all the bishops of Asia-as themselves also receiving the rule from an unimpeachable authority, to wit, the evangelist John, who leant on the Lord's breast, and drank in instructions spiritual without doubt-were in the way of celebrating the Paschal feast, without question, every year, whenever the fourteenth day of the moon had come, and the lamb was sacrificed by the Jews after the equinox was past;

These were the rules by which the Celtic Churches kept Passover each year for 6 centuries. Anatolius references "The Bishops of Asia" who, also instructed by The Apostle John, kept the Passover sequence as described above. We will look to them next to see what might be added to our knowledge of the subject.

REMEMBERING JESUS

PART 3 – THE BISHOPS OF THE EAST

The Players:

Polycarp - Died C. 155 - a disciple of John the Apostle and bishop of Smyrna

Anicetus - Died 153 – Bishop of Rome

Polycrates - Died 195 – Bishop of Ephesus, disciple of Polycarp, disciple of the Apostle John

Victor - Died 199 - Bishop of Rome

From Wikipedia – Article titled "Quartodecimanism"

Quartodecimanism (from the Vulgate Latin quarta decima in Leviticus 23:5, meaning fourteenth) is the name given to the practice of celebrating the death of Christ on the day of Passover on the 14th of Nisan according to the biblical dating, being on whatever day of the week. The Quartodeciman controversy in the Church was over the question of celebrating Easter on the first day of the week, Sunday, or at the same time as the sacrifice of the Passover lamb.

Regarding the observance of Passover, Wikipedia continues:

The practice had been followed by Polycarp, who was a disciple of John the Apostle and bishop of Smyrna (c. 69 – c. 155) - one of the seven churches of Asia, and by Melito of Sardis (d. c. 180). Irenaeus says that Polycarp visited Rome when Anicetus was its bishop (c. 68–153), and among the topics discussed was this divergence of custom, with Rome celebrating the Easter always on Sunday. Irenaeus noted:

Neither could Anicetus persuade Polycarp not to observe what he had always observed with John the disciple of our Lord, and the other apostles with whom he had associated; neither could Polycarp persuade Anicetus to observe it, as he said that he ought to follow the customs of the presbyters that had preceded him.

— Eusebius 1890, Book V Chapter 24

Polycarp, disciple of the Apostle John, and witness to other Apostles, kept the scriptural practice of Passover, on the 14th of the first month. The fledgling Church of Rome practiced Easter in the second century CE. Despite the spring festival controversy, we can see here a serious problem that still plagues the Christian Churches today. It is alleged by some that Peter and Paul changed the Passover practice to the Easter practice. This opinion has evolved into a message that the original Apostles did not always teach the same on any given subject. This is not true, All of the Apostles taught as Jesus had taught them. But the Quartodeciman Dispute did not end in Polycarp's day.

Again from Wikipedia:

The council in Rome, presided over by its bishop Victor, took place in 193 and sent a letter about the matter to Polycrates of Ephesus and the churches of the Roman province of Asia. Within the same year, Polycrates presided over a council at Ephesus attended by several bishops throughout that province, which rejected Victor's authority and kept the province's paschal tradition.

The Churches of the East, rejected the authority of the Church of Rome, just as the Celtic Churches continued to do until about the year 600. Both remote sets of churches maintained their Passover celebrations beginning on the 14th day of the first month of the year according to the lunar cycle.

Polycrates emphatically stated that he was following the tradition passed down to him:

We observe the exact day; neither adding, nor taking away. For in Asia also great lights have fallen asleep, which shall rise again on the day of the Lord's coming ... Among these are Philip, one of the twelve apostles, who fell asleep in Hierapolis; and his two aged virgin daughters, and another daughter, who lived in the Holy Spirit and now rests at Ephesus; and, moreover, John, who was both a witness and a teacher, who reclined upon the bosom of the Lord, and, being a priest, wore the sacerdotal plate. All these observed the fourteenth day of the Passover according to the Gospel, deviating in no respect, but following the rule of faith. And I also, Polycrates, the least of you all, do according to the tradition of my relatives, some of whom I have closely followed. For seven of my relatives were bishops; and I am the eighth. And my relatives always observed the day when the people put away the leaven. I, therefore, brethren, who have lived sixty-five years in the Lord, and have met with the brethren throughout the world, and have gone through every Holy Scripture, am not affrighted by terrifying words. For those greater than I have said 'We ought to obey God rather than man.'

— Eusebius 1890, Book V Chapter 24

This Passover/ Easter controversy lasted, at least until the Council of Nicea in 326, called by Constantine I. This council decreed that all Christian Churches everywhere must keep the Easter Celebration on the same date, predetermined by The Church of Rome.

Another result of the Council was an agreement on when to celebrate Easter, the most important feast of the ecclesiastical calendar, decreed in an epistle to the Church of Alexandria in which is simply stated:

We also send you the good news of the settlement concerning the holy pasch, namely that in answer to your prayers this question also has been resolved. All the brethren in the East who have hitherto followed the Jewish practice will henceforth observe the custom of the Romans and of yourselves and of all of us who from ancient times have kept Easter together with you.

It had never been the practice of the Churches developed under Apostolic authority to keep an Easter celebration. The Passover celebration, given to Moses and continued under Jesus Christ, and requested by Him as a remembrance celebration, was the original Christian practice. Now we need to look at that Last Passover of Jesus, to determine any additional information to include in A Proper Passover.

REMEMBERING JESUS

PART 4 – THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

Luke Chapter 3:

3 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tibe'ri-us Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Iturae'a and Trachoni'tis, and Lysa'ni-as tetrarch of Abile'ne, 2 in the high-priesthood of Annas and Ca'iaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechari'ah in the wilderness; 3 and he went into all the region about the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.(RSV)

The Players:

Tiberius Caesar - Named “co-Princeps” of the Roman Empire in 12 CE while the previous Caesar laid on his death bed for the next 2 years. Named “Augustus” in 14 CE, most Encyclopedias and commentators believe that Luke refers to the 12 CE date which collaborates with other data provided by him in the copied text. The 15th year of his reign would then be 27 CE.

Pontius Pilate - Governor of Judea in 26-36 CE.

Philip the Tetrarch - Ruled over the northeast part of his Herod's kingdom between 4 BCE and 34 CE.

Considering the datum points given to us by Luke, we can determine that John The Baptist began his ministry in 27 CE. Later, we will consider the entire governance period of Pilate to zero in on the exact date of the death of Jesus The Christ.

But for now, we will recognize that The Gospel of John relates for us that there were 3 Passovers during the Ministry of Jesus, and that He was killed on the third one. We also know that there was an overlap in the Ministries of John The Baptist and Jesus. So for the present, 30 CE appears to be the correct candidate for the Last Passover of Jesus.

Matthew Chapter 16:

1 And the Pharisees and Sad'ducees came, and to test him they asked him to show them a sign from heaven.

4 An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of Jonah." So he left them and departed.

Luke Chapter 24:

46 and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead,

Now Jonah was inside the belly of the giant fish for three days and three nights, and this was the only sign that was to be given that Jesus was The Christ. All of the things written in scripture must become true, and all of the pieces must fit together for the true picture of the last Passover of Jesus to become apparent. Now that day was marked in scripture with the following quotes:

Matthew Chapter 26:

17 Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the passover?"(RSV)

Mark Chapter 14:

12 And on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the passover lamb, his disciples said to him, "Where will you have us go and prepare for you to eat the passover?"(RSV)

Luke Chapter 22:

7 Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the passover lamb had to be sacrificed. 8 So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the passover for us, that we may eat it." (RSV)

Three times we are told that Passover Day proper is the first day of Unleavened Bread. It is the day when the Passover lamb is killed in order to eat the Passover meal. There are some Christian based religions that deny that Jesus ate the Passover meal on the night before He was killed. They are really denying scripture. There are some Christian based religions that deny that Passover Day proper is the first day of eating Unleavened Bread. They are really denying scripture.

We can be sure that Jesus participated in His last Passover meal in accordance with the other scriptures written about that occasion. It would have been after dark, after the lamb was cooked, probably close to 10 or 11 PM as we count time now days. He and the Apostles would go to the garden for His betrayal about midnight as scripture also tells us. It would have all happened on the 14th evening of the first lunar cycle of the new year.

Jesus was then killed during the daylight hours of the same 14th of the month according to the calendar of scripture that starts each new day at sunset. His body was placed into a tomb just before sunset of that day. The Apostle John in his gospel account tells us that the next day was a High Sabbath Day, Passover of the Jews – Distinct from the Christian Passover that had just passed. Jesus would be in that tomb for 3 days and 3 nights, appearing before His faithful followers, at about day break the following first day of the week. They found the tomb already empty, Jesus had risen some time before they arrived.

For 3 days and 3 nights to have passed with Jesus in the tomb, and being available on a Sunday morning, means that He must have been placed in the tomb just before sundown on a Wednesday. The last Passover meal would have been on a Tuesday evening/night.

So now we have defined a range of years where the 14th of the first month (lunar cycle) of the year must be the first such day after the Vernal Equinox. That day in history, must begin at sunset on a Tuesday and end at sunset on a Wednesday. Conveniently, we have the Astronomical Applications Division of the United States Naval Observatory who have derived this information for us. Others have used the data from Her Majesty's Astronomical Almanac to provide this proof. The data is identical since it documents the movements of the earth and moon relative to the sun, God's clock in the sky.

VERNAL EQUINOX

Julian Greenwich

Calendar Date Time Day of Week

CE March

26	22	10 p.m.	Friday
27	23	4 a.m.	Sunday
28	22	10 a.m.	Monday
29	22	4 p.m.	Tuesday
30	22	10 p.m.	Wednesday
31	23	3 a.m.	Friday
32	22	9 a.m.	Saturday
33	22	3 p.m.	Sunday
34	22	9 p.m.	Monday
35	23	3 a.m.	Wednesday
36	22	9 a.m.	Thursday

FULL MOON

On or next after

date of equinox

Julian Greenwich Week

Cal. Date Time Day

CE

26	April 20	Noon	Sat.
27	April 9	4 p.m.	Wed.
28	March 29	3 a.m.	Mon.
29	April 17	3 a.m.	Sun.
30	April 6	8 p.m.	Thu.

- 31 March 27 11 a.m. Tue.
- 32 April 14 9 a.m. Mon.
- 33 April 3 3 p.m. Fri.
- 34 March 23 3 p.m. Tue.
- 35 April 11 8 a.m. Mon.
- 36 March 30 2 p.m. Fri.

NEW MOON

On or preceding

date of equinox Following equinox

Julian Greenwich Julian Greenwich

Cal. Date Time Cal. Date Time

CE

- 26 March 7 7 p.m. April 6 5 a.m.
- 27 Feb. 25 4 a.m. March 26 5 p.m.
- 28 March 15 0* April 13 2 p.m.
- 29 March 4 0* April 2 5 p.m.
- 30 March 22 6 p.m. April 21 9 a.m.**
- 31 March 11 11 p.m. April 10 Noon
- 32 Feb. 29 10 a.m. March 29 8 p.m.
- 33 March 19 10 a.m. April 17 7 p.m.
- 34 March 9 4 a.m. April 7 Noon
- 35 Feb. 26 6 p.m. March 28 4 a.m.
- 36 March 16 3 p.m. April 15 3 a.m.

These data comprise the set for all the years that Pilate was Governor of Judea. We can observe 10 yearly data sets that do not match the requirements of scripture. The data is given in Julian years, and as long as all data is counted as such, the entire set is relative in time. We also notice that hourly data is given as Greenwich time. Jerusalem time is plus 2 hours from the noted Greenwich time, and all conversions do not change the dates of the measured occurrences. So now we have the time sequence of the last Passover of Jesus. It occurred in 30 CE as we would expect from the information given by Luke above. We should also begin to see a pattern of observance shared by the Celtic Christians, the Christians under Polycarp and Polycrates, the Church Fathers who endorsed the writings of Anatolius and Jesus and His Apostles. There is no room for anything but consistency in all of these examples.

But these are all New Testament documentations. What about Old Testament examples?

PART 5 - REMEMBERING JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Exodus Chapter 12:

12 The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, 2 “This month shall be for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. 3 Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month they shall take every man a lamb according to their fathers’ houses, a lamb for a household; 4 and if the household is too small for a lamb, then a man and his neighbor next to his house shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. 5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old; you shall take it from the sheep or from the goats; 6 and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs in the evening. 7 Then they shall take some of the blood, and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat them. 8 They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. 9 Do not eat any of it raw or boiled with water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. 10 And you shall let none of it remain until the morning, anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. 11 In this manner you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord’s passover. (RSV)

The Passover meal was and is to be eaten, after it is cooked, after evening on the 14th of the first month of the year. It is eaten with Unleavened Bread and bitter herbs.

Leviticus Chapter 23:

4 “These are the appointed feasts of the Lord, the holy convocations, which you shall proclaim at the time appointed for them. 5 In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening, is the Lord’s passover. 6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread to the Lord; seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. 7 On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work. 8 But you shall present an offering by fire to the Lord seven days; on the seventh day is a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work.” (RSV)

The Passover is a seven day day festival in which Unleavened Bread is to be eaten. The first day and the last day are Holy Days of convocation.

Deuteronomy Chapter 16:

16 “Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover to the Lord your God; for in the month of Abib the Lord your God brought you out of Egypt by night. 2 And you shall offer the passover sacrifice to the Lord your God, from the flock or the herd, at the place which the Lord will choose, to make his name dwell there. 3 You shall eat no leavened bread with it; seven days you shall eat it with unleavened bread, the bread of affliction—for you came out of the land of Egypt in hurried flight—that all the days of your life you may remember the day when you came out of the land of Egypt. 4 No leaven shall be seen with you in all your territory for seven days; nor shall any of the flesh which you sacrifice on the evening of the first day remain all night until morning.

7 And you shall boil it and eat it at the place which the Lord your God will choose; and in the morning you shall turn and go to your tents. 8 For six days you shall eat unleavened bread; and on the seventh day there shall be a solemn assembly to the Lord your God; you shall do no work on it.

(RSV)

Unleavened Bread shall be eaten for 6 more days after the Passover Day proper is over. The.. RSV wants the Passover meal to be boiled in the last text. But this is not permitted by other scriptures. The NKJV indicates that the lamb is to be roasted by fire, and the commentators agree that the RSV is not correct in this matter. Regardless, that is not the purpose of this article, Moses dismissed the Israelites from the Passover service and told them to eat Unleavened bread for 6 more days. Always in the Old Testament and at the last Passover of Jesus, Passover Day Proper is a nocturnal celebration. It is always a 7 day observance in which only Unleavened Bread is to be eaten.

PART 6 REMEMBERING JESUS IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In the book of Ezekiel, the last 8 chapters are reserved to give us a glimpse into subjects related to conditions during The Kingdom of God on this Earth after Jesus returns to be King of that Kingdom.

Ezekiel Chapter 45:

21 "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you shall celebrate the feast of the passover, and for seven days unleavened bread shall be eaten. 22 On that day the prince shall provide for himself and all the people of the land a young bull for a sin offering. 23 And on the seven days of the festival he shall provide as a burnt offering to the Lord seven young bulls and seven rams without blemish, on each of the seven days; and a he-goat daily for a sin offering. 24 And he shall provide as a cereal offering an ephah for each bull, an ephah for each ram, and a hin of oil to each ephah.

We can here see that the symbol of the Passover Lamb has been replaced by a young bull. The Passover Lamb is now the King of His Kingdom and a most definitely stronger animal is an appropriate new symbol. However, Passover is still a 7 day festival. Unleavened Bread is still to be eaten. If we keep on reading, we find that all of the Festivals described in Leviticus Chapter 23 have remained in place since at least they were dictated to Moses. It is here that the New Moon Days become equivalent with the weekly Sabbath Day, and not before.

PART 7 – REMEMBERING JESUS THE INSTRUCTION FROM THE RC CHURCH

Common to the Celtic Christians, The Bishops of the East, and Anatolius is the subject of the change of practice from Passover and Unleavened Bread to Easter by the Roman Catholic Church(RC). All three discussions verify that Passover Day is the 14th of the lunar month. There were also discussions about the 21st of the Lunar month which falls after the Days of Unleavened Bread. The RC Easter adherents wanted the Christians to keep the 21st but they did not. They wanted their Easter Day to be validated by always being somewhere within the week long spring festival of the scriptures. This is not always possible as we have seen.

From New Advent – Catholic Encyclopedia:

According to this rule, Easter Sunday is the first Sunday which occurs after the first full moon (or more accurately after the first fourteenth day of the moon) following the 21st of March. As a result, the earliest possible date of Easter is 22 March, the latest 25 April.

In simpler terms – Easter Sunday is the first Sunday after the Paschal Moon which next follows the Vernal Equinox. The dates given above in italics are only valid for the Julian Calendar, because we know that the Equinox floats a day or two depending on the Gregorian Leap year situation in different years.

So the RC Church designed Easter to be the Sunday after Passover. If Passover falls on a Sunday, Easter will fall on the next Sunday. The people who changed Passover to Easter tell us when Passover Day Proper is.

And if we consider this mini venture into the Catholic Encyclopedia another case study - Every such case study contained within this article “Remembering Jesus” and this one all agree.

Passover Day Proper is the first 14th of the moon after the Spring Equinox. It does not matter to this determination which day is the first of the month, if we know the 14th, we know the first. It is not imperative that the 14th be the astronomical Full Moon, very often it is on the 15th..

Passover Day Proper is an Holy Day and the first Day of Unleavened Bread as the synoptic Gospels tell us. Seven days – sundown to sundown – we eat only unleavened bread. The 7th day, the 20th of the lunar sequence, is an Holy Day.

PART 8 - REMEMBERING JESUS

INFORMATION FROM THE HISTORIANS

God's calendar from scripture gives us the timing for His Holy Days in terms of their lunar sequence each year. But it is well known that the lunar sequence and the solar sequence of months in a year are not equal. Therefore, an adjustment is required occasionally, by means of an intercalary month. Thus far in this investigation, we have not regarded the opinions of the Jewish religion to determine when or how to properly remember Jesus at the Passover, for the obvious reason that they do not. We can also determine from history and their own documentation, that the calendar used by the Jewish religion at present, has been modified from the ancient practices, after the fall of the second Temple, and cannot be relied on to provide accurate dates for a Passover practiced by Christians.

However, the ancient rules for intercalation have been preserved for us by the Jewish historians and the most concise description of this type of event is described in the books by Emil Schurer - A History Of The Jewish People In The Time Of Jesus Christ – Volume II Appendix II:

The rule, according to which it was determined whether to intercalate or not, was very simple. It required that care should be taken that the Passover festival, to be celebrated at the full moon in Nisan (14th Nisan), should in any case fall after the vernal equinox, when the sun stood in the sign Aries. This explanation is characterized by Anatolius in the fragment of decided importance in relation to the history of the Jewish calendar given in Eusebius, Hist, eccl. vii. 32. 16-19, as the view in which all Jewish authorities are agreed, pre-eminently as that of Aristobulus, the celebrated Jewish philosopher of the time of Ptolemy Philometor (not Philadelphus, as Anatolius erroneously says). With this also agree the statements of Philo and Josephus. If one therefore toward the close of the year noticed that the Passover would fall before the vernal equinox, the intercalation of a month before Nisan would have to be resorted to. It may therefore be accepted as certain that the decision as to whether there should be intercalation or not, was made on each separate occasion in the course of the year according to the principles stated.

The month of Aries is the first 1/12 of the solar year which begins anew at the Vernal Equinox. So the Passover is always in the first lunar month of the year and also the first solar month of the year according to the instructions given to Moses in Exodus Chapter 12. Intercalation is only ever used to keep the Passover in the proper season.

This coming year, 2024, will be a tricky year for some Christians who keep the Passover. It is a year for intercalation within the Jewish calendar, but not for those of us who only require this adjustment when natural occurrences warrant it. There is no need to readjust our calendars in 2024 to keep the Passover in the proper season. Please check into this on your own and do not just go along with the crowd.

PART 9 - REMEMBERING JESUS

SUMMARY

Luke Chapter 22:

19 And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 20 And likewise the cup after supper, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

Each year, at the proper time, (See LEV 23:4), we keep The Passover in honor and in the memory of Jesus Christ Who gave His mortal life so that we could be reconciled to God The Father. It was the most important event in the history of mankind.

1 Peter Chapter 1”

18 You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. 20 He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake. 21 Through him you have confidence in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

We have seen the Celtic Christians, empowered by the Gospel not long after Jesus died, continue the Passover tradition as handed to them through the Apostle John. They were successful in this practice for 6 centuries because they were sheltered from the influences of Rome and the changes that were brought into the Christian religion by those who were really only adopting Jesus into an existing pagan religion.

We have seen the churches in the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire keeping the Passover from Apostolic guidance, in constant practice since Jesus was killed. The Roman influence to change to Easter practice was formidable almost as soon as those churches were organized. They held the line for only 3 centuries until the Catholic religion became the state religion in the early 4th century. Their practices were identical to the Celtic Christian practices because their understanding of scriptures was the same.

We have seen the writings of Anatolius, although outside of canonized scripture, define the timing of the Passover and the length of that celebration. Acknowledged to be a synopsis of the practice of the Celts, it also matches the practices of the Churches in the Eastern Roman Empire . Passover was practiced in identical fashion in the far reaches of the West and within the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire until both were forced to change.

We have seen the example of Jesus and the Apostles at the last Passover of Jesus in all 4 Gospel accounts, keeping the proper observance, while those of the Jewish religion kept a different timing, at least the Jews knew that the first day of Passover was the first Holy Day of that festival. We saw Jesus declare the Passover as a remembrance of His Sacrifice, the singular act that allowed the New Covenant to be ordained.

All of these examples conform to the instructions given to Moses for the practice of the Passover as the first annual Holy festival for observance among those whom God is calling for repentance and adherence to His Holy Way of life.

We have also seen, from Ezekiel, that the practice of the Passover will be continued through the Kingdom of God in the Millennium. There will be a change in some practices for that dispensation, just as Jesus changed some practices during His last Passover for our use, but the timing of the observance and the observance itself is not to be abandoned or changed to another practice during all of the time from Moses until the end of the Millennium, at least. It may continue for all time as far as we know now.

Some of us have seen, in the 20th century, a portion of The Seventh Day Churches of God adopt the Passover under the leadership of the Armstrong family. Unfortunately, their understanding of this celebration was incorporated into their church using the practices of the Jewish faith, which can be seen as lacking in understanding even in the days that Jesus walked among us. It is no wonder that God allowed the Armstrong's religion to fester and die a slow death. Scriptural understanding has been found lacking in their pursuit of funds to finance their personal perception of worthiness before God. To this day, not a single splinter church that had roots in the Armstrong church, practices the Passover according to scripture – not a single one. All bear the hallmarks of some portions of the Armstrong experience and apostasy.

But we are not here to determine what is incorrect regarding other people not observing Passover as required by scripture. And so as follows is what we have learned from all of the examples presented.

Passover Day proper is the 14th day of the first month of the year. It begins at sundown and continues until sundown of the next day. The Pascal Moon is the first full moon of the New Year Spring season. That Full Moon need not be precisely astronomically full on the 14th. At Jesus' last Passover, it was completely full during the first day that His body lay in the tomb.

Passover Day proper is the first Day of Unleavened Bread of which there are seven total. We are told this in all of the synoptic gospels. It is the first Holy Day in the annual sequence described in Leviticus Chapter 23. At Jesus' last Passover, the Jews postponed this day until the 15th of the month, for some strange reason, but still understood that it was a High Sabbath Day. There are some small churches today that practice a postponement schedule for the High Holy Days, that cannot be found in scripture nor in the practices of any of our case studies above. It is an evil practice, designed to keep them outside of the True Way.

Passover Day proper is calculated as the first lunar sequence in the spring that yields a 14th day of that sequence which falls after the Vernal Equinox. The first day of that month, the first day of the Biblical year, may then be determined from the Passover Day. These determination are able to be made years in advance, even to Moses' time. In fact we can see that Noah used this calendar to determine dates while on the Ark. God showed us His calendar in Genesis Chapter 1, it has been there for our use since then.

All of our case studies agree on the timing and proper observance of The Passover that Jesus sanctified for us. It is the foundation of our understanding of the entire Plan of God for mankind. If we do not practice the proper Passover, then we will find ourselves unable to grasp all of the aspects involved in the New Covenant declared by Jesus at His last Passover. Nothing could be worse for a Christian trying to be sincere.

Jeremiah Chapter 31:

31 “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. 33 But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

We are ignorant of many things which should not be hidden from us if we were accustomed to read the ancients.

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