

From the West Meadow  
Pastor Wes Higgins

In most years, Passover and Easter fall in the same time frame, as they logically should: the crucifixion before the resurrection. But this year, Passover isn't observed until the end of April, one month after Easter. How does this happen? The simple answer is that Easter is calculated using man-made calendar rules, while Passover is calculated using rules given by God to the Levitical priesthood thousands of years ago.

In Exodus 12, God told Moses and Aaron to make the month of Abib the first month in God's calendar. On the 10th day, they were to have every household select a lamb. The lamb was to be kept until the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> (after sundown of the day before), when they were to kill it, and take some of its blood and mark the door of their houses with it. God told them that He would execute judgment on Egypt that night, but when He saw the blood of the lamb on their homes, He would pass over them.

God's people were to keep the Passover as a memorial to the Lord, as an everlasting ordinance. The lamb sacrificed that night represents Jesus, whom John called the true "Lamb of God" (John 1:29), "slain from the foundation of the world." (Revelation 13:8)

The Old Testament lays out God's annual festivals in a chronological order, which He says we are to proclaim as His at their appointed times, beginning with the Passover. (Leviticus 23) Paul told the Colossians that these feasts of the Lord are "a shadow of things to come" whose substance, or meaning, is found in Jesus Christ. (Colossians 2:16-17)

In order for His people to keep and proclaim God's salvation message through the festivals of Christ, He created a calendar. "Then God said, 'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons (appointed times, as in Leviticus 23), and for days and years'" (Genesis 1:14).

It was to the Jews that God entrusted the oracles, the Bible (Romans 3:2), which included His calendar and the way to calculate it. God's trust was not misplaced; through centuries, through persecution, even through attempts at genocide, the devoted Jews have managed to keep God's sacred calendar, and its weekly cycle, intact. It was Jesus, a Jew, who declared Himself to be in control of God's calendar both weekly and annually when He said "the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath." (Mark 2:28)

The 14<sup>th</sup> day of Abib, God's Passover, the memorial of Jesus' sacrifice, this year falls according to man's calendar on April 22, starting at sundown the day before. And with Passover, God's sacred calendar—His holy plan of salvation—begins.

Pastor Wes Higgins  
West Meadow Ministries  
Celebration Church of God  
celebrationchurchofGod.org