

Did Jesus Eat Passover the Night Before His Crucifixion?

by Rod Reynolds

After I had written a publication titled *When is the Biblical Passover?*, available at cogmessenger.org, I received a "question," from an individual, which was more like a challenge, with regard to whether the last meal Jesus partook of before his crucifixion as recorded in Scripture was a Passover observance. The idea that the last meal Jesus ate before his crucifixion was not the Passover meal is promoted by some among individuals who, contrary to Scripture, but in accord with the tradition of the Pharisees, assert that the Passover is properly observed on the fifteenth of Nisan rather than the fourteenth.

I did not respond immediately to the challenge, and soon received another message asserting that I was being "rude" by not responding immediately, as the individual apparently thought was my obligation.

I did subsequently reply to these messages as follows:

Dear Mr. ..., Responding to your question has been on my agenda since I received your first inquiry about the subject. It has not been at or near the top of my list of things to do, however, because in my view I adequately addressed this question in the paper you referenced (*When Is the Biblical Passover?*, pp. i-ii). So, in a sense, you had your answer from the moment you had access to my paper. Nonetheless, I have spent a significant amount of time pondering your question and thinking about exactly how to respond.

I'm not able to answer every question submitted to me immediately, because of the weight of my responsibilities, nor do I think it wise to do so in every case. Often I study and ponder a question for weeks, months, sometimes years, before I answer it. The paper on the Passover I wrote was not completed, for example, until about eight years after some inquiries were made, although I did present a more abbreviated answer much sooner.

I get quite a few questions, and some I may never get to. I tell the congregations I work with that the questions I answer first are the ones I deem of most pertinence to the people I serve. Some questions I may not answer immediately, if at all, because the answers seem patently obvious from the available evidence. Your question comes close to fitting in this latter category.

I'm sorry you interpreted my delay as rudeness. You might consider that patience is a trait of character God wants all of us to develop (Ecclesiastes 7:8; Hebrews 10:36; James 1:3-4).

It seems likely from the tenor of your remarks that you have your mind made up about the question you addressed to me. Probably nothing I would say is going to sway your opinion. Nevertheless, here's my reply:

Your question is "whether Jesus' last meal was a Passover observance." The question of the meal you reference is not at all complicated. You asked that I give you my reasons for

concluding that Jesus ate the Passover on the night before he died. I've done so in the paper I wrote.

Now let me return the favor. Tell me what you think the following statements mean? "I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples" (Matthew 26:18). "...they prepared the Passover" (Matthew 26:19). "When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve. Now as they were eating..." (Matthew 26:20-21). "He who dipped his hand with Me in the dish will betray Me" (Matthew 26:23). "Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they killed the Passover lamb, His disciples said to Him, 'Where do You want us to go and prepare, that You may eat the Passover?'" (Mark 14:12). "The Teacher says, 'Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?'" (Mark 14:14). "...they prepared the Passover" (Mark 14:16). "In the evening He came with the twelve. Now as they sat and ate, Jesus said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, one of you who eats with Me will betray Me'" (Mark 14:17-18). "Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed. And He sent Peter and John, saying, 'Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat'" (Luke 22:6-8). "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?" (Luke 22:11). "So they went and found it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover. When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. Then He said to them, 'With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God'" (Luke 22:13-16).

Mr. ..., you stated in your e-mail to me, "I am finding that far too many people (who should be far more thorough in their supporting evidence) are taking it for granted that it was a Passover meal...." I'm not surprised that many people would take it for granted, as you say, that it was a Passover meal, since that's what Scripture plainly says it was. If you believe otherwise, where is your evidence?

Paragraph above was the end of my note, but I could have added: "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that **the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed** took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes" (I Corinthians 11:23-26; compare Matthew 26:17-28, 45-50; Mark 14:12-24, 41-46; Luke 22:7-22, 47-54; John 13:1-2, 11, 21-30; 18:1-12).

cogmessenger.org

Copyright © 2026 by Rod Reynolds

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

Unless otherwise noted Scripture taken from the New King James Version™
Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.

Messenger Church of God
PO Box 619
Wentzville, MO 63385
USA