

SABBATH THOUGHT 2026-03-28—THE EVER-CHANGING PASSOVER

May God bless you on His Sabbath day!

Ninety five years ago, Herbert Armstrong started a radio program to broadcast biblical Truths that had been 'lost'; in particular, he focused on the Holy Spirit, the Law of God, and the plan of God through the weekly Sabbaths, Passover, and holydays. Herbert Armstrong was used by God to bring matters of salvation to the attention of a world that had fallen asleep via the Radio and then the Worldwide Church of God (WCG). But Satan, through wicked men, destroyed the WCG only 64 years later. Still, God revealed very important doctrines (teachings) of salvation to a blinded world through Herbert Armstrong and the WCG.

Herbert Armstrong died forty years ago and WCG fell apart after about nine more years, but not so the evil men. They are ever-present as the Parable of the Wheat & Tares warns. Over the years, a number of WCG doctrines have been scrutinized and questioned but the core points of salvation remain. However, secrets of the Bible are still being pulled out after centuries of neglect by some who are diligent, studious, and gifted. When they are discovered, new ideas can be difficult to accept and, to a large extent, that is good—it forces them to be accepted only with a high standard of burden of proof because salvation is dependent upon Truth. What we know today is but a shadow of the biblical understanding in the days of the apostles and those who search for it must be grounded in humility and contriteness so that falsehoods do not creep in.

The greatest threat to Truth comes when teachers are overcome by pride. Inspiration by God of His amazing biblical knowledge can be a heady feeling that must be tamed with humility and giving glory and thanksgiving to God, especially when those who are given deeper knowledge of the Bible acquire a large following. There is a clear and present danger when teachers are no longer little in their own eyes¹! Flesh and blood are, in general, foolish, ignorant, and corruptible beings so whatever wisdom and talents one possesses must be acknowledged as gifts from the Creator whose throne is in the heavens above—He alone is worthy of praise.

For as long as I can remember, people have been coming up with new ideas about that most solemn of occasions—the Passover. Even the Jews have been arguing about it for millennia. This is expected since Satan knows it is the foundation that enables eternal salvation and he lost his critical battle to destroy it when he failed to tempt Christ into sinning².

But some have challenged what I consider to be very well established truths of the Passover. They typically start by reordering the timeline of the events of the Passover of Moses and the ancient Israelites. There are a number of examples but I will only mention four of them. I did not include the names of the organizations or preachers because they have inane legal restrictions against naming them or

¹ 1 Sam. 15:17.

² Mark 1:13.

quoting their works if it is directed to a “general audience.” I guess they do this so they can control those who might question or dispute them. It is fairly easy to silence individuals but more difficult to censure a wider exposure in a public forum. In any regards, the responsibility for adhering to the Truth of God is on the individual so there is no real benefit in publishing names. Here they are:

- 1) One theory is that the Passover lamb was sacrificed in the afternoon of the fourteenth day of the first month instead of at twilight (Exod. 12:6). This seems more influenced by the national sacrifice that came about in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah³ than the original household Passover⁴ recorded by Moses.
- 2) There a couple of organizations that teach the Death Angel made his rounds early in the evening at the beginning of the fifteenth day of the first month. I have yet to figure out how they disregard the Scriptures that clearly say it was at midnight on the fourteenth (Exod. 11:4-7; 12:12, 29-30).
- 3) Another idea that is gaining popularity is that the Passover lambs were sacrificed at twilight on the fourteenth but not eaten until the evening at the beginning of the fifteenth day, which is the first Day of Unleavened Bread. This does not reconcile with Scripture that says the Passover was eaten beginning at twilight on the fourteenth day (Exod. 12:6-11, 22).
- 4) This one took me by surprise when I first heard it. One man teaches that no one keeps the Passover because Jesus was the Passover; instead, people are to observe the Lord’s Supper, in direct conflict with Scripture (1 Cor. 11:20).

One man reasons that ALL the events in the Old and New Testaments must be aligned with each other. While many events naturally mirror one another, requiring Passover events to be connected even if the links are not found in Scripture is a foolish foundation to build on—it is not proper reasoning⁵. It *sounds* reasonable to say that events in the Old and New Testaments must be aligned because many of them are obviously related. But events cannot be forced into a timeline; they only fit if they are confirmed by Scripture.

For example, the theory that the Death Angel did his work in the evening at the beginning of the fifteenth day was rationalized that it somehow connects to the death of Jesus Christ who died in the afternoon of the fourteenth. I still cannot understand how the death of the Egyptian firstborn at the hands of the Death Angel is related to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. God killed the Egyptian firstborn to force Pharaoh to release the Israelites⁶, which is why God then laid claim to all firstborn of men and animals⁷. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ, on the other hand, was not to kill but to redeem from death those who would be God’s firstborn children! Ironically, some will quote Herbert Armstrong and say, “Prove it yourself from your Bible.” False teachers will say this to try to add legitimacy to their ideas while hoping you will not follow through or cannot figure out their reasonings.

³ Ezra 6:19-21.

⁴ Exod. 12:3-4.

⁵ Acts 17:2.

⁶ Exod 13:15; et al.

⁷ Exod 13:2.

I am not saying any of these men are intentionally trying to deceive people. Although I have listened to them on occasion, I do not personally know them. My main point is to beware of deceptions, especially when teachers are influenced by pride. Pride is a difficult temptation even for the most humble of teachers. That is why it is foolish for anyone to blindly follow the teachings of others because everyone is susceptible to pride, ignorance, bias, popularity, wealth, etc., so the danger of being deceived is real and there are many warnings against deception⁸:

TITUS 1:10-11, 13-16 For **there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. ... 13 ... Therefore rebuke them sharply,** that they may be sound in the faith, 14 **not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth.** 15 To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. 16 They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.

[NET2.1] 2 PETER 2:1-3 But false prophets arose among the people, just as **there will be false teachers among you. These false teachers will infiltrate your midst with destructive heresies, even to the point of denying the [Lord] who bought them.** As a result, they will bring swift destruction on themselves. 2 And **many will follow** their debauched lifestyles. **Because of these false teachers, the way of truth will be [blasphemed].** 3 And in their greed **they will exploit you with deceptive words.** Their condemnation pronounced long ago is not sitting idly by; their destruction is not asleep.

Teaching that keeping the Passover is by eating the “Lord’s Supper” seems to be “denying the Lord who bought them.” Not only did Paul say “**not** to eat the Lord’s Supper,”⁹ but calling the bread and wine the Lord’s Supper obscures the symbolism of the bread and wine for the body and blood of Jesus Christ. It may seem to be a minor point but it detracts from His sacrifice—a supper does not bring to mind the remembrance of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. In fact, a supper is usually something that is enjoyed whereas the symbols of the body and blood of Jesus Christ are stark reminders that God died to save us. Similarly, claiming that the Passover was eaten on the evening of the fifteenth—the beginning of the first Day of Unleavened Bread—instead of at twilight on the fourteenth is the “way truth will be blasphemed.” The Passover and holydays are reminders of the key parts of God’s plan of salvation; changing them confounds the understanding of it.

Some people excuse false teachers by saying, “He has a lot of good messages and I just ignore the things he says that are wrong.” But exposure to Knowledge that is both Good **and** Evil can have consequences. Can someone actually know if they are deceived? Is it possible to listen to both truth (good) and falsehoods (evil) and not

⁸ 2 Tim. 3:1-9; Col. 2:16-19.

⁹ 1 Cor. 11:20.

be adversely affected even to a small degree? If a teacher said the Passover ceremony is called the Lord's Supper five years ago, will they in another five years (after it is accepted as fact) start claiming that the bread and wine is replaced with a supper of lamb, bitter herbs, and unleavened bread? Will they later change the Passover to another day entirely as more deceptions are introduced over time? The Holy Spirit warns us whenever someone teaches things that are counter to God's Truth. Deception begins with seemingly minor changes ('corrections') and builds upon them over time. The most concerning are changes to matters of salvation such as the Passover, which IS the foundation of the New Covenant with God for eternal life. Such things should not be ignored or taken lightly by anyone whose sins God has forgiven and has received the Holy Spirit of life.

Over the years I have encountered several techniques whereby false teachers perpetrate their ideas. One said that they could not explain something to me because they did not want to be responsible for any repercussions I might face. In other words, their beliefs were so contrary to established doctrines that I likely would have been 'disfellowshipped'. They also use put-downs such as, "you will come to understand these things in time." The point of most of them is to make you feel as if you are not smart enough to progress beyond the milk of the Word. However, matters of salvation ARE simple and they are very simply explained in the Bible including, for example, the commands for the New Covenant Passover:

1 CORINTHIANS 11:20, 23-26 Therefore when you come together in one place, **it is not to eat the Lord's Supper.** ... 23 For I [*Paul*] 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;** 24 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.**" 25 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.**" 26 For **as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.**

The ceremony of bread and wine is the same night that Jesus was betrayed. When was that?

[KJV+] MATTHEW 26:2 Ye know that after two days is **the Passover, and the Son of man is betrayed** to be crucified.

Jesus was betrayed on Passover. When is Passover?

LEVITICUS 23:5 **On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight [*ha'arbayim*] is the LORD's Passover.**

Passover observance begins at twilight ("*between the evenings*") on the fourteenth day of the first month. It was the same day that Jesus instituted the bread and wine that are symbols of His sacrifice. Later that same night, He was betrayed by Judas and arrested by soldiers who brought Him before a tribunal of the high priest and Sanhedrin. The next morning Pontius Pilate sentenced Jesus to death. He was

nailed to the cross about the third hour (9am) and subsequently died that afternoon at about the ninth hour (3pm)¹⁰. Again, Jesus died on Passover because that is the *only* day assigned to KILL the lamb and Jesus instituted the bread and wine on Passover because that is the *only* day assigned to EAT the lamb. The New Covenant Passover ceremony requires eating unleavened bread and drinking wine in recognition and remembrance of the body and blood of Jesus Christ—it is not the Lord's Supper. The Passover SACRIFICE is so important that God established and set apart the entire fourteenth day of the first month to observe and remember it. He then established and set apart the next day, the fifteenth day of the first month that is the first Day of Unleavened Bread, as a remembrance of being saved out of Egypt¹¹. God even gave that night a name: He called it "That Night of the LORD" and said it is "a night of solemn observance."¹² These days are so important that God will "cut off"¹³ anyone who does not keep the Passover and That Night of the LORD as He commanded.

Some will likely dismiss all this as simplistic and ignorant. Two of the primary principles that guide effective thinking are logic and recognizing that simpler explanations are usually more accurate and effective. Scripture can always be twisted to mean something other than the Truth. When teachers require long, complex explanations to describe why a simple statement in the Bible means something different, it should raise a red flag. One man gave *nine* sermons on only *one* of his points about Passover. There is POWER in simplicity because it is hard to deny. The Bible also should always make rational sense. In the case of claiming that the lamb was eaten at the beginning of the fifteenth day, it was not only required a long and convoluted explanation, but one must rationally conclude that it is no longer a Passover lamb but an UNLEAVENED BREAD lamb, which loses all ties to Christ's sacrifice! God is not the author of confusion¹⁴.

Some have a desired to discover 'new' Truth in order to make a name for themselves. Once they are proven to be false teachers, Scripture says to withdraw from them¹⁵—it is never wise to "tempt the LORD your God."¹⁶ Also recognize that not all teachers are elders. Some who are not elders have come up with all kinds of "crazy." One man wanted to change Sabbath observance to begin at SUNRISE and end at sunset (something he heard from a Muslim named Chazaq EliYahu Yashara!). Even though his argument might sound reasonable, this man likes to play basketball on Friday evenings so I seriously doubt he was motivated by Truth. There is even a Church of God offshoot that believes the Quran is at least equal to the Bible! All of this and more is reason why everyone should know Scripture well enough to *be* a teacher even if they do not have that role:

¹⁰ Mark 15:25, 34-37.

¹¹ Exod. 12:51.

¹² Exod. 12:42.

¹³ Num. 9:13; Exod. 12:15, 19.

¹⁴ 1 Cor. 14:33.

¹⁵ 1 Tim. 6:5.

¹⁶ Deut. 6:16; Matt. 4:7.

HEBREWS 5:11-14 ... since you have become dull of hearing. 12 For though **by this time you ought to be teachers**, you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes *only* of milk *is* unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Knowing Scripture and staying humble and contrite is the only defense against deception. It is not always necessary or proper to publicly cry out against false teachers, but it is vital to defend the Truth God gave you for salvation against deceit and heresy. But even if the occasion warrants it, do not fear being persecuted for taking a stand for the Truth of God if done so in meekness:

1 PETER 3:14-16 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, *you are* blessed. "And **do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.**" 15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and **always be ready to give [an answer]** to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, **with meekness and fear**; 16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.

Those who were baptized ten years ago or more should easily qualify as teachers, at least for the basics of the Passover sacrifice, repentance, baptism, the Holy Spirit of God, the Law of God, agape love, Good Works, the weekly Sabbaths, and the plan of God especially as it relates to the holydays. Everyone begotten by God has the mind of Christ¹⁷ and is "taught by God."¹⁸ If you are not confident you can teach these things, the solution is simple:

PROVERBS 15:28 The heart of the righteous **studies** how to answer ...

2 TIMOTHY 2:15 **Be diligent** to present yourself approved to God, **a worker** who does not need to be ashamed, rightly [handling] the Word of Truth.

Seek out "the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you **wise for salvation**"¹⁹ and know that the Holy Spirit will "guide you into all truth."²⁰

May God's grace and peace be upon you!

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¹⁷ 1 Cor. 1:10; 2:16; 2 Tim. 1:7; 1 Pet. 4:1.

¹⁸ Isa. 54:13; Jer. 31:34; Mic. 4:2; John 6:45.

¹⁹ 2 Tim. 3:15.

²⁰ John 16:13.