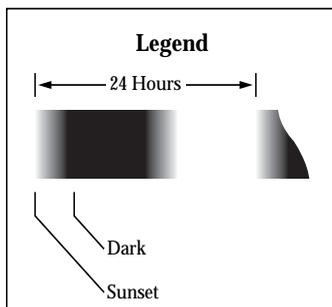
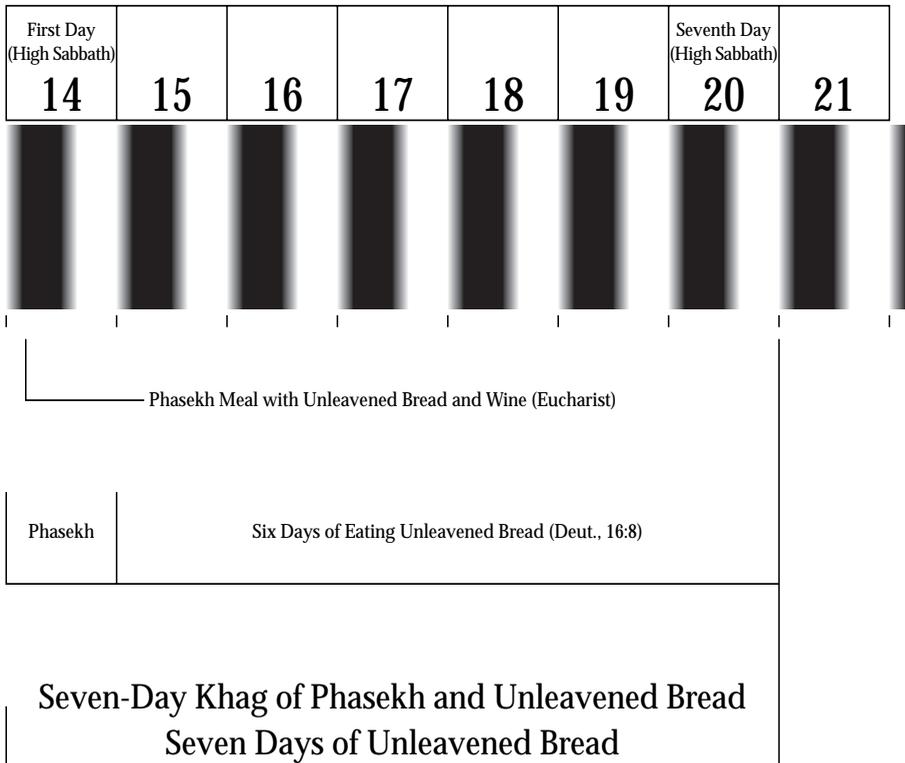


## ***Section II***

### ***Early Christian Schools***

# QUARTODECIMAN SYSTEM A

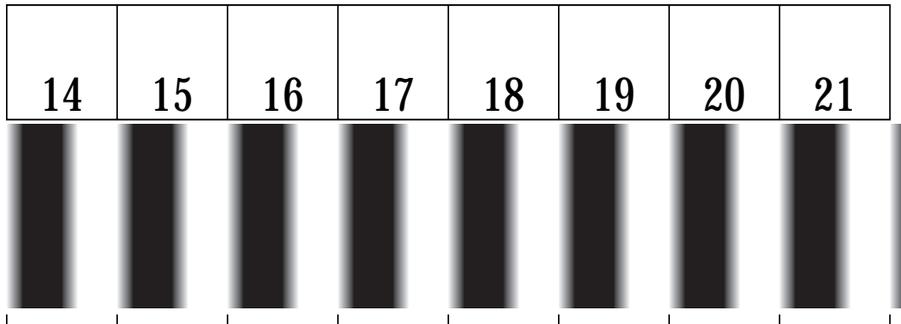
Month of Abib



**CHART F**

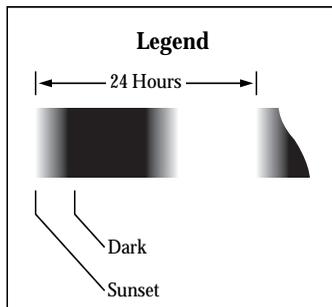
# QUASI-QUARTODECIMAN SYSTEM D

Month of Abib



← The Festival of the Phasekh of the Resurrection and its Eucharist is celebrated on the first day of the week (i.e., Sunday) that falls on one of these seven days. →

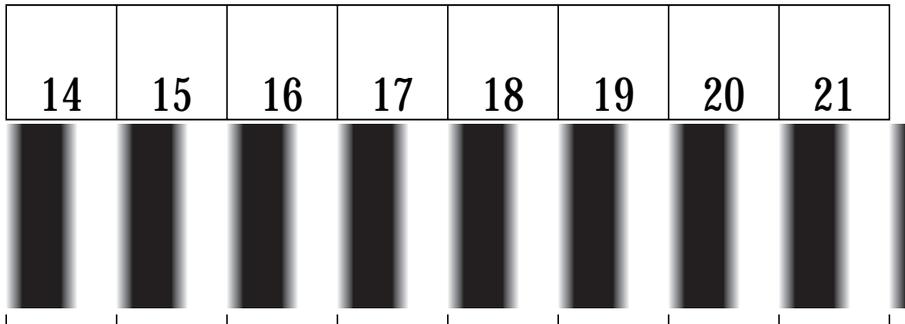
Seven Days Used to Determine the Phasekh of the Resurrection



**CHART G**

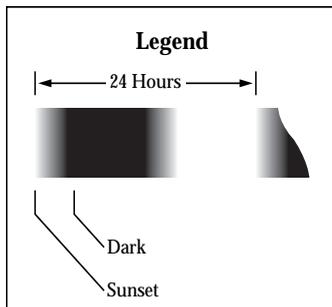
# ROMAN SYSTEM E

Month of Abib



← The Festival of the Phasekh of the Resurrection and its Eucharist is celebrated on the first day of the week (i.e., Sunday) that falls on one of these seven days. →

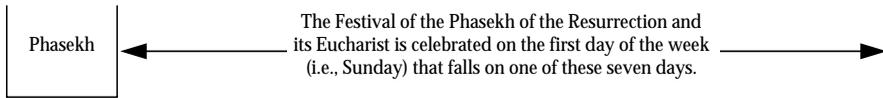
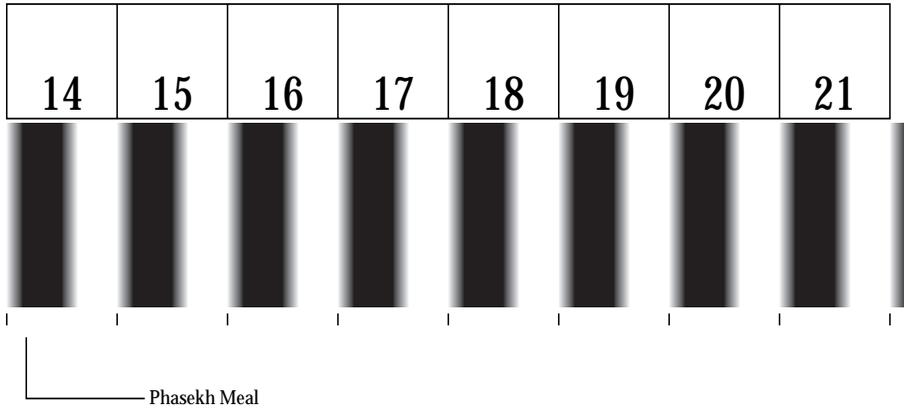
Seven Days Used to Determine the Phasekh of the Resurrection



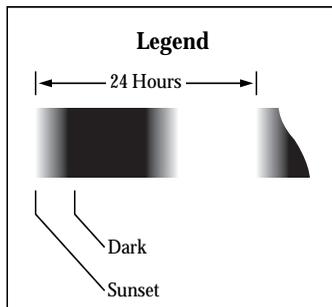
**CHART H**

# HYBRID SYRIAN SYSTEM F

Month of Abib



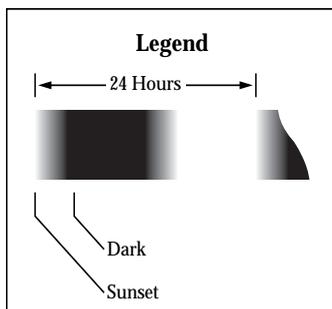
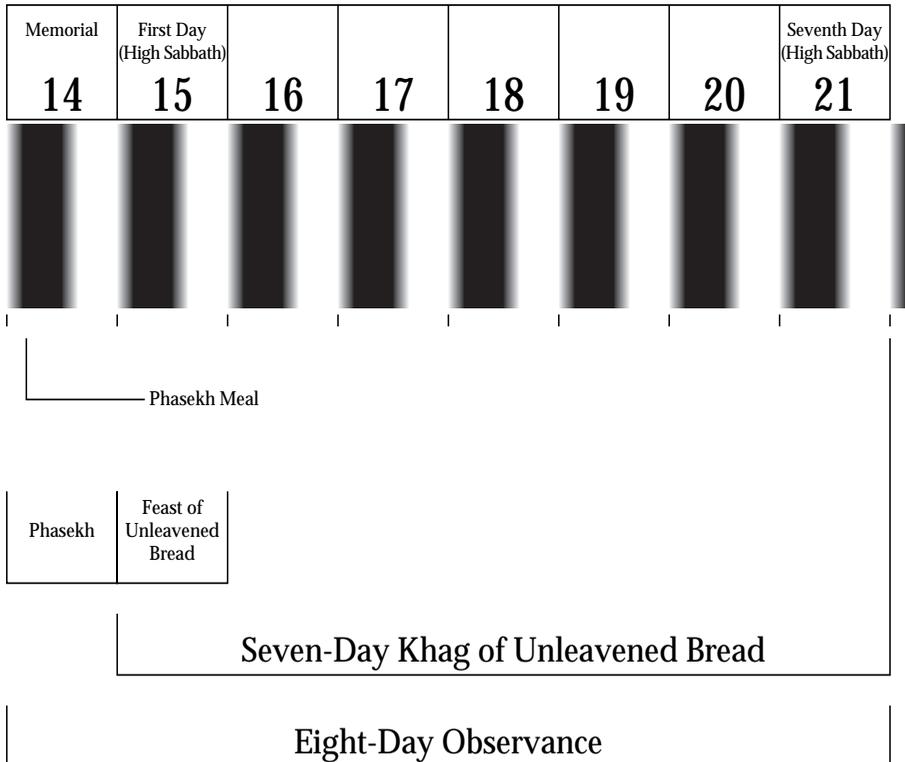
Seven Days Used to Determine the Phasekh of the Resurrection



**CHART I**

# MODERN HYBRID SYSTEM G

Month of Abib



**CHART J**

## Introduction: Section II

The Festival of Phasekh and Unleavened Bread and the Festival of Shabuath (Pentecost) were not just Jewish concerns. Today, few English-speaking Christians, largely due to their long practice of glossing the Hebrew word Phasekh with the name Easter and their abandonment of the Festival of Pentecost, realize that Phasekh and Pentecost were the chief religious observances of the early Christian assemblies. In one form or another, all early Christian groups not only observed the Phasekh and Pentecost but calculated the Phasekh observance in connection with the seven days of unleavened bread. The Roman Catholic writer Augustine (c.400 C.E.) reminds Christians:

Phasekh and Pentecost are festivals with the strongest Scriptural authority.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to Pentecost, general agreement was maintained among the various Christian factions. The 50 days of Pentecost were celebrated by the Aristocratic method, counting from the first day of the week following Abib 14. The Phasekh was another matter. Unfortunately, as had occurred with the Jewish experience, divergent opinions about the Phasekh soon sprang up. Epiphanius (c.378 C.E.), for example, informs us that confusion over Phasekh arose among the various Christian groups shortly after the circumcised bishops of Jerusalem were removed from power at the beginning of the Jewish revolt led by Bar Kochba against Rome:

For long ago, even from the earliest days, the Phasekh was celebrated at different times in the Assembly,<sup>2</sup> occasioning ridicule every year. For some kept it a week early and quarreled with others, while others kept it a week late. And some celebrated it in advance, others in between, others afterward. And in a word, as is not unknown to many scholarly persons, there was a great deal of muddle and tiresomeness whenever trouble was stirred up in the Assembly's teaching on the question of this festival. In the time of Polycarp (c.158 C.E.) and Victor (196

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<sup>1</sup> Augustine, *Epist.*, 55:17 §32.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek term ἐκκλησία (*ekklesia*), Latin *ecclesia*, shall be translated throughout as "Assembly," if the reference is to the world body, and as "assembly," if the reference is to a local congregation (see GEL, 1968, p. 509; SEC, Gk. #1577). The Hebrew term behind the Greek and Latin is קהל (*qahal*), קהלה (*qahalah*), "an assemblage:—assembly, congregation" (SEC, Heb. #6951, 6952; HEL, p. 228; cf., CS, 1, p. 433). The English term "Church," which is often used to translate the Greek and Latin words, is misleading in that it gives a connotation of a building for public worship as well as for the congregation.

C.E.) the East was at odds with the West and they would not accept letters of commendation from each other. But in as many other times—in the time of Alexander, the bishop of Alexandria, and Criscen-tius, when we find each of them writing argumenta-tively to the other, and down to our own day. This has been the situation ever since (the Assembly) was thrown into disorder after the time of the circumcised bishops (ending in 133 C.E.).<sup>3</sup>

One fact is certainly cogent. Since the messiah never sinned, the Phasekh observed by the messiah and his disciples provides an important key to the correct Phasekh celebration. In this regard, all the various early assemblies made the claim that they were continuing the Phasekh, either in fact or in spirit, as the messiah had commanded. Yet only one of these practices, if any, can be correct. Therefore, in our search for the original and true observance of Phasekh and the seven days of unleavened bread, it is incumbent upon us to fully examine these various early Christian systems in order that, in our second and third volumes, we might weigh their credibility and worth against Scriptures.

### **The Christian Systems**

Few Christians today realize the vibrant and rich history that has been pre-served for us from the Ante-Nicaean Christian period (30–324 C.E.) and after-ward. Contrary to the popular opinion of a Christian “dark age,” what we actually find is a time of great debate, turmoil, and doctrinal evolution. As we search through the ancient records from this period, we discover that during the first several centuries of our common era four basic Phasekh systems, with some local variations, were competing with each other for the hearts and minds of the numerous Christian assemblies.

For simplification purposes, this study shall utilize the following labels to identify each of the four early Christian systems: System A (the Quarto-deciman), System D (the early western quasi-Quartodeciman), System E (the Roman), and System F (the hybrid Syrian). We shall also add to our investi-gation the discussion of a recent innovation among some Christian groups, which we have labeled System G.

**System A** (Quartodeciman Phasekh): Buried in the pages of antiquity is the little known fact that the original Phasekh practice of the early Christian assemblies was the Aristocratic System A (see Chart F). We retain the System A label due to the fact that the original Quartodeciman practice was a direct descendant of the old conservative Zadok (Tsadoq) system of the priests. For that reason, those who followed this system, or one of its later variants, were subsequently called Quartodecimans (14th keepers).

The Quartodeciman formula was nothing less than a continuation of the Aristocratic understanding: the 14th was Phasekh and the seven days of unleavened bread continued from the 14th until the end of the 20th of Abib

<sup>3</sup> Epiphanius, *Pan.*, 70:9:7–9. For the Quartodeciman practice of the circumcised Christian bishops of Jerusalem see below Chap. XVII–XIX and FSDY, 2.

(the first lunar month). The early Quartodecimans differed from the old Jewish Aristocratic system in that they did not practice the ritualistic sacrifices or offerings of the handwritten Torah, including the slaughter of the Phasekh lamb. In its place, they counted the messiah as the true Phasekh lamb and his death as a realization of the prophetic type expressed in the handwritten Torah and sacrificed and eaten on the night of Abib 14 during the Exodus. Unleavened bread and the mystery of the Eucharist became the focus of this new Christian Phasekh repast. Nevertheless, the method for determining the dates for the Phasekh dinner and the seven days of unleavened bread was identical to that used by the conservative priests (System A).

The Quartodecimans noted that the “Phasekh of the Jews”—a reference to the Phasekh repast on the 15th of Abib as practiced by the state religion of the Pharisees—was not the true Phasekh of the Torah. Instead, they gave that honor to the 14th of the first moon, claiming four points of doctrine:

- The 14th was a high Sabbath.
- It was a day of remembrance of the messiah’s (the lamb’s) death.
- It was the day of the Phasekh meal (the Last Supper).
- It was the day of the fellowship of the Phasekh Eucharist.

The Quartodecimans always celebrated the Phasekh festival (i.e., the Phasekh supper and the Eucharist) on the 14th of Abib, regardless of which day of the week it fell on. Also for the early Quartodecimans, the 14th and 20th were always observed as high Sabbaths.

During the first three centuries C.E., support was very strong among the early Christian assemblies in the East for the Quartodeciman method, especially in Asia Minor where the apostles John and Philip taught. Nevertheless, after this system was condemned by the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E. as Judaizing, it was suppressed and soon faded into disuse.

**System D** (Early Western quasi-Quartodeciman Phasekh): In the early second century C.E., along with the collapse of the power of the circumcised Christian bishops of Jerusalem, a dissenting opinion appeared among some of the western assemblies. As a result, a variation of the Quartodeciman view was constructed by some of the bishops in the West (see Chart G). This western quasi-Quartodeciman method (System D)—which must not be confused with other minor quasi-Quartodeciman systems<sup>4</sup>—retained the Aristocratic understanding for the seven days of unleavened bread, i.e., that these days extended from the beginning of the 14th until the end of the 20th day of the first moon. This system also recognized that the messiah ate the Phasekh supper on the 14th of Abib.

Yet the advocates of this system did not always keep the Phasekh supper and Eucharist on the 14th, counting that day as far too sad an occasion for such a joyous celebration. In fact, they considered such an observance an act of Judaizing. In its place, its supporters observed the day of the *omer* wave offering (emphasized as being the date of the messiah’s resurrection) as the

<sup>4</sup> For the variant practices of some of these minor quasi-Quartodeciman groups see below Chap. XVII, pp. 278f.

sacred day for the Phasekh festival and Eucharist celebration. This festival was always placed on the first day of the week within the seven days of unleavened bread and, therefore, it would only occasionally fall upon the 14th day. Since the festival of Phasekh was only observed on the first day of the week within the seven days of unleavened bread, the Quartodeciman method of always counting the 14th and 20th of Abib as high Sabbaths was abandoned.

This early western quasi-Quartodeciman system became the basis for the first major breach within the early orthodox Christian community. It was originally used in the western districts of the Roman empire, especially in places like Rome and Alexandria, until the latter end of the second century C.E. At that time it was replaced in those districts with the Roman assembly doctrine of Phasekh (System E). The System D (quasi-Quartodeciman) construct was condemned at the Council of Nicaea (325 C.E.) in the name of unity and under the guise of avoiding any appearance of Judaizing. Nevertheless, System D continued in use for centuries among various outlying assemblies. It was eventually suppressed by the Roman Church, which had slowly gained political power over the other assemblies, and fully disappeared by the early eighth century C.E.

**System E** (Phasekh of the Roman assembly): In the late second century C.E. a third important construct was developed in the West, chiefly by the bishops governing the assemblies in Rome and Gaul. In the early second century C.E., the assemblies at Rome and Gaul had abandoned System A for System D, regarding the former as an act of Judaizing. Yet they found it difficult to overcome the Quartodeciman argument that, since the messiah and his disciples had kept their “Last Supper” Phasekh on the 14th of Abib, all Christians should do likewise.

In response to the Quartodeciman position, those in the West took on a new strategy. The western bishops had already found reason to fault the Quartodeciman construct that Phasekh should be held on the 14th—it was the same day that the Jews sacrificed their Phasekh lamb and it was the sad occasion of the messiah’s death. The Roman assembly advocates of System E, therefore, believed that if one were to observe the Phasekh Eucharist<sup>5</sup> on this date he was also committing the heinous act of Judaizing.

To remove the Quartodeciman claim that the 14th was important, the supporters of System E dismissed the Aristocratic construct altogether and adopted the Hasidic premise, which held that the legal Phasekh and the seven days of unleavened bread began on the 15th of Abib (see Chart H). The 14th, they now argued, was merely the day given under the handwritten Torah for the Phasekh sacrifice. Indeed, they retorted, since we are no longer under the Torah and since the true lamb has been sacrificed with the death of the messiah on the 14th, that day has been fulfilled. The celebration of the 14th, as a result, is simply no longer necessary or relevant and, to the chagrin of the Quartodecimans and advocates of System D, they proclaimed that the 14th should never be observed as the Phasekh festival or for the giving of the Phasekh Eucharist.

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<sup>5</sup> See above Intro.to Part II, p. 138, n. 9.

The advocates of System E then carried over the idea developed in System D that, since the messiah was murdered on the 14th, it was only a commemoration of a sad occasion. The first day of the week (Sunday), on the other hand, being the day of the week of the messiah's resurrection, was a much happier and more proper day on which to celebrate the Phasekh. Therefore, the first day of the week falling within the seven days of unleavened bread (counting from the 15th until the end of the 21st) should be observed as the festival. The preceding Friday and Saturday were marked as the day of the messiah's crucifixion and burial (time in the grave). These days were honored but only as a time to fast, not to celebrate. At the same time, the advocates of System E disregarded the Hasidic interpretation that the 15th and 21st days of Abib were always high Sabbaths.

Beginning with Emperor Constantine in the early fourth century C.E., the Roman Church obtained the backing of the Roman empire. It is at this point that the Roman Catholic (Universal) Church truly began. With the Roman government behind them, System E eventually gained the upper hand and overcame all other Christian Phasekh systems. Though slightly modified over the centuries, this system is presently the dominant practice among Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestant Christians.

**System F** (Hybrid Syrian Phasekh): The transition to System E proceeded along a different path in Syria. A strong Quartodeciman heritage existed in the East and did not allow for any quick transformation. In response to this reality, those who gravitated toward the western views developed a hybrid system that incorporated both Quartodeciman and western elements. In many ways this hybrid system mimicked the efforts of the Jewish Karaites and the neo-Samaritans (System C), who blended together the Aristocratic and Hasidic constructs to form a hybrid third view (see Chart I).

In the late second century C.E., the Syrian assemblies were Quartodeciman. They kept the 14th day of the first moon as the Phasekh and their seven days of unleavened bread were counted from the 14th until the end of the 20th day of the first moon. Yet during this same period some of the Syrian Christian assemblies had already adopted the western format of celebrating the day of the resurrection (the first day of the week following the 14th) by keeping the preceding Friday and Saturday as a fast.

Major change came after the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E. The council, dominated by the Roman Emperor, made the decision to disregard any Quartodeciman or quasi-Quartodeciman system for the observance of the Phasekh festival. They then ordered the various Christian assemblies to adopt the Hasidic construct for the seven days of unleavened bread. Unwilling to immediately abandon the 14th as Phasekh, many Syrian Christians continued to observe the 14th. Yet to satisfy Rome, some began to attach the Hasidic seven days of unleavened bread (from the 15th to the 21st) to their celebration, and like Rome they disregarded the Hasidic idea that the 15th and 21st of Abib were always high Sabbaths. They also continued to keep the Friday and Sabbath preceding Phasekh Sunday as a fast, though at times this conflicted with the 14th as Phasekh, and they continued to observe Sunday as the Phasekh of the resurrection, the messiah being raised on that day. In doing so,

they remained in harmony with the Roman Catholic celebration. This hybrid form we have labeled System F.

Once the Hasidic construct for the seven days of unleavened bread was fully accepted, it was not long before the hybrid System F construct was, for the most part, abandoned and the Roman Catholic System E Phasekh completely adopted.

**System G** (modern hybrid Phasekh): In our present time a new hybrid has developed. In this form, which we dub System G (see Chart J), the 14th of Abib is the day of the Phasekh supper, and the 15th is the Festival of Unleavened Bread. The seven-day Festival of Unleavened Bread extends from the 15th until the end of the 21st day of Abib, a total observance of eight days. Despite the fact that the 14th is also a day of eating unleavened bread, under this system the 14th is not a high Sabbath and is not counted among the seven days of unleavened bread. Rather, the 14th is a solemn memorial day in observance of the messiah's death. At the same time, the Hasidic interpretation that the 15th and 21st days of Abib are high Sabbaths has been retained.

Though System G is not explicitly found mentioned among any ancient Jewish or Christian assemblies, its proponents argue that it was the original practice. Therefore, for comparative reasons, we shall touch upon this system now and explore its potential in our later volumes.

**Minor Views:** There are likewise some other minor variant views that have been extrapolated over the centuries. Some believe that *arab* is merely a point in time. Some claim that the messiah offered his Phasekh lamb on the 13th of Abib;<sup>6</sup> while others believe that some of the rites of Phasekh, such as the Eucharist, should be offered every Sunday as communion. Such views are either so speculative as to have no substantive support or are so far from the original system that they cannot be remotely considered as celebrating Phasekh and the seven days of unleavened bread. When relevant, we shall deal with these and other similar views as we proceed with our study.

## **A Common Foundation**

There were eight basic premises concerning Phasekh, the seven days of unleavened bread, and Pentecost which were almost universal and formed the foundation upon which the overwhelming majority of the early Christian assemblies, whatever system they followed, stood:

- (1) The Phasekh celebration was required for all Christians.<sup>7</sup>
- (2) The Christian Phasekh was an innovation in that it did not require any ritualistic animal sacrifice.<sup>8</sup>
- (3) The Phasekh lamb of the Torah and its sacrifice was a typology of the death of the messiah, the true Phasekh lamb of Yahweh.<sup>9</sup>
- (4) The bread and wine (or grape juice) of the "Last Supper" Phasekh possessed a higher typology than formerly stated under the Torah.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> CBTEL, 5, pp. 744–746.

<sup>7</sup> Cf., 1 Cor., 5:7f.

<sup>8</sup> Cf., Heb., 7:26–28, 10:1–13; Matt., 9:13, 12:7.

<sup>9</sup> E.g., 1 Cor., 5:7; cf., John, 1:29, 36; 1 Pet., 1:19; Rev., 5:6–12.

<sup>10</sup> Cf., Matt., 26:26–29; Mark, 14:22–25; Luke, 22:17–20; 1 Cor., 5:8.

- (5) The day of the messiah's resurrection was observed, being one and the same with the day of the *omer* wave offering. This *omer* wave offering always took place on the first day of the week, on the day following the weekly Sabbath which fell within the seven days of unleavened bread. The resurrection day was also the first day in the 50-day count to Pentecost.
- (6) The messiah ate his famous Last Supper on the night of the 14th of Abib and suffered his death in the daylight portion of that same day (Hebrew sunset-to-sunset reckoning).
- (7) The celebration of Phasekh was based upon the occurrence of the seven days of unleavened bread.
- (8) The festival of Pentecost was a required Christian celebration. Its date was determined by the Aristocratic method, which counted the 50 days from the first day of the week that fell after Abib 14. Pentecost, as a result, always fell on the first day of the week (Sunday).

These eight premises relating to the celebration of Phasekh and Pentecost are everywhere expressed in ancient Christian literature, regardless of their particular Phasekh preference. Nevertheless, today there is not a general knowledge of items six and seven. Since they are so vital to our research and are basic to understanding the ancient Christian practices, we are obligated at this point to give examples for these two concepts using representatives from each of the four ancient Phasekh systems.

#### **The Last Supper: Abib 14**

That the messiah ate his "Last Supper" Phasekh at night and suffered death during the following daylight period is clearly established in the Synoptic Texts.<sup>11</sup> It is likewise stated that these events occurred on the day of the "preparation of the Phasekh,"<sup>12</sup> being also the day of the "preparation of the Jews."<sup>13</sup> This day of preparation is an obvious reference to the Jewish state religious practice, wherein the Phasekh preparation is on the 14th and their Phasekh supper is on the 15th of Abib.<sup>14</sup>

What is not so well-known is that the ancient Christian assemblies held a universal understanding that the messiah observed his "Last Supper" Phasekh on the night of Abib 14 and died during the daylight portion of that same day (Hebrew reckoning). For example, Apollinarius of Hierapolis (161–169 C.E.), an advocate of the Quartodeciman System A, argued:

The 14th is the true Phasekh of the sovereign, the great sacrifice . . . who was buried on the day of the Phasekh with the stone placed over the tomb.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Matt., 26:17–27:61; Mark, 14:12–16:47; Luke, 22:7–54; 1 Cor., 11:23–26.

<sup>12</sup> John, 19:14.

<sup>13</sup> John, 19:42.

<sup>14</sup> See above Chaps. XII–XIII.

<sup>15</sup> Chron. Paschale, 1, pp. 13f. Also see Eusebius, *H.E.*, 5:24.

Anatolius of Alexandria (c.270 C.E.), a supporter of System D, while speaking of the events dealing with the Phasekh of the Last Supper, writes:

And there is no doubt as to its being the 14th day on which the disciples asked the sovereign, in accordance with the custom established for them of old, "Where will you that we should prepare for you to eat the Phasekh?"<sup>16</sup>

The advocates of System E also held to the doctrine that the messiah both ate his "Last Supper" Phasekh and then died on the 14th of Abib. Eusebius (fl. 303–339 C.E.), for instance, after reporting that the Jews sacrificed the Phasekh sheep "on the 14th of the first moon," defines this day as "the (day of) preparation, on which the saviour suffered."<sup>17</sup> He adds:

Nor did the saviour observe the Phasekh with the Jews at the time of his suffering. . . . But before he suffered he did eat the Phasekh and celebrate the festival—with his disciples, not with the Jews.<sup>18</sup>

Clement of Alexandria (fl. 182–220 C.E.), as another example, states that the messiah died on the 14th, prior to the day that the Jews (Pharisees) celebrated their Phasekh (i.e., the 15th):

Suitably, therefore, to the 14th day, on which (day) he (the messiah) also suffered, in the morning, the chief priests and the scribes who brought him to Pilate, did not enter the Praetorium, that they might not be defiled, but might freely eat the Phasekh in the evening (of the 15th).<sup>19</sup>

Those following the Syrian hybrid (System F) likewise believed that the messiah ate the Phasekh on the 14th and then suffered. To demonstrate, the fourth century C.E. Syrian Christian named Aphraates writes:

Our saviour ate the Phasekh with his disciples in the sacred night of the 14th . . . And he was taken in the night of the 14th, and his trial lasted until the sixth hour, and at the time of the sixth hour they sentenced him and lifted him up on the (torture-)stake.<sup>20</sup>

## **Seven Days of Unleavened Bread**

The requirement among the various early Christian assemblies to observe the Phasekh at the time of the Festival of Unleavened Bread is also well-established.

<sup>16</sup> Anatolius, 8, cf., 10; also cf., Matt., 26:17; Mark, 14:12; Luke, 22:7–9. Also see the discussion between Coleman, bishop of Lindisfarne, and Wilfrid at the Synod of Whitby in Bede, *Hist.*, 3:25.

<sup>17</sup> Eusebius, *Pas.*, 7, 9. Also see Peter Alex., frags. 5:1, 2, 7, who specifically identifies the date as Abib 14. Augustine similarly calls the first month "Abib" (*Epist.*, 55:3 §5).

<sup>18</sup> Eusebius, *Pas.*, 9, 10.

<sup>19</sup> Clement, frag. 28.

<sup>20</sup> Aphraates, *Dem.*, 12:6.

It was never a matter of whether or not one should use the seven days of unleavened bread to set the date, but rather an issue of which method one was to use: the Aristocratic or Hasidic. The Aristocratic position of the Quartodecimans (System A) and quasi-Quartodecimans (System D), for example, is vigorously defended by Anatolius, who wrote:

Calculate, then, from the end of the 13th day of the moon, which marks the beginning of the 14th, on to the end of the 20th, at which the 21st day also begins, and you will have only seven days of unleavened bread, in which, by the guidance of the sovereign, it has been determined before that the most true festival of Phasekh ought to be celebrated.<sup>21</sup>

Similarly, abbot Ceolfrid (an advocate of System E) wrote to King Naitan of the Picts of Scotland about the people in that district holding to the System D view, stating, “For they which think that the sovereign’s Phasekh day must be kept from the 14th of the first moon to the 20th anticipate the time commanded in the Torah.”<sup>22</sup> Referencing the events around the year 601 C.E., Bede writes, “For they (the quasi-Quartodecimans of Britain) kept not the Phasekh on the Sovereign’s day in its due time, but from the 14th to the 20th of the moon.”<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile, those of Systems E and F regarded the Hasidic method as correct for calculating the seven days of unleavened bread (i.e., from the 15th to the 21st). Proof of this detail is demonstrated in a letter sent by Pope John IV (mid-seventh century C.E.) to the Scots. This letter was composed for the sake of persuading the Scots to amend their System D position. As part of this letter the Pope is found “plainly asserting therein that the sovereign’s Phasekh ought to be sought for from the 15th moon up to the 21st, as was approved in the Council of Nicaea.”<sup>24</sup>

The Hasidic arrangement also appears in the works of Aphraates (writing in c.344 C.E.), a supporter of the System F Phasekh. In his work, the 14th is still claimed as the day of the Phasekh and of the sovereign’s suffering.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, to this celebration is attached the Hasidic construct for the seven days of unleavened bread,<sup>26</sup> for he states, “AFTER the Phasekh come the seven days of unleavened bread to the 21st (day).”<sup>27</sup> The seven days of unleavened bread, as calculated by the Hasidic system, are also a requirement under the more recent Phasekh construct we have called System G.

## Conclusion

In our present section we shall examine in greater detail the evidence for each one of the four major forms of the Phasekh celebration practiced by the early

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<sup>21</sup> Anatolius, 8.

<sup>22</sup> Bede, *Hist.*, 5:21.

<sup>23</sup> Bede, *Hist.*, 2:2.

<sup>24</sup> Bede, *Hist.*, 2:19.

<sup>25</sup> Aphraates, *Dem.*, 12:6, 8, 12.

<sup>26</sup> Aphraates, *Dem.*, 12:8, 12.

<sup>27</sup> Aphraates, *Dem.*, 12:12.

Christian assemblies during the first seven centuries C.E. What this data reveals is that, even though there was a common agreement on the eight premises stated above, the various early Christian assemblies still arrived at radically different conclusions. This diversification in the Christian Phasekh came as the result of different regions emphasizing different aspects of the messiah's Last Supper, suffering (passion), and resurrection. By applying different interpretations to each of the problems, variant views arose.

Meanwhile, one consistent calculation among the various early Christian assemblies was the celebration of Pentecost. It was always counted by the Aristocratic method, i.e., the 50-day period began on the day after the weekly Sabbath which fell within the seven days of unleavened bread. Yet, as we shall demonstrate, the first day of the Pentecost count, which was also the anniversary of the messiah's resurrection, came to serve as a guide for the western Christian reconstruction of Phasekh. For those in the West, those days falling prior to the first day of the Pentecost count were deemed far too sad an occasion for celebrating the Phasekh supper. It was the time of the messiah's suffering, death, and burial—therefore, a time for mourning. The first day of the Pentecost count, on the other hand, because it was also the day of Yahushua's resurrection, took on a more joyous tone. From this interpretation arose the Phasekh Systems D, E, and F.