

Numbers 9:1-5

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Following the consecration of the Levites in chapter 8, the LORD then gave more instructions about the Passover. Verses 1 – 5 are concerned with the celebration of the second Passover.

The familiar phrase *Thus the Lord spoke to Moses* (v. 1) introduces another topic. This word was given *in the wilderness of Sinai*, and the occasion was *in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt*. This means that these instructions were given on the anniversary of the Israelites' departure from Egypt one year earlier. They were given after the completion of the tabernacle (Exodus 40:17) and before the taking of the census (Numbers 1:1 – 2).

Verses 2 – 3 contain the content of the LORD's instructions to Moses. The LORD commanded Moses to *let the sons of Israel observe the Passover at its appointed time* (v. 2). The *Passover* was first described in Exodus 12:1 – 28. It was to be a memorial of the Angel of the LORD "passing over" (i.e., not killing) the firstborn of Israel during the tenth and final plague on Egypt (Exodus 11:1 – 10, 12:29 – 31). The "appointed time" and the order of celebrating the Passover was described in Exodus 12:18ff.

Jewish tradition holds that Numbers 9:2 marks the only time a Passover feast was observed by the Israelites in the wilderness. This is alluded to in Amos 5:25, which asks "Did you present Me with sacrifices and grain offerings in the wilderness for forty years, O house of Israel?" The inferred answer to this is "no."

The Passover was to be celebrated *on the fourteenth day of this month* (v. 3), "this month" being the first month of the Israelite year. This month was the one when the tenth plague occurred and the Israelites were allowed to leave Egypt. Also, they were to celebrate it *at twilight*. The Hebrew literally reads "between the evenings," which may refer to the late afternoon to early evening. This was when they were to *observe it at its appointed time*.

[\(To learn more, read our article, "The Original Passover"\)](#)

Nothing was to be left out or ignored when celebrating Passover. Instead, they were required to *observe it according to all its statutes and according to all its ordinances*.

Obediently, *Moses told the sons of Israel to observe the Passover* (v. 4).

In response to Moses' command, the Israelites diligently obeyed the LORD as *they observed the Passover in the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight, in the wilderness of Sinai* (v. 5). This date was first commanded by God in Exodus 12:6, 18. Thus, they did *according to all that the Lord had commanded Moses, so the sons of Israel did*. Once again, the Israelites were careful to carry out the will of the LORD when it involved organization and

performing religious activities during this initial period. However, as previously noted, it does not appear that this continued in subsequent years.

The Passover is on the *fourteenth day of the month*. The number fourteen is interesting in scripture, because it has the numerical value in Hebrew that is equal to “David.” Since Jesus the Son of David is our perfect passover lamb, it could be that God chose the fourteenth day of the first month as the date for Passover.

Biblical Text

¹ Thus the Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying, ²“Now, let the sons of Israel observe the Passover at its appointed time. ³ On the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you shall observe it at its appointed time; you shall observe it according to all its statutes and according to all its ordinances.” ⁴ So Moses told the sons of Israel to observe the Passover. ⁵ They observed the Passover in the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight, in the wilderness of Sinai; according to all that the Lord had commanded Moses, so the sons of Israel did.