



Feast of Unleavened Bread

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Verses

1. Ex. 23:14-15 ¹⁴“Three times a year you are to celebrate a festival to me. ¹⁵“Celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread; for seven days eat bread made without yeast, as I commanded you. Do this at the appointed time in the month of Aviv, for in that month you came out of Egypt.
2. Lev. 23:4-8 ⁴“These are the LORD’s appointed festivals, the sacred assemblies you are to proclaim at their appointed times: ⁵The LORD’s Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. ⁶On the fifteenth day of that month the LORD’s Festival of Unleavened Bread begins; for seven days you must eat bread made without yeast. ⁷On the first day hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work. ⁸For seven days present a food offering to the Lord. And on the seventh day hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work.’”
3. Deut. 16:1-8 ¹Observe the month of Aviv and celebrate the Passover of the LORD your God, because in the month of Aviv he brought you out of Egypt by night. ²Sacrifice as the Passover to the LORD your God an animal from your flock or herd at the place the LORD will choose as a dwelling for his Name. ³Do not eat it with bread made with yeast, but for seven days eat unleavened bread, the bread of affliction, because you left Egypt in haste— so that all the days of your life you may remember the time of your departure from Egypt. ⁴Let no yeast be found in your possession in all your land for seven days. Do not let any of the meat you sacrifice on the evening of the first day remain until morning. ⁵You must not sacrifice the Passover in any town the LORD your God gives you ⁶except in the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name. There you must sacrifice the Passover in the evening, when the sun goes down, on the anniversary of your departure from Egypt. ⁷Roast it and eat it at the place the LORD your God will choose. Then in the morning return to your tents. ⁸For six days eat unleavened bread and on the seventh day hold an assembly to the LORD your God and do no work.
4. Ex. 34-18 ¹⁸“Celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread. For seven days eat bread made without yeast, as I commanded you. Do this at the appointed time in the month of Aviv, for in that month you came out of Egypt.

II. WHAT IS LEAVEN?

A. Traditional view

1. Leaven causes dough to grow or ‘puff up’
2. Sin is like leaven-causes a person to puff up
 - a. Pride
 - b. Jealousy
 - c. Greed
3. A little bit of sin is like a little bit of leaven--no such thing as eating just one chip
4. Past sin = old leaven
5. Yeshua = unleavened bread
 - a. Through repentance sin no longer a burden
 - b. Prompts toward Cross, narrow road of victory over sin
6. Leaven is a symbol of death and decay
 - a. Rise of dough is a sign the dough is decaying

B. Alternate view

1. Leaven = false teachings
 - a. Pharisees taught elitism, work-based faith, souls raised but not bodies, etc.

- b. Obedience to Oral Law
 - c. Legalism, hearts were hard
 - d. False teachings gradually lead believers away from submission to Messiah alone
 - e. Pharisees were clean on the outside but corrupt on the inside
 - 1) Corruption, leaven, eventually comes out and shows true sinful nature
2. Leaven = evil influence
- a. Pagan idol worship
 - 1) Money
 - 2) Power
 - 3) Influence
 - b. Leaven = evil impulse within every human being

C. Another alternative

- 1. Leaven = bondage to past lives

III. SPRING FESTIVALS--A DIVINE SEQUENCE

A. Last Night

- 1. Met with the King of the Universe
- 2. Shared a meal with our Lord
 - a. Let the flow of the wine remind us of the cleansing action of His Blood
 - b. Ate of the bread of His afflictions for the salvation of our souls
- 3. Remembered that without Him we are nothing
- 4. Remembered the free gift of our salvation

B. Today

- 1. 1st day of unleavened bread
- 2. Holy convocation
 - a. Begins 7 days of eating without leaven
 - b. What life is like with Messiah in it?

C. Tomorrow

- 1. Celebrate the Festival of First Fruits
 - a. The Resurrection of Yeshua
 - b. Understand that without that Resurrection we are to be pitied; we are placing our hope in a falsehood
 - c. Much of the modern world believes exactly that
 - d. All is naught if Yeshua didn't rise from the grave
- 2. Start of the 50 day count toward Shavu'ot and the Holy Spirit
 - a. Pete Dean's message next week

D. Next Friday

- 1. 7th day of unleavened bread
- 2. Solemn Assembly
 - a. Derived from Hebrew word 'Asereth'
 - b. Used 11 times in Tanakh
 - i. 4x referring to 8th day of Sukkot
 - ii. 3x referring to the Great and Terrible day of the Lord
 - iii. 1x referring to 7th day of unleavened bread
 - iv. 3x as minor mentions
- 3. Was the last day of the first of three annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem
- 4. How will you get ready for the soon and imminent return of the LORD.

IV. FESTIVAL OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

A. Prepare the home

1. Jewish tradition

- a. Clean the home to remove all traces of leaven from the house
 - i. Bread
 - ii. Crumbs
 - iii. Crackers
 - iv. Any bread type item
- b. Vacuum the whole house, wipe down cupboards, detail oriented
- c. Did this days before Pesach, then had a ceremony on Pesach before Seder
- d. Missed the point; was works based

2. Messianic tradition

- a. The Passover meal is a picture of our salvation
- b. Unleavened Bread, beginning the following day, is a picture of our sanctification
- c. Prepare the home in a way consistent with both
 - i. Begin to remove leaven after the Seder, so do so on today, rather than yesterday
 - ii. If we begin before the Seder, we communicate that we get rid of sins first and get saved after
 - iii. Implies works-based salvation
 - iv. Clean the home as best you can
 - v. Don't be in a panic about it
- d. Remove following items
 - i. Any leavened breads made from the 5 grains: wheat; rye; oats; barley; or spelt
 - ii. Buns, rolls, muffins, cakes, doughnuts, and croutons
 - iii. All leavened bread dough

B. Relationship to Yeshua

1. Yeshua was unleavened, i.e. unsoiled by sin
 - a. Unleavened bread is a picture of His holiness, purity, and sinlessness
 - b. Had no taint of the curse of death.
 - c. A lamb without spot or blemish
 - d. Did not suffer process of decomposition

C. Relationship to us

1. 1Cor. 5:6-8 *⁶Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough? ⁷Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch— as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. ⁸Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*
 - a. Live a life of purity and separation from the corrupting influence of sin in our lives.
 - b. Monks tried this in Middle Ages to no avail.
 - c. If we are made unleavened, i.e., Pure, by the sacrifice of Yeshua, our lives should reflect holiness and devotion to the Lord.
 - d. Heb. 12: 1-2. Must strive to 'lay aside every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset us' in order to be unhindered in our walk with God.
2. Bread of affliction. Deut. 16:3 *³Do not eat it with bread made with yeast, but for seven days eat unleavened bread, the bread of affliction, because you left Egypt in haste—*
 - a. Live a life flagellating ourselves in repentance?
 - b. Flagellants tried this in Middle Ages too. Didn't drive out anything but blood.

- c. Eating unleavened bread means identifying with the suffering and afflictions that Yeshua performed on our behalf.
- d. Isaiah 53:4-5 *4Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. 5But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.*
 - i. Hebrew word for ‘blow, stripes, wounds, etc’ has same root as ‘friendship.
 - ii. In His friendship we are healed
 - iii. Yeshua gave up His life so we could become friends
- e. Eating the bread of affliction is really to eat the bread of His affliction
 - i. Demonstrates our powerlessness to effect righteousness
 - ii. As eaten in haste by Israelites, so should we eat in haste--not the result of human ingenuity or planning.
 - iii. Commemorates that salvation is of the LORD, not a work of our own.

D. Relationship to sanctification

- 1. Sanctification work of Holy Spirit
 - a. We become sanctified by sincerely trusting in Yeshua
 - b. Do not earn merit through performing good deeds (Titus 3:5-6)
 - c. Do earn merit through humbling ourselves and trusting in Messiah for righteousness (John 6:28-29)
- 2. Not a result of religious works like separation or flagellation
- 3. Leavened bread has a ‘history’ of bits of previous leavenings
- 4. Unleavened bread has no carry-forward; no history
 - a. Free from the effects of curse of previous decay
- 5. Having no connection to decay, unleavened bread represents an abrupt break with our past lives.

V. LEAVEN IN OUR LIVES

A. Metaphorical Leaven

- 1. Sample list: Unforgiveness, bitterness, malice, wickedness, envy, jealousy, strife, gossip, lust pride, rebellion, many others
- 2. Ask God to help you recognize those things He wants removed
- 3. Confess it, repent of it, seek forgiveness for it, and get ready to be set free.

B. Spiritual Leaven

- 1. The idea that we can be self-sufficient
 - a. Only when pride and ego are ‘deflated’ or ‘brought up short’ are believers able to grasp the truth of their inward condition.
 - b. ‘In the gutter’ moments
- 2. Do not need a Savior
 - a. Can handle anything that ‘comes my way’
- 3. Burden of past mistakes or hurts.
 - a. Too big for Yeshua

C. Leaven of the Pharisees

- 1. Double minded, insincere
- 2. Putting on a show, feigning righteousness,
- 3. Counterfeit thinking that cheats the truth
- 4. Puffs up, based on human pride

D. Leaven in the Kingdom

- 1. Leaven not always bad

- a. Is a metaphor used to describe inner condition.
- 2. Depends on the condition of the heart
- 3. Luke 13:20-21 *Again he asked, "What shall I compare the kingdom of God to? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough."*
 - a. As we activate the Royal Law in society, we spread inward change. People see us, notice the way we live, want what we have. The Kingdom expands.

VI. TWO CONVOCATIONS

A. 1st Day

- 1. Holy Convocation
- 2. Following right after Seder, is a reminder that after salvation the believer needs sanctification
- 3. As a redeemed person, need to know how to live for Messiah
- 4. Deliberately remove leaven from lives, i.e. remove obvious sin
- 5. Focus is on **turning away** from sin, or temptation

B. 7th Day

- 1. Solemn Assembly
 - a. Asereth. Associated with Great and Terrible Day of the Lord
 - b. What do we need to do to be ready?
- 2. Different focus
- 3. Having removed obvious sin, what about deeper issues?
- 4. Leaven of the Pharisees was hidden from sight.
- 5. Go deeper: don't just avoid leaven; deliberately choose to eat unleavened.
 - a. Is a change of focus; different attitude
 - b. Don't just avoid sin; deliberately seek Messiah.
 - c. Occam's Razor: trusting in Yeshua requires nothing else
- 6. Focus is on **turning toward** Yeshua
- 7. Order of process:
 - a. Focus on Yeshua
 - b. Then focus on items He wants removed
 - c. Need constant connection with Him
 - d. 'Feast on Yeshua' means reading Word, meditating on it, communing with Him.

VII. APPLICATION

A. Focus

- 1. Don't just check off a box
- 2. Contemplate Yeshua
- 3. What does He say to you?
- 4. What do you need to do to be ready for His return?