

## Unleavened Bread



*And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten. This day came ye out in the month Abib. And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that thou shalt keep this service in this month. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day shall be a feast to the LORD. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters. And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which the LORD did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the LORD'S law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt. Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year. Exodus 13:3-10*

The Passover was followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which occurred in Abib, the first month of the Jewish year, corresponding to the last of March and the beginning of April. The cold of winter was past, the latter rain had ended, and all nature rejoiced in the freshness and beauty of the springtime. The grass was green on the hills and valleys, and wild flowers everywhere brightened the fields. The moon, now approaching the full, made the evenings delightful. It was the season so beautifully pictured by the sacred singer:

"The winter is past,  
The rain is over and gone;  
The flowers appear on the earth;  
The time of the singing of birds is come,  
And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;  
The fig tree ripeneth her green figs,  
And the vines are in blossom,  
They give forth their fragrance." Song of Solomon 2:11-13, R.V.

Throughout the land bands of pilgrims were making their way toward Jerusalem. The shepherds from their flocks, the herdsmen from the mountains, fishers from the Sea of Galilee, the husbandmen from their fields, and sons of the prophets from the sacred schools--all turned their steps toward the place where God's presence was revealed. They journeyed by short stages, for many went on foot. The caravans were constantly receiving accessions, and often became very large before reaching the Holy City.

Nature's gladness awakened joy in the hearts of Israel and gratitude to the Giver of all good. The grand Hebrew psalms were chanted, exalting the glory and majesty of Jehovah. At the sound of the signal trumpet, with the music of cymbals, the chorus of thanksgiving arose, swelled by hundreds of voices:

"I was glad when they said unto me,  
Let us go unto the house of the Lord.  
Our feet are standing  
Within thy gates, O Jerusalem. . . .  
Whither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord, . . .  
To give thanks unto the name of Jehovah. . . .  
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:  
They shall prosper that love thee." Psalm 122:1-6, R.V.

Surmounting the hills in view of the Holy City, they looked with reverent awe upon the throngs of worshipers wending their way to the temple. They saw the smoke of the incense ascending, and as they heard the trumpets of the Levites heralding the sacred service, they caught the inspiration of the hour.

All the houses in Jerusalem were thrown open to the pilgrims, and rooms were furnished free; but this was not sufficient for the vast assembly, and tents were pitched in every available space in the city and upon the surrounding hills.

The first and the seventh day were days of holy convocation, when no servile work was to be performed. On the second day of the feast, the first fruits of the year's harvest were presented before God. Barley was the earliest grain in Palestine, and at the opening of the feast it was beginning to ripen. A sheaf of this grain was waved by the priest before the altar of God, as an acknowledgment that all was His. Not until this ceremony had been performed was the harvest to be gathered.<sup>43</sup>

What was the Feast of Unleavened Bread to remind Israel of?  
Exodus 12:14-20

Leaven takes time to raise the dough that it is mixed with. But the Israelites were preparing to leave Egypt in a hurry and there was not enough time for their dough to rise, so they left the leaven out and baked it similar to a flat pancake or cracker.

When was leaven to be prohibited?  
Leviticus 2:11

What did Jesus use leaven to refer to?  
Matthew 16:6, 11, 12

What did Paul say about leaven?  
1 Corinthians 5:6

What does Paul use leaven as a symbol of?  
1 Corinthians 5:8

What are characteristics of a Christian who is "unleavened?"  
1 Corinthians 5:8

What are we to do with the old leaven of sin in our lives?  
1 Corinthians 5:7

The Unleavened Bread also represents Jesus' life. He had no leaven of sin in Him. His pure life is an example to us. What does Jesus call Himself?  
John 6:35

This is what the Shewbread in the Tabernacle represented. It also was unleavened. It is a symbol of Jesus just as the Unleavened Bread of Passover / Communion is a symbol of His body. Now let's look at the keeping of feast in the New Testament.

What did Paul do in regard to the Holy Festivals?  
Acts 18:20, 21

Acts 20:6

Acts 20:16

It appears that Paul celebrated the Feast of Unleavened Bread with some of his Gentile converts at Philippi and wanted to be at Jerusalem for Pentecost.

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is a symbol of the purifying process that God wants to do in our lives. Since leaven is a symbol of sin and its many manifestations, we need to get the old leaven out of our lives. When we eat the Unleavened Bread at Communion or during the Feast, let us remember to ask God to cleanse our hearts of all sin.