



GOD'S SPRING FESTIVALS—Part 2: Feast of Unleavened Bread

A STUDY GUIDE FOR PARENTS TEACHING THEIR CHILDREN GOD'S WAY

Artist: James Mitchell—Kingston, Jamaica

THE SECOND FESTIVAL ON GOD'S HOLY DAY CALENDAR that immediately follows the Passover is the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This festival is also often called the Days of Unleavened Bread as it goes for seven days. Just like Passover, the Days of Unleavened Bread remind us of events that happened in the past. This festival reminds us of the events in Exodus, when God brought the Children of Israel out of Egypt, yet these special days are meant to teach us some important spiritual lessons as well. What does God want us to learn from this Feast of Unleavened Bread that will help prepare us to be in His family? Wait and see!



This Study Guide is written for the purpose of helping parents teach their children vital Biblical topics in a focused, easy-to-follow format. Each section is not meant to be taught in one lesson, rather the topics are organized so parents can choose specific areas of focus and gear lessons toward the learning styles and ages of their children. Each topic is presented in a straightforward manner with accompanying verses for study.

Each lesson packet includes memory verses, questions for meaningful discussion, and activities (added at the end of the packet). Also, though some things may be labeled as Level 1, 2, or 3, the activities, questions, and scriptures for memorizing can be used to fit the needs and learning levels for children of all ages. Enjoy!

Unleavened Bread—Keeping Sin Out

There is a reason that God made the Feast of Unleavened Bread to come right after Passover on His Holy Day calendar. In fact, Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread are so close on the calendar, that some people combine them and call all the days Passover. We must be sure that we keep these days separately, because God made them each with different and important meanings for His people. What is the meaning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread? Let's see what the Old Testament says about these days.

Unleavened Bread in the Old Testament

Let's look again at the book of Leviticus to see what God commanded the Israelites regarding these Holy Days.

Read Leviticus 23:6-8

What do we find out from this passage about the Days of Unleavened Bread?

Here are some of the things we can learn:

- It begins on the fifteenth day of the same month as Passover
- It last for seven days
- We are commanded to eat unleavened bread for all seven days
- The first day is a holy convocation
- No customary work is to be done on the first day
- An offering made by fire is to be given for seven days
- The seventh day is a holy convocation
- No customary work is to be done on the seventh day

We can learn more about the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the book of Exodus. We find that God commanded the Israelites to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread at the same time when He explained that they would need to keep the Passover. Let's have a look.



Think for a moment:

What is a holy convocation? Why do you think God told the people not to work on the first and last days of the feast?

Read Exodus 12:14-20



Think aloud: *Is there anything in this passage that is different from what we read in Leviticus?*

While these verses give us God's commands on how His people were to keep these days, there is so much more to be found in the Bible about what these days mean. While we know that God told the people to eat bread without leavening, there is more to the story of the Feast of Unleavened Bread!

The Night of Solemn Observance

After the night of the Passover, when the firstborn of the Egyptians were killed, Pharaoh told Moses to get out of Egypt and to take all the people with him. After many years of servitude in Egypt, the Israelites were finally going to be free! They had to hurry to get ready to leave. They quickly packed up their belongings and grabbed their unleavened bread. Before they headed out on their journey, they plundered the Egyptians, which means that the Egyptians gave them gifts of gold and clothing and other precious things. The preparations to leave took mostly all day, but by that evening they were all heading out of Egypt, leaving their old homes, and their slavery behind. It was a night to be remembered! God wanted them (and us) to remember that first night of freedom, so he told the people that it would be a night of solemn observance to be kept in the years to come.

Read Exodus 12:41-42

This is why we continue to keep the Night to Be Observed with a special dinner on the evening which starts the First Day of Unleavened Bread.

Think for a minute:

Why do you think God wants us to remember this night of solemn observance?

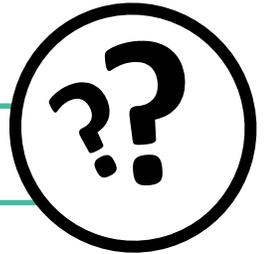


The Feast Begins!

On the First Holy Day of Unleavened bread God led His people out of Egypt. On that day Moses reviewed with them God's instructions for the Feast of Unleavened bread and how they were to keep it. God also showed the people that He was leading them and taking care of them by using a very special method.

Read Exodus 13:3-10, 17-22

Quick check: *When the people were led out of Egypt how did they know where to go?*



The Red Sea

The Bible says that the children of Israel left Egypt with a "high hand", which means they left with boldness. A few days after the Israelites had gone, Pharaoh's heart was hardened. He remembered how they left so boldly, and he became angry. "Why have we done this?" Pharaoh asked his servants. He prepared his army and chariots to go after the Israelites, to destroy them! Thankfully, God was taking care of His people, and He had some amazing miracles to show the Israelites that would teach them and the Egyptians a lesson about the power of God.

Read Exodus 14-15



Think for a minute: *Why do you think Pharaoh sent his army to pursue the children of Israel? What were the amazing miracles that God showed to the people?*

It is a tradition that the Israelites made it through the Red Sea on the Last Day of Unleavened Bread! What meaning can we learn from this? Keep reading to find out!

Other Feasts of Unleavened Bread in the Old Testament

Besides the story of the Exodus, the Feast of Unleavened Bread is mentioned as celebrated in other parts of the Old Testament. Here are a few that you can look up:

- The Israelites before the battle of Jericho (Joshua 5:11)
- During the time of Solomon (2 Chronicles 8:12-13)
- The people in Jerusalem during the reign of King Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 30:21)
- When the people in Jerusalem kept it for an extra seven days! (2 Chronicles 30:23)
- The people who returned from captivity to Jerusalem (Ezra 6:22)

Consider: What is your favorite story about the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the Old Testament?



Unleavened Bread in the New Testament

Like Passover, you can find a few places in the New Testament which talk about this special feast. The New Testament gives us some clues that Jesus kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread. One clue is in the fact that during the time Christ lived on earth, the Feast of Unleavened Bread was sometimes called Passover (Luke 22:1). Knowing that, we find that when Jesus was 12 years old He kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread with His parents, as His family did every year.

Read Luke 2:41-50



Think for a minute: *Jesus' relatives must have also been keeping the Feast of Unleavened Bread which is how Jesus' parents lost track of Him. Do you have relatives who keep the Holy Days? Do you have any special family traditions for how you keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread?*

The Symbols and Meaning for Us Today

What is so special about unleavened bread anyway? What does it mean to be unleavened? If bread is unleavened it means there is no leaven in it. Leaven is a substance which makes the bread rise - it is what makes bread puffy and soft. One of the most common types of leaven is yeast. When a baker puts yeast in his bread dough, because of the chemical reaction of the yeast with the other ingredients, the dough will puff up which makes the bread nice and fluffy when it is baked. Unleavened bread doesn't have any yeast or ingredients that make it puff up, so it ends up being flat and dense.

In the Bible, God uses leaven as a symbol for sin. In the same way that we are to take leaven out of our homes, God wants us to remove sin from our lives. Leaven makes bread puff up, in a similar way that sin puffs us up with pride. Pride makes us think we are better than we are and that we don't need God's help. Pride also makes us think we can make up our own rules and that we don't have to follow God's rules. That is why God gives us the Feast of Unleavened Bread, a time to get leaven out of our homes, to remind us that we must get sin out of our lives so we are not puffed up with pride.

Read 1 Corinthians 5:6-8

Think about this: *What are some of the different leavened products we have to get out of our houses during unleavened bread? How do we get it out?*



Ponder This:

Why do you think God was upset when the people complained that they wanted to go back to Egypt? Do we ever complain about having to follow God?



Leaving Egypt Behind

God commands His people to keep this feast every year. But what does the Exodus have to do with this feast? Why did God work it out so that the Israelites were brought out of slavery on the first day of Unleavened Bread? In a similar way that leaven is a symbol of sin, Egypt also is a symbol of sin. When the Israelites left Egypt, it was like they were leaving their sinful way of life behind. The Egyptians worshiped many different pagan gods. God didn't want the Israelites to be surrounded by sin any longer, so He wanted to bring them out of Egypt so they would not be influenced by the Egyptian society any longer. The Feast of Unleavened Bread reminds us that when we accept Christ as our Savior, our Passover, that we must get sin out of our lives. We are to leave sin behind, just like the Israelites had to leave Egypt behind.

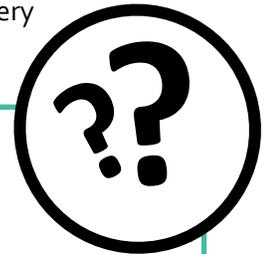
Getting Leaven Out!

Have you ever wondered how we can deleaven our homes before the Feast of Unleavened Bread? God tells His people that not only are we supposed to stop eating leavened bread, we must also completely remove it from our homes.



Read Exodus 12:15

In order to do that we must check our houses carefully to make sure we don't have any leaven or leavened products anywhere in our homes. We get rid of any yeast, or leavening agents for baking, we throw away leavened bread (like the stuff you might use for breakfast toast), and we check every room to make sure there is no leavening anywhere.



Think for a minute: *What are some leavened items you can think of that we would have to remove from our homes before the feast? What are some ways we can be sure the leavening is out of our houses?*

Commanded to Eat

During the Feast of Unleavened Bread, God tells us not to eat leavened bread. But He doesn't stop there. He tells us that we must **eat** unleavened bread every day of the feast. We are supposed to replace the leavened bread (which represents sin) with unleavened bread (which represents obedience to God).

Read Leviticus 23:6

God is telling us that we need to eat it! This means that we get to make sure we eat at least a little bit of unleavened bread every single day of the feast. What a cool command!

What about you? There are so many different kinds of unleavened bread! What kind is your favorite? Just because it doesn't have leaven doesn't mean it can't be tasty! What are your favorite ways to eat it? Maybe with peanut butter, or honey? Or do you like it plain? (If you are looking for some new recipes check out the activities section of this lesson)

The Wave Sheaf

In the book of Leviticus, there is a special ceremony listed among the Holy Days just after the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It is sometimes labeled as "The Feast of Firstfruits" in some Bibles. It is a special ceremony that God commanded the Israelites to do once they got to the land God promised them. It was to happen on the day after the Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Read Leviticus 23:9-14

The priests were to cut a sheaf from the firstfruits of the harvest right and "wave it" before God in the morning after the Sabbath. The sheaf needed to be presented before God. This ceremony has a very special meaning relating to Jesus Christ. When Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead, before He could finish what He had to do on earth He needed to "ascend" to His Father. Ascend means to go up. In other words, He needed to be presented before God. He was presented before God in a similar way that the wave sheaf had been presented, only Jesus Christ went and stood before God's actual throne in Heaven. Jesus Christ became like the firstfruits of the harvest. He was the first One to be resurrected to everlasting life. (If you want to learn more about firstfruits, read our Holy Day lesson called "What is Pentecost?") Since there is no longer a physical priesthood, because Jesus Christ became our High Priest, we no longer perform this ceremony, but we can still learn about and appreciate its special meaning.



Ready for the Next Step?

After the Spring Holy Days when we work hard to get sin out of our lives we have to wait a while before the next step in God's plan--Pentecost. God tells us we can figure out when Pentecost is by counting 50 days from the time of the Wave Sheaf. Why did God tell us to count 50 days, and what is the meaning of Pentecost? You can find out by reading Parts 1 and 2 of our Holy Day Lessons called "What is Pentecost?"



Questions for Meaningful Discussion



Level 1

1. What is customary work? Why do you think God commands His people not to do any customary work on the First and Last Days of Unleavened Bread?
2. What do we do on the other days during the Feast of Unleavened Bread? What are we commanded to do every day during the Feast of Unleavened Bread?
3. Can you name some different products that have leavening? What unleavened items could you use to replace them during the days of unleavened bread?

Level 2

1. Why does the Feast of Unleavened Bread come after Passover?
2. When did the Israelites leave Egypt? How do we remember this special occasion today? Do you have any family traditions for the Night to Be Much Observed?
3. When were the Israelites finally free from Pharaoh and the Egyptians?

Level 3

1. Why do we have to eat unleavened bread? What are some ways we can we replace sin with God's law?
2. Are there any areas of your home which are your responsibility to keep clean? What are some ways you can help deleaven for the Feast?
3. Can you identify any leaven in your life? Come up with some action points that you can use to replace that sin or bad habit with good behavior that would be pleasing to God.

Memory Verses

For the Feast of Unleavened Bread

Level 1

Exodus 12:17 So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance.

Level 2

Exodus 13:6-8 Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the Lord. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters. And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, 'This is done because of what the Lord did for me when I came up from Egypt.'

Level 3

1 Corinthians 5:6-8 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Activities

For the Feast of Unleavened Bread

Activity: Make your own unleavened bread!

This activity is meant to help get kids involved in the process of making unleavened bread for the Holy Days. There are lots of different (and tasty) ways to make unleavened bread. God doesn't say we can't make it delicious!

Related Bible Verses: Exodus 12:20, 34; 13:7-10

Recipe

Supplies Needed:

- Mixing bowl
- Pastry blender or fork
- Rolling pin
- table knife
- Measuring cups
- Baking sheet
- Spatula
- Cooling rack
- Oven mitts

Ingredients:

- 1 cup flour
- ¼ c softened butter
- ¼ c water
- Pinch of salt

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.
2. In a mixing bowl, combine flour, butter, and salt with a pastry blender (or fork) until reaches a crumb-like consistency
3. Add water and mix until dough forms into a ball.
4. Sprinkle some flour onto a flat surface. Roll out the dough on the flour surface. Try to make it an even thickness (approx. 1/8"-1/4" thick depending on how crispy you want it to be). (Optional: Once the dough is rolled out, you can sprinkle it with add-ins of your choice. See "Variations" below for some yummy ideas).
5. Using the table knife (or a pizza cutter), cut out squares or triangles from your dough.
6. Using your spatula, move pieces onto the baking sheet. The pieces can be close together, but make sure none of them overlap.
7. Bake for 10-15 min until lightly browned.
8. Move pieces of unleavened bread to cooling rack. Once cool, have a taste your homemade unleavened bread. Enjoy!

Variations

- Before baking, sprinkle on any of the following: flax seeds, sesame seeds, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, grated parmesan cheese, grated asiago cheese, cracked pepper, poppy seeds, rosemary, onion flakes
- Make it sweet: Add some honey and cinnamon (to desired taste) to the dough before adding the water.