

OT Feasts: Part 3 of 8; Ex. 12 & 13; Lev. 23:6-8; Deut. 16

How Did the 2nd OT Feast of Unleavened Bread Point Ahead to Jesus' First Coming?

Third Wednesday of Lent, March 26, 2014 at 11 AM & 7 PM

Wednesday Services during Lent at 11 & 7; Meals at 12 & 6

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: As we continue our series on the OT feasts, our focus today is on the **Second** of the spring feasts which is **Unleavened Bread**. It is the *first of three feasts* in which all men were required to appear before the LORD ([Deut. 16:16](#)). The LORD appointed it as a way for the people to remember **God's rescue from *PHYSICAL slavery***, but especially as a way for them to anticipate **God's rescue from *SPIRITUAL slavery*** through *Jesus!*

1. The Relationship between Passover and Unleavened

Bread: You might recall from the first sermon in this series that the feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread occurred back-to-back, with one flowing into the other; it's almost as if they are one, *even though they are two*. The LORD said to Moses: ⁵ "The LORD's Passover begins at twilight on the **fourteenth day** of the first month. ⁶ On the **fifteenth day** of that month the LORD's Feast of Unleavened Bread begins; for seven days you must eat bread made without yeast...." ([Lev 23:5-6 NIV](#)) Here's another way to distinguish from the two: "While the Passover commemorated the dreadful night of judgment and deliverance, the Feast of Unleavened Bread...reminded...of the Exodus itself..." (Kretzmann, OT I: 132) For those who continue to celebrate the spring feasts today, Passover, "Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits have all been incorporated into the celebration of Passover, and reference to Passover means all three feasts [*Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits*]." ¹

¹ [Feasts of the Bible](#) (Torrance, CA: Rose Publishing, 2004, 2011).

2. **God's Rescue from PHYSICAL Slavery:** The LORD said to Moses: ¹⁵ “For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast [or leaven]. On the first day remove the yeast from your houses, for whoever eats anything with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh must be cut off from Israel. ¹⁶ On the first day hold a sacred assembly, and another one on the seventh day. Do no work at all on these days, except to prepare food for everyone to eat... ¹⁷ Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come.” (Ex. 12:15-17 NIV)

a. Why no leaven?

- i. ^{NIV} **Exodus 13:3** Moses said to the people... ⁷ “Eat **unleavened bread** during those seven days... ⁸ On that day tell your son, ‘I do this because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt [*He freed me from physical slavery*].’ ⁹ This observance will be for you like a sign on your hand and a reminder on your forehead that the law of the LORD is to be on your lips...” // Parents are called to learn, *then to teach their children*. The lack of leaven was like an **object lesson**. Imagine eating leavened bread all year, *except for those seven days*; that striking difference helped reinforce the remembrance of the LORD’s great rescue from slavery! (Parents, please use ♦your child’s baptismal birthday and ♦every significant day in the church year to teach of God’s great blessings!)
- ii. ^{NIV} **Deuteronomy 16:3** “Do not eat [*the Passover lamb*] 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.” // So which kind of bread can be made more quickly –

leavened or unleavened? Yes, unleavened; *no time is needed for the bread to rise.* So the eating of unleavened bread was a reminder of their affliction and hasty departure!

iii. In the NT Jesus used the word “leaven” to describe sin; He said: “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.” (Luke 12:1 ESV) Instead, the Lord calls us to be **genuine from the inside out!**

- b. What did it mean to be “cut off from Israel”? It meant to be *cut off from the benefits of being God’s forgiven children.*² When the LORD said to do it **or** be cut off, *not doing it was an expression of unbelief!* Even today people express their unbelief by ☹refusing to hear God’s Word, ☹indulging in *temporal things* while ignoring *eternal things*, and ☹living as if *Jesus is not God* and *His ultimate sacrifice means nothing!*
- c. What was a “sacred assembly”? “A call to the congregation by trumpet (Num. 10:2) to worship the Lord.” (TLSB, 114) So they gathered on each Sabbath day, *but also on other special days*—like the first and last days of the feast of Unleavened Bread! We are similar—Sundays + Holy Thursday, Good Friday, etc.

3. **God’s Rescue from SPIRITUAL Slavery (Sin) Through Jesus:**

- a. Why did the Son of God become like us? God told us: ¹⁴ *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil--* ¹⁵ *and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*” (Heb. 2 NIV) Physical

² Examples: For refusing circumcision at that time (Gen. 17:14); for working on the Sabbath (Ex. 31:14); for offering a sacrifice at a non-appointed location (Ex. 17:3-4).

slavery must be very difficult, *but spiritual slavery is worse!* Physical is temporary; *spiritual is eternal!* Therefore, with *the Father's great love* and *the Son's perfect obedience*, Jesus defeated the devil and won freedom for all who receive the benefits of His work!

- b. How do we live in spiritual freedom? *By no longer being controlled by sin!* A custom practiced by some Jewish families in preparation for the Feast of Unleavened Bread is called Bedikat Chametz⁴: “The father...gives each child a candle, and they go about their home looking for the leavened crumbs that have been placed in various locations... When the children see a crumb, they call out to their father. He comes and gently brushes the crumb onto the wooden spoon with the feather and carries the crumb to a furnace to be burned. The picture... illustrates that if we walk in the light of God’s Word, He shows us our sin. When we call out to our heavenly Father, He gently takes away our sin. The wooden spoon is symbolic of the...cross of Christ.”⁴
- c. Are we celebrating the feast of Unleavened Bread as a “lasting ordinance”? Last week we saw how the *OT Feast of Passover* has become the *NT celebration of the Lord’s Supper*. Today, let us also see our celebration of *the Supper* as our celebration of *the OT Feast of Unleavened Bread*.

Conclusion: Now, knowing that *through Jesus* we are †free from sin, †righteous in God’s sight, and †certain of eternal life, let us live in spiritual freedom—*unto God’s glory!* And all God’s people said: **Amen!** (Next Wednesday: The OT Feast of Firstfruits!)

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⁴ http://www.hebrew4christians.com/Holidays/Spring_Holidays/Pesach/Chametz/chametz.html

⁴ Michael Norten, Unlocking the Secrets of the Feasts (Bloomington, IN: West Bow Press, 2012), 28-29.