



FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day shall be a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. —Leviticus 23:6-8

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. —1 Corinthians 5:6-8

OBJECTIVE

To teach that the Festival of Unleavened Bread depicts removing sin from one's life and replacing it with righteousness.

Note to parents

We encourage you to read through this material with your children to provide an overview of the meaning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread and what it pictures. Then choose appropriate materials from the supplemental pages that you feel will be helpful in teaching and reinforcing the meaning of this festival.

THE MEANING OF THE FESTIVAL

The seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread contains the first and second annual Sabbaths in God's redemptive plan for humanity. Often called the Days of Unleavened Bread, this festival follows Passover and focuses our attention on our personal role and responsibility in pursuing God's righteousness. Upon acknowledging and accepting Jesus Christ's sacrifice as the complete covering for our past sins, we must consciously and actively dedicate ourselves to obeying God and submitting to His will. We are to strive to put sin out and righteousness in.





For these seven days each year, leaven is symbolic of sin—the breaking of God’s perfect laws.

God established a special symbolism for the Feast of Unleavened Bread that concretely demonstrates the pervasiveness of sin and its spiritual destructiveness. For these seven days each year, leaven is symbolic of sin—the breaking of God’s perfect laws. Because leavening permeates and inflates, it provides a powerful parallel to sin.

To reinforce this concept for our benefit, God commands the removal of and abstinence from all leavened foods during this weeklong festival. He emphasizes the necessity of our focused commitment to put away our sins, which are covered under the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, our Passover, and to “live for righteousness” (1 Peter 2:24) by keeping God’s law.

Through adhering to God’s instruction to eat unleavened bread—symbolic of sincerity and truth (1 Corinthians 5:8)—throughout these seven days, we learn how to overcome sin and maintain a righteous life, growing toward spiritual maturity. We must replace our selfish reasoning, sinful tendencies, and human weaknesses with something superior—the unleavened Word of God—and allow God’s Spirit to produce holy, righteous character in us. By eating physical unleavened bread, we are reminded of the urgent spiritual need to overcome and fervently seek God’s righteousness. Looking to Christ, we must strive with all our effort to prevent sin from regaining a foothold in our lives.

Just as Pharaoh held the children of Israel in bondage, Satan holds us captive.

Preserved as an example, ancient Israel’s exodus from slavery in Egypt characterizes our departure from being slaves of sin. Just as Pharaoh held the children of Israel in bondage, Satan holds us captive. Just as God delivered Israel out of Egypt never to return, God delivers us from our sinful life and instructs us never to return. Knowing that God mercifully rescued us from the bondage that leads to death, we are responsible to do our part to forsake our past sins which have been covered by the atoning sacrifice of Christ.



We rejoice because God has provided the righteousness of His law and truth to shape us into His character—His image.

The Days of Unleavened Bread are a time of great rejoicing! We rejoice because God has sent the Redeemer, Jesus Christ, to rescue us from the powerful grip of Satan and sin. We rejoice because we know what sin is and, with God’s help, how to put it out. We rejoice because God has provided the righteousness of His law and truth to shape us into His character—His image. We rejoice because God’s perfect plan points us forward to Pentecost and the source of strength necessary for obedience—His Holy Spirit.



SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION POINTS

You can use the following guided discussion topics to stimulate dialogue about the Feast of Unleavened Bread. When reading and discussing these concepts, be mindful of the maturity level of your children. Adjust the discussion based on their level of personal development. Young children will not necessarily need all of this information during their early years.

Explain that all seven days are set apart as the Feast of Unleavened Bread but only two are holy days.

Feast of Unleavened Bread observance commanded

Fifteenth day of the first month (Leviticus 23:5-8; Numbers 28:16-18, 25)

Explain the difference between the calendar we use today and the biblical calendar.

Emphasize that these are the “feasts of the LORD” (Leviticus 23:4). God has set aside special times for humanity to learn about Him and His plan.

Explain that the Feast of Unleavened Bread is a seven-day festival. The first and seventh days are holy days.

Explain that a holy day is an annual Sabbath day: rather than work, we rest, attend church services, rejoice, and so on.

Explain and define *convocation*: “a calling together; a group of people formally assembled for a special purpose.” Since this is a holy convocation under God’s authority, our presence is commanded.

Explain that all seven days are set apart as the Feast of Unleavened Bread but only two are holy days. Compare and contrast how we observe the two holy days during this week with the other five days, which are not holy days. We are commanded to observe all seven days of this feast. How do you observe a day that is not holy? What will you be talking about? What will you be thinking about?

Share special memories from past observances of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Discuss that Israel was to present a special offering to God on a holy day and how we give an offering in a different way today (Deuteronomy 16:16-17).

Review the previous festival and its meaning:

Passover, a memorial of Christ’s sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins





An everlasting ordinance (Exodus 12:15-20)

Emphasize that God established and commanded the observance of the Feast of Unleavened Bread prior to Israel's departure from Egypt (Exodus 12:19; 13:3).

Ask, How long were these days to be observed? (See Exodus 12:17, 41-42.) How long is forever?

Remember, and teach your children (Exodus 13:3-10)

Share the story of how your family learned about God's holy days.

Share special memories from past observances of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Invite other members of the Church to share their stories of God's deliverance from "Egypt" (their conversion stories).

Plan special activities during this week to draw attention to the blessings that come from obedience to God's laws.

Work with your child to read labels and search for leavening.

Leavening: What is it? Why does it have to be removed?

"A little leaven leavens the whole lump" (Galatians 5:9)

Define physical leavening. Explain that leavening is any substance used to cause dough to rise through fermentation. Yeast, baking soda and baking powder are the three most common leavening agents.

Discuss how physical leaven "spreads" throughout the product being leavened.

Work with your child to read labels and search for leavening.



Explain that all leaven must be removed and disposed of before sunset on the first day of the feast.

Removing physical leavening (Exodus 12:15, 19-20; 13:7)

Explain that all leavening (source or product) is to be removed from our homes and property prior to the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Explain that we are to avoid eating any leavened products for seven days.



Include your children in the removal of leavening from the family home.

Dispel the myth that we keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread because the Israelites did not have time to leaven their bread. God commanded Israel's observance of the Feast of Unleavened Bread prior to their departure from Egypt ([Exodus 12:19; 13:3](#)).

Explain that all leaven must be removed and disposed of before sunset on the first day of the feast.

Include your children in the removal of leavening from the family home.

Share stories when you failed in removing all the leavening from your dwelling. Compare those examples to removing sin from our lives. Discuss God's mercy and willingness to forgive ([Psalm 86:3-5](#)).



Explain and define repentance: “genuine sorrow that leads to change.”

“Sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4, KJV)

Explain and define *sin*: “the breaking of God’s law.” Discuss that all have sinned and broken God’s law ([Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23](#)).

Explain that sin is sin, that no one sin is better or worse than another. Although physical consequences may vary, the ultimate spiritual consequence of all sin is the same—eternal death.

Explain and define *repentance*: “genuine sorrow that leads to change” ([Psalm 38:18; Isaiah 66:2; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Hebrews 10:26; 1 John 1:6-10](#)).

Explain that Christ’s sacrifice allows us the privilege of seeking repentance ([Acts 2:38; Romans 6:23](#)).

Leaven of the Pharisees (Matthew 16:6, 11-12; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1)

Discuss the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees: hypocrisy and false teaching ([Matthew 23:14-30; Mark 7:5-9; Luke 11:39-44](#)).

Explain and define *hypocrisy*. See [Luke 18:11-14](#) for a good example. Human nature rationalizes sins and lowers God’s standards.

Compare physical leavening to spiritual leavening.



Discuss how sin “spreads,” just like physical leaven.

“Purge out the old leaven” (1 Corinthians 5:6-8)

Discuss how sin “spreads,” just like physical leaven.

Explain that Paul defines the behavior and attitude necessary for overcoming sin and living a life of righteousness ([Colossians 3:1-17](#)).

Contrast spiritual leavening—malice and wickedness—with spiritual unleavened bread—sincerity and truth ([Joshua 24:14](#); [1 Corinthians 5:8](#)).

Compare the removal of physical leavening from our homes with the removal of spiritual leavening from our lives.

Emphasize that only by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ can we be redeemed from our sins. Without Passover (Christ’s sacrifice), we are unable to partake of unleavened bread (righteousness).



Discuss that Satan has confused the world into believing right is wrong and wrong is right.

Keep the Commandments (Matthew 19:16-17)

Discuss that Satan has confused the world into believing right is wrong and wrong is right ([2 Corinthians 4:3-4](#)).

Emphasize that by keeping God’s Commandments and holy days we choose to live differently than the world around us. Obedience to God’s laws demonstrates our love for Him ([1 John 2:3-6](#); [5:1-5](#)).

Discuss that eating unleavened bread is a sign of our obedience to God ([Exodus 13:7-9](#)). When we eat unleavened bread, we are demonstrating our desire to obey God and to submit to His will in our lives.

Explain that we must dedicate ourselves to continually overcoming sin and growing in righteousness ([Matthew 5:48](#); [Romans 12:2](#); [2 Timothy 2:19](#)).

The Night to be Much Observed

God announces His plan (Genesis 15:12-21)

Explain that God already had established the exact day of the Israelites’ deliverance.

Read [Exodus 12:41-42](#), [51](#). Emphasize the words “on that very same day” ([verse 51](#)). Explain that God has a plan and He executes it perfectly and precisely ([Galatians 3:15-18](#)).



God establishes a covenant with Abraham (Genesis 17:1-4, 8-11)

Emphasize that God was and always is faithful to His promises (Exodus 2:24-25; 3:7-8; 6:5-8).

Review the main events that occurred from the establishing of this covenant to Israel's departure from Egypt (Acts 7:6-36).

Emphasize that this evening signifies our freedom from the bondage of sin.



Israel leaves Egypt (Exodus 12:41-42, 51)

Emphasize that God instructs that this night is to be held in remembrance (Exodus 13:3).

Emphasize that this evening signifies our freedom from the bondage of sin (Deuteronomy 6:20-25).

Discuss how this evening begins the Feast of Unleavened Bread and marks the beginning of leaving sin behind and going forward in obedience.

Fifteenth day of the first month (Numbers 33:3)

Clarify the difference between Passover evening and this evening: two separate evenings, two separate festivals, and two separate meanings.

Explain that Israel left Egypt at the sunset ending the fourteenth day and beginning the fifteenth day of the first month. Remember God established the definition of a day as sunset to sunset (Genesis 1:5; Leviticus 23:32).

Explain that the unleavened bread served as a reminder to Israel of their pain and suffering as slaves in Egypt.

“Bread of affliction” (Deuteronomy 16:3)

Explain that the unleavened bread served as a reminder to Israel of their pain and suffering as slaves in Egypt (Exodus 1:11-14; 2:23).

God's favor upon the Israelites (Exodus 12:35-36; Numbers 33:3)

Discuss how the Israelites left Egypt as conquerors, not slaves (Exodus 3:21-22; Psalm 105:37).

Discuss how the Egyptians simply allowed the Israelites to leave instead of falling on them in vengeance.



We are unable to escape our sinful lives without God's miraculous intervention and help.

“By strength of hand” (Exodus 13:3, 9, 14, 16)

Explain that God's strong hand (His powerful intervention) was the source of Israel's deliverance.

Emphasize that God willingly extends His strong hand to uphold and deliver us from Satan and his influence. We are unable to escape our sinful lives without God's miraculous intervention and help.

This evening is a time to celebrate God guarding, keeping, and protecting His people generation after generation.



Pillar of fire and cloud (Exodus 13:21-22; 14:19-20)

Explain how God continually kept watch over the Israelites.

Discuss how God watched over them the entire 40 years in the wilderness (Exodus 40:36-38). Israel had visible evidence of God's presence.

Discuss God's same careful watch that He provides for His people today. When has God demonstrated His presence to your family?

Emphasize that this evening is a time to celebrate God guarding, keeping, and protecting His people generation after generation.

A life of sin is a life of bondage. Without the help of God's Holy Spirit, we remain in bondage to sin.

Symbolism of ancient Israel's deliverance

Ancient Israel is an example (Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:1-11)

Emphasize that the accounts of ancient Israel are recorded and preserved for our benefit today. Through Israel's example, we learn the importance of obedience.

Explain that Israel's example remains to teach us the consequences of a life of sin. A life of sin is a life of bondage. Without the help of God's Holy Spirit, we remain in bondage to sin.

Review the symbolism associated with the Feast of Unleavened Bread.



Explain that Pharaoh is symbolic of Satan who will not let anyone go unless God intervenes.



Moses renounced Egypt (Hebrews 11:24-29)

Explain that living in Egypt is symbolic of living in sin.

Compare the burden of the Israelites' daily life to that of living in sin.

Explain that the pleasures of sin are deceitful and short-term. Discuss the long-term consequences that a sinful life brings.

Pharaoh's harshness (Exodus 1:8-22)

Explain that Pharaoh is symbolic of Satan.

Emphasize that Satan will not let anyone go unless God intervenes. Only God can release us from the bondage of sin and rescue us from Satan ([Exodus 3:19-20](#); [13:3, 9, 14, 16](#); [1 Corinthians 10:13](#); [2 Peter 2:9](#)).

God sends Moses (Exodus 3:15-17)

Explain that Moses is symbolic of Jesus Christ, the Deliverer ([Deuteronomy 18:15](#)).

Discuss that God alone offers salvation ([Exodus 14:13-14, 30-31](#); [Romans 6:23](#)).

Explain that the only way to obtain eternal life is through following Jesus Christ. Our exodus from a sinful life is through the merciful sacrifice of Jesus Christ ([John 14:6](#); [Romans 6:16-18, 22-23](#); [2 Timothy 2:19](#)).

We are to leave all sin behind and follow Christ's perfect example.

Israel leaves Egypt (Exodus 6:5-7; 12:41-42; 13:14-16)

Explain that the exodus is symbolic of our deliverance from sin through Christ's sacrifice.

Emphasize that when Israel left Egypt, they left all leavening behind. Likewise we are to leave all sin behind and follow Christ's perfect example.

Explain how sin enslaves ([Romans 6:16](#)).

Explain that God commands us to never forget this decisive, divine deliverance. Throughout the remainder of Scripture, the phrase *out of Egypt* is used extensively (a [blueletterbible.org](#) search for this phrase produces well over 100 results, for example). God clearly wants us to remember how He rescues us from Satan. We must not return to our past sins.



Discuss the importance of looking to and trusting in Christ to lead us, even if we sometimes don't understand why He is leading us in a certain direction.

Explain that God did not guide Israel along the most direct route to the Promised Land (Exodus 13:17-18; 14:1-4). Discuss the importance of looking to and trusting in Christ to lead us, even if we sometimes don't understand *why* He is leading us in a certain direction (Hebrews 12:2).

Pharaoh pursues Israel (Exodus 14)

Explain how Pharaoh's pursuit of Israel symbolizes Satan's pursuit of us today (John 17:15; 1 Peter 5:8).

Discuss how Satan influences us to return to a life of sin (Romans 6:16; 2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 2:15-16).

Discuss that trusting in and relying on God is our only means of "escaping from Egypt"—overcoming sin, in other words (Exodus 14:13-31; 1 Corinthians 10:13). We are powerless to overcome sin on our own; we need God's generous, merciful help.

Explain that the Red Sea is symbolic of baptism (1 Corinthians 10:1-4).

Emphasize that the dividing of the water was a miracle performed by the hand of God.

We are not only to avoid leavened bread (sin), we are also to put in unleavened bread (righteousness).



"Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread" (Exodus 12:15)

Explain that unleavened bread is symbolic of righteousness. Unleavened bread is always associated with that which is holy, pure, and clean.

Explain that for these seven days, leavened bread is symbolic of sin.

Explain that these seven days symbolize the need to completely forsake sin. We are not only to avoid leavened bread (sin), we are also to put in unleavened bread (righteousness).



The Promised Land (Exodus 3:8; 6:8)

Explain that the Promised Land is symbolic of the Kingdom of God (Exodus 15:17).

Explain that the Promised Land represents rest—the rest associated with the weekly Sabbath and the rest to come when the Kingdom of God is established on earth (Jeremiah 23:7-8; Hebrews 4:1-9).

Emphasize that God remained faithful to His promise to Abraham in giving the physical Promised Land to his descendants (Psalm 105).

Did Jesus Christ and the apostles observe the Festival of Unleavened Bread?

“According to the custom of the Feast” (Luke 2:41-43, 46-47)

Explain that **verse 41** uses the word *Passover* to refer to the Passover *and* Feast of Unleavened Bread. Notice **verse 43**: “When they had finished the days,” meaning the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Explain that Jesus’ mother (Mary) and stepfather (Joseph) traveled to Jerusalem every year to observe the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It was customary for the Jewish people to annually observe these days in Jerusalem. This particular account records that Jesus Christ was twelve years old.

Explain that Jesus Christ continued to travel to Jerusalem, just as He did as a child, to observe the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Passover was near (John 2:13, 23)

Explain that the two festivals of Passover and Unleavened Bread were often spoken of or referred to jointly as “Passover” because they follow one after another (much as we might refer to “the spring holy day season”).

Explain that Jesus Christ continued to travel to Jerusalem, just as He did as a child, to observe the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Jesus Christ’s enemies expected Him at Jerusalem (Mark 14:1-2)

Ask, Why did they expect Christ to be in Jerusalem observing the holy days? (Answer: Jesus Christ faithfully observed all of God’s commanded festivals.)

During the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Acts 12:1-4)

If you use the King James translation, explain that “Easter” is mistranslated and should be “Passover.”

Explain that the Passover season refers to the entire eight days spanning the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.



Explain that the murder of James and the imprisonment of Peter occurred during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Emphasize that the disciples continued to keep the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread after Christ's death. The apostles and the early Church remained faithful to the teachings of the Scriptures and Christ ([Matthew 28:18-20](#); [1 Peter 2:21](#)).

After the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Acts 20:6)

Explain that the apostle Paul referenced the Feast of Unleavened Bread because faithful followers of Christ were keeping the festival. He waited to sail until the conclusion of the festival because he was observing the days with the Church. Christ did not abolish the observance of the seven annual festivals.

“Let us keep the feast” (1 Corinthians 5:6-8)

Explain that Paul was exhorting the Church to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. He would not have done so if Christ had abolished observing the holy days ([1 Corinthians 11:1](#); [14:37](#)). Why would the early Church keep the Passover, but not the Feast of Unleavened Bread?

Emphasize that observing God's holy days is necessary to properly serve, worship, and honor Him.

Stories related to the Festival of Unleavened Bread

Lot's wife and the consequences of not completing forsaking sin, in Genesis 19: Lot and his family were warned to not look back on Sodom (their past life). Lot's wife was unwilling to forsake her life of sin and turn to a life of righteousness.

King Hezekiah restores God's festivals in 2 Chronicles 29-30: Leading Judah back to serving and worshipping God, Hezekiah invited all of Israel to come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. When the festival concluded, an additional seven days of worship and celebration were observed. Great joy abounded throughout Jerusalem, “and their prayer came up to His holy dwelling place, to heaven” ([2 Chronicles 30:27](#)).

King Josiah's restoration of the observance of the annual holy days in 2 Kings 22; 23:1-3, 21-23 and 2 Chronicles 34-35: In the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, a copy of the Book of the Law was found during the restoration of the temple. Hearing the warnings of God read aloud, Josiah repented and led Judah in a return to God. So fervent was Josiah's restoration that “none of the kings of Israel had kept such a Passover as Josiah kept, with the priests and the Levites, all Judah and Israel who were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem” ([2 Chronicles 35:18](#)).

The rebuilding of the temple by the decree of Cyrus, king of Persia, in Ezra 6: Cyrus released the exiled Jews to their homeland and supplied the necessary resources for the rebuilding of the temple. Under the direction of Haggai and Zechariah, the temple was completed after four years, and Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were observed with great joy.

Memory Verse

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.
—1 Corinthians 5:8