



PARASHAT
BESHALACH
פרשת בשלח

Exodus 13:17-17:16

by
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& his kids

Note to the adult teacher: It will be necessary for you to give the scriptural context and background for each of the points listed below.

Great Discoveries in This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion)

- 13:17 The Route to the Promised Land
- 14:1 Pharaoh Hardens His Heart One Last Time
- 14:9 Israel Panics in the Face of the Egyptian Army
- 14:13 YHVH Reassures His People
- 14:21 The Parting of the Red Sea
- 14:23 The Water Crashes Down Upon the Egyptian Army
- 14:30 The Salvation of Israel From Their Enemies
- 15:1 A Song of Praise
- 15:20 Miriam and the Women Sing
- 15:23 Israel Tests YHVH at the Waters of Marah
- 16:4 The Miracle of the Manna
- 16:22 The Sixth Day: Preparation for the Sabbath
- 17:2 Israel Complains Again: Water From the Rock
- 17:8 The First Battle in the Wilderness Against Amalek

Exploring This Week's Parashah

1 The Feast of Unleavened Bread

Last week we studied about the Passover (Exodus 11:14). We learned that Passover/Unleavened Bread is the first of seven feasts or divine appointments that YHVH's people get to celebrate each year. Christians have **two** main non-biblical holidays each year: Christmas and Easter. Those who have returned to the Hebrew roots of the Christian faith have **seven** holidays (or holy days), and two of them—the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Feast of Tabernacles—last for seven days! Ask any kid in the group, and that sounds like a good deal

to them. You give up two non-biblical Christian holidays that have pagan origins and aspects and you get in return seven holidays that have come from the Bible!

Let's now take a look at the Feast of Unleavened Bread that follows immediately after Passover.

▲ (a) When was the Passover lamb to be killed? (Read Exodus 12:6.)

When our Bibles say evening or twilight, the Hebrew literally means that the lamb was to be killed "between the evenings"—that is, as the day of Passover was ending and the next day was beginning. (Remember that biblical days begin in the evening with the setting of the sun—not at midnight, see Gen 4:5.)

▲ (b) When was the Passover lamb to be eaten? (Look at Exodus 12:8.) How was the lamb to be cooked and what was to be eaten with the lamb? (Read the same verse.) What was really going on here? What do we call it when we roast meat over a fire? Do you like meat that your dad cooks over a grill? In reality, YHVH was commanding the Israelites to have a "holy barbecued meal."



▲ (c) On what day of the month on YHVH's biblical calendar does the Feast of Unleavened Bread fall? (Read Leviticus 23:6.) On which day is Passover? (Note Leviticus 23:5.) Now if Passover is at the end of the day, and the Israelites were eating the Passover lamb at the beginning of the next day, then when were they having their meal? It was on the first day of what?

▲ (d) What is unleavened bread? List some examples of different types of unleavened bread. For how long is it to be eaten? (Look at Exodus 12:15, 18-19.)



▲ (e) How did YHVH command his people to prepare their homes for the Feast of Unleavened Bread? (Read Exodus 12:15, 19.) Ever hear of spring cleaning? Does it feel good to give your room and home a good cleaning? It's a lot of work, but how do you feel afterwards?

▲ (f) What were the Israelites to be doing during the seven days of Unleavened Bread? (See Exodus 12:15.)

▲ (g) What were the Israelites to do on the first and seventh or last day of Unleavened Bread? (Read Exodus 12:16.) This day was to be a holy (set-apart) convocation or assembly. It is the Hebrew word *miqra kodesh*, which means "a calling together of YHVH's people for a special meeting." What were they to do at this special meeting? Obviously, YHVH's leaders would teach them about the meaning and purpose of the day. (Read Exodus 12:14.)

▲ (h) YHVH called the day a memorial and a feast. For how long was this feast to be kept? (Read Exodus 12:14, 24.)

▲ (i) Were YHVH's people keeping Unleavened Bread during the time of the apostles? (See Matthew 26:17; Mark 14:12; Luke 22:1; and Acts 12:3; 20:6. In 1 Corinthians 5:8 Paul urges believers to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread.)



▲ (j) The Hebrew name for the Feast of Unleavened Bread is Hag HaMatzot and literally means "Feast of the Unleavened Bread." You probably know what unleavened bread is—it is bread that has no leavening in it to make it rise. Most bread has yeast in it to make it light and fluffy. Have you ever eaten bread that someone forgot to put yeast or baking powder in it to make it rise? What was it like? It was probably more like a brick than bread! But there are crackers that one can eat that are unleavened bread, as well. Rye crisp and matzah is unleavened bread, as are crepes and tacos. So it's not as bad as it sounds!

▲ (k) Now let's look at the word "feast" in Feast of Unleavened Bread. When you think of a feast, what do you think of? A fun time of celebration, maybe? Well, that's exactly what the Hebrew word chag (feast) means. It literally means a time to celebrate and to dance! Why do you suppose YHVH wanted his people to celebrate by dancing on the Feast of Unleavened Bread? What did the Israelites have to celebrate about? What incredible things happened on the night to be much observed (Exodus 12:42)? (Read Exodus 12:17, 23-42; 13:3-10.)

▲ (l) Imagine being a slave in a foreign land for many years. Imagine that your captors were cruel and made you work every day in the hot sun. They gave you no money and little food. Imagine that if you didn't work they whipped you. Imagine that every time a boy was born into your family, these slave masters killed him. How would you feel if suddenly your enemy was destroyed and you were given total freedom along with great riches of gold and silver (Exodus 12:35)? How would you feel? Would you feel like singing and dancing too?

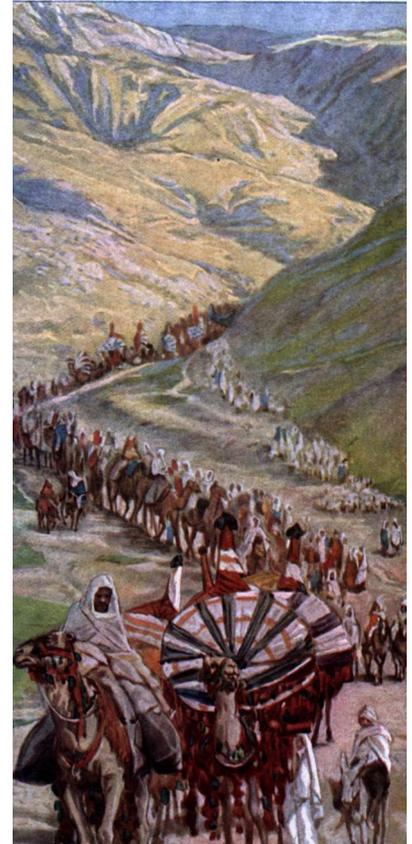
▲ (m) The Children of Israel left Egypt on the first day of Feast of Unleavened Bread. But who was leading them? Where did he lead them to? (Read Exodus 13:17-22.)

Pharaoh and the Egyptians had a pretty good thing going with all that free labor the Israelites had provided them for so long to build their pyramids, monuments, palaces and great cities. They weren't about to let Israel go without a fight.

▲ (n) What did Pharaoh decide to do? (See Exodus 14:1-9.) Were the Israelites afraid? (Read Exodus 13:10.) What did Moses tell the people? (Look at Exodus 14:13-14.) How did YHVH deliver the Israelites? (Read the rest of chapter 13.)

▲ (o) What was the Israelites' response as a result of their great victory? (Read Exodus 15:1-21.)

Remember how we learned that the Feast of Unleavened Bread was a time to celebrate? Though the Scriptures do not specifically say this, many Jewish Bible scholars believe that YHVH lead the Israelites through the Red Sea on the last day of Unleavened Bread, which was a high or special Sabbath day. It could fall on any day of the week including the seventh day or weekly Sabbath. The seventh day of this feast is to be a day of great celebration. This is exactly what the Israelites did after crossing the Red Sea in Exodus 15.



2 The Spiritual Meaning of Feast of Unleavened Bread

The Israelites left Egypt on the first day of the seven-day long Feast of Unleavened Bread. It was pretty easy to leave Egypt, once YHVH opened the door for them to escape. But once Israel was out of Egypt, they had to "get Egypt out of them."

As part of their instructions to keep the Passover, YHVH instructed them to put all leavening out of their homes in time for the Passover meal, and for the following seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Exodus 12:8,15). This was a picture of putting the sin of Egypt (a symbol of the world) out of our lives.

After the Passover meal, they had to prepare to leave Egypt very early the next morning. You see, early every morning, the Israelites had to make fresh bread so that they would have food for that day. Well, in their haste to get out of Egypt, they had to take their unleavened dough with them and bake it "on the road."

▲ (p) Read about this in Exodus 12:29-34, 37-39.

This is wonderful spiritual picture of leaving sin behind in Egypt. In the Bible, leavening is a picture of sin.

▲ (q) Read Matthew 16:11,12; Mark 8:12; Luke 12:1; 1 Corinthians 5:1,6-9.

These verses show us that Yeshua and Paul viewed leavening as a symbol of sin, pride, and unbiblical teachings. Elsewhere, Scripture refers to Yeshua as the spiritual Bread of Life that we are to eat if we are to have spiritual life and live forever.

▲ (r) Read John 6:32-58.

Yeshua is that spiritual Bread of Life, and he is the Word of Elohim (John 1:1-4,14). This means that the Word of Elohim—the Bible—is the Bread of Life that we must study and obey if we are to be like Yeshua and to live a life without sin.

So when the Israelites left Egypt, they left the leavening—a picture of sin—behind them and ate unleavened bread that contained no leavening. They had no leavening with them at all.

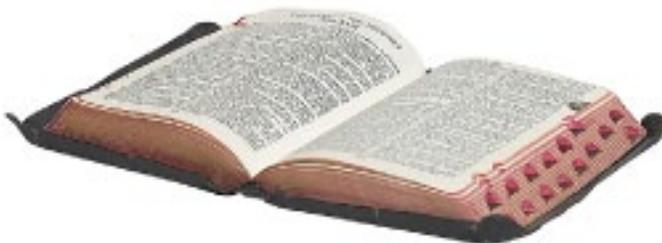
When we leave the world (spiritual Egypt) and start to follow Yeshua, we must leave the sin behind us and start obeying YHVH's Word or Torah, which are his instructions in righteousness that teach us how to live sin-free. Remember, to sin is to break YHVH's laws, the Torah (1 John 3:4), and when we follow YHVH we have to stop sinning and follow his commandments.

Israel had been enslaved in Egypt for generations. They acted like Egyptians, looked like them, thought like them, dressed and ate like them and had the same values and beliefs. But now that YHVH had delivered Israel from Egypt, it was time to leave that pagan nation along with all of its ungodly ways. Israel had to become the people of YHVH, which meant being different from the pagan society that they had been previously a part of and to which they had been enslaved. Now Israel was a free people—free to serve YHVH and to experience the life of freedom that obeying him offered.

For you and me, Israel's leaving Egypt is a picture of our being saved from the death penalty



Yeshua: The Word of Elohim and the Bread of Life



The Word of Elohim—the Bread of Life

we deserve because of our sins (even as the death angel killed the Egyptians for their sins) by the blood of Yeshua, the Lamb of Elohim (the blood of the lamb on the Israelites' door posts), and coming out of the world (Egypt) or leaving worldly ways and lifestyles behind us. As Israel had to become a new and set-apart (holy) people to YHVH by leaving the worldly and the pagan ways of Egypt, so we must do the same. When we become YHVH's people we become a new spiritual creation in him (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20), and we must leave our worldly, carnal and ungodly ways behind. This is called dying to self and involves overcoming all the sinful habits in our lives, which can be a life-long process. This is what we mean when we say "getting Egypt/the world or sinfulness (pictured by leaven) out of us (the spiritual houses of our lives)."

This process of getting sin out of our lives is illustrated during this Feast of Unleavened Bread by YHVH's command to remove all the physical leavening from our homes. Leavening is a type of sin and pride, since yeast causes bread to rise and puff up. The sin of pride (thinking that you're better than everyone else including YHVH and believing that you have the right to do your own thing), and hypocrisy (thinking that you're better than you really are, and expecting others to do the right thing, but not doing the right thing yourself) leads one to believe that one is a good person when in reality he is a sinner on the path to death and separation from YHVH.



Searching for all the leavening (bread crumbs, etc) in all the nooks and crannies of our homes, and then putting it into the garbage can so that it can be taken away is a picture of how we are to search for all the sin in our lives and to remove it far away by the blood of Yeshua and the forgiveness of Elohim.

But we cannot get rid of some sin easily. We have grown used to it being in our lives. Sometimes the sin is in how we think, feel, how we talk and act. These habits and thought patterns are not always easy to get rid of. We need help from above to accomplish this difficult task.

This takes us to the next step in our spiritual walk. That's why we need the Set-Apart Spirit (Ruach HaKodesh) of YHVH that will help us to overcome sin, to put it out of our lives and then to live a sin-free life. The Ruach came on the day of Pentecost. But that is the next feast of YHVH's yearly feast cycle, and we'll get to study that one later!

