



## **Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits**

Welcome to the spring Feasts! It is the first month of the biblical New Year which brings the beginning of seven annual celebrations of YHWH's festivals or set apart days.

*Ex. 11:10 Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, and YHWH hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the people of Israel go out of his land.*

*Ex. 12:1 YHWH said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, 2 "This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you.*

When we first came unto the understanding that ALL of scripture is to be relevant for us as believers and we started pursuing the Feasts of YHWH, I was so excited to finally get to celebrate Passover!

For years I had always thought it was downright silly for us to be celebrating Easter for Yeshua's resurrection knowing He is our Passover Lamb. That was even before knowing the pagan origins of that christian holiday. I used to wonder "Why does the New Testament church not hold Passover for their annual remembrance of Him?" It just didn't make sense. "Shouldn't we be doing things bible based?"

In retrospect, I can now see that it was the Holy Spirit each year pricking my heart concerning Passover vs Easter. I am guilty, as so many of us

are, of ignoring those gentle nudges and not seeking out or praying to discern the exact reasons for having those feelings.

I am truly thankful that Yah continued to nudge us and bring us, like so many others in these recent years, to a better understanding of living and growing in His ways. He has enriched our walk with Him allowing us to get a glimpse of how great His love is!

My prayer is for all to be able to stop neglecting the unanswered questions that are so easily dismissed because of traditions. Taking that first step of seeking the answers is hard! My prayer is also for us who do understand to not give up on those around us just as Yah did not give up on us.

As we look at Passover, it is just about impossible for me not to bring in Feast of Unleavened. Likewise, I could not talk about Feast of Unleavened without mentioning Firstfruits. These three set apart times coincide with one another. In fact, they are commonly referred to as one.

For example, It is not unusual to read about the “seven day feast of Passover”, “Feast of Unleavened Bread”, or “Feast of Firstfruits” with Passover referenced as one of the same. The reason is, Passover, Unleavened Bread and Firstfruits all start with one going into the next. It is no wonder why many lump them together in reference.

These three appointed times, which occur all within the seven day time period of Unleavened Bread, are one of the three feasts that the men are required to travel to Jerusalem and appear before YHWH. (The other two are Shavuot and Sukkoth.)

Since there is no temple or priesthood today, we are not able to appear before Him as commanded and are unable to fully observe the instructions Yah has given regarding them. While we can't Biblically observe these days, we believe it is very valuable to celebrate and pursue them the best we can.

Let's look at each one of these three and see how we can incorporate them today.

## **Passover**

When is Passover? Passover, known in Hebrew as Pesach, is not a day but a meal. It is eaten on the eve before the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It falls on the 14th day of the new Hebrew year which is the month of Nisan.

The Passover meal is found in Exodus 12: 5-11. It is very specific in how they were to prepare the meal and eat of unleavened bread and bitter herbs. They were instructed to not leave any of it until morning or burn what was left. They also were to be clothed and ready to leave while eating in haste.

In Exodus 12:14 we are instructed to commemorate this day. In Hebrew it means to make it a “memorial”. This instruction is also found in these next two references:

*Lev. 23:4 “ These are YHWH’s appointed festivals, the sacred assemblies you are to proclaim at their appointed times: 5 YHWH’s Passover begins at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month.*

*Num. 9:1 YHWH spoke to Moses in the Desert of Sinai in the first month of the second year after they came out of Egypt. He said, 2 “Have the Israelites celebrate the Passover at the appointed time. 3 Celebrate it at the appointed time, at twilight on the fourteenth day of this month, in accordance with all its rules and regulations.”*

How can we observe Passover? Today we memorialize the actual Passover meal with the understanding we can not “sacrifice” a lamb as prescribed. Yet, it also does not prevent anyone from having lamb for their meal if wanting to choose to do so.

With that in mind, these verses in Numbers shows how to keep the

Passover. These explain in detail what they are to eat.

**Num 9:11** *but they are to do it on the fourteenth day of the second month at twilight. They are to eat the lamb, together with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. 12 They must not leave any of it till morning or break any of its bones. When they celebrate the Passover, they must follow all the regulations.*

Notice that verse 11 refers to the second month. This account in Numbers 9 is where we find the provision of the second Passover for those who were unable to attend the first. There were those who could not partake in the Passover meal at the appointed time because of being ceremonially unclean or too far away at the time.

These Israelites had the desire for the opportunity to still honor Passover and so they went to Moses concerning it. YHWH answered Moses and gave them the second month as another appointed time specifically for those who fall into that group.

Let's go back to the focal points of the meal. They are unleavened bread (which is commonly referred to as matzah in hebrew), bitter herbs, and lamb. These are the foods that are the basis for the Passover meal.

Another instruction we are to carry out is to teach our children the reason Yah gave us Passover to commemorate.

**Ex. 12:25** *When you enter the land that YHWH will give you as he promised, observe this ceremony. 26 And when your children ask you, 'What does this ceremony mean to you?' 27 then tell them, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to YHWH, who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt and spared our homes when he struck down the Egyptians.'* ”

We have a fun family tradition each year after going over the story of the Exodus out of Egypt. Steve and the children cut out strips of red construction paper and tape them to our doorframe to represent the blood of the lamb for each house of the Israelites at the first Passover.

We also love to watch the animated movie, Prince of Egypt. Though it is not 100% accurate, it brings the story alive to our little ones. There are many ways you can help instill in them the event. These are just a few of the ways for us. There are more ideas on the [Woman to Woman](#) page for activities and recipes you can incorporate.

## **Feast of Unleavened Bread**

This seven day feast is instructed by YHWH for us to commemorate immediately following the Passover meal. It is the evening of the 14th day and the start of the 15th day of Nisan of the [Hebrew calendar](#) that lasts thru the 21st day.

*Ex. 12:18 In the first month you are to eat bread made without yeast, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day. 19 For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses.*

This week represents the day the Israelites were delivered from slavery. It is found here in these references in Exodus.

*Ex. 12:17 “Celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt.*

*Ex. 13:3 Then Moses said to the people, “Commemorate this day, the day you came out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery, because YHWH brought you out of it with a mighty hand. Eat nothing containing yeast. 4 Today, in the month of Aviv (Nisan), you are leaving.*

How do we observe this week?

*Ex. 12:19 For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses.*

As a family, we like to start a few days early with removing all leavened dough/bread from our home. Meaning, we start eating it up. We have a little fun right before our Passover meal. Anything left not eaten is brought together and burned up in a small fire. Besides getting leaven

out of our home, we are instructed to eat unleavened bread the full week.

*Ex. 12:20 Eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live, you must eat unleavened bread.”*

The first and seventh days are set apart as holy convocations. These are considered "high sabbath" days that are days of rest and gathering with other believers. No regular work is to be done.

*Lev 23:7 On the first day hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work. 8 For seven days present a food offering to YHWH And on the seventh day hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work.’ ”*

Because of not having the Temple and Levitical priesthood we are unable to offer the food offerings each day. We do have the privilege of keeping the high sabbaths and meeting with others though. For that - I am thankful!

## **Firstfruits**

So where does Firstfruits come into this timeline? I have to admit that this was a little harder for me to grasp! I like consistency. That is just how my brain is wired. This set apart day has consistency in it's own right but not in the same manner as the other two.

Firstfruits is not appointed a calendar day of the month like Passover and Feast of Unleavened. It always falls in the midst of the Feast of Unleavened week but varies which day from year to year. It is observed the day after the sabbath that occurs during the Feast. So, it will always be a Saturday evening to the following Sunday evening.

*Lev. 23:10 ... 'When you enter the land I am going to give you and you reap its harvest, bring to the priest a sheaf of the first grain you harvest. 11 He is to wave the sheaf before YHWH so it will be accepted on your behalf; the priest is to wave it on the day after the Sabbath.*

Firstfruits is a day that our family keeps as a high sabbath. It is a day of rest and a holy convocation. So yes, we get two shabbats back to back every year!

**Num. 28:26** “ *‘On the day of Firstfruits when you present to YHWH an offering of new grain during the Festival of Weeks, hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work.*

Some attribute this verse in Numbers 28 with that of Shavuot and say that is the day of the “High Sabbath” and that Firstfruits is not a “High Sabbath”. We can cover this more in a later teaching, yet just as Unleavened Bread and Sukkot has the first and last days as “High Sabbaths”, we see the same with the Feast of Weeks. It starts on Firstfruits and ends 50 days later on Shavuot.

Though we can not bring offerings before Yah, we are to gather together with like minded believers and rejoice in what Firstfruits is representing for us today.

Yeshua raised from death and is the Firstfruits. We have been given victory over death thru Him.

**1Cor. 15:56** *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Yeshua Messiah.*

**1Cor. 15:20** *But Messiah has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. 22 For as in Adam all die, so in Messiah all will be made alive. 23 But each in turn: Messiah, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.*

## **Firstfruits and Counting**

There is one last note I am going to leave you with. This verse in Leviticus explains it better than I could hope to.

**Lev. 23:15** “ *From the day after the Sabbath, the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, count off seven full weeks. 16 Count off fifty days up to the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to YHWH.*

The day of Firstfruits is what determines the date set for Shavuot celebrated fifty days later. It is another high sabbath day and the last of the spring feast celebrations.

**Lev. 23:21** *On that same day you are to proclaim a sacred assembly and do no regular work. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live.*

I pray this Passover will mark a time of bringing you intimately closer to YHWH as you remember His precious love for you! Happy Pesach, Feast of Unleavened, and Firstfruits!

Growing in Him,  
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