

# SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER CONNECTIONS TO PASSOVER AND THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

by Marlan J. Heide

“Passover comes from the Hebrew verb, pasach, which signifies to pass, to leap, or skip over. They gave the name of Passover to the feast which was established in commemoration of the coming forth out of Egypt, because the night before their departure, the destroying angel, who slew the firstborn of the Egyptians, passed over the Israelites, who were marked with the blood of the lamb which was killed the evening before; and which for this reason was called the Paschal Lamb. The feast was kept for seven days, from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> Nisan, corresponding to our March—April. As the beginning of the month was dependent on the moon there was nearly a month’s difference between the possible times of beginning. This is the reason for the varying dates of our Easter, which must, as the commemoration of Christ’s resurrection, be determined by the date of the Passover.” (p. 483, Cruden’s Complete Concordance).

At the crucifixion of Jesus Christ in approximately A.D. 30, it was the Passover. And at the exact same moment when the lamb was slain in the temple, Jesus, who was then on the cross, said, “Father, it is finished, thy will be done,” and yielded up the ghost. Christ is to us the Passover sacrifice by which atonement is made. (I Cor. 5:7) He is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Genesis 7:54 Inspired Version)

The gospel was restored to earth, and Christ’s Church was organized April 6, 1830. This has to be in recognition and honor of the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was the most important event that ever occurred in the world.

In honor of this event, general and world conferences have been held through the years which have included the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. Most of these Sacrament services would have been held on what the Jews observe as Passover. The use of unleavened bread has never been a requirement in those Sacrament services. Nowhere in our scriptures or Church history is there a requirement to use unleavened bread for the Sacrament whether it is on Passover or not.

D.C. 26, (RLDS) given by a heavenly messenger shortly after the Church was organized in 1830, states “that it mattereth not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, when ye partake of the Sacrament, if it so be that ye do it with an eye single to my glory; remembering unto the Father my body which was laid down for you, and my blood which was shed for the remission of your sins . . .” (D.C. 26:1b-c) The Sacrament of the Lord’s supper is in fulfillment (replacement) for the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

## NEW TESTAMENT BREAD, LEAVENED

There is a different Greek word used in the New Testament for “bread” (leavened) and “bread” (unleavened).

The word for leavened bread in the New Testament is “artos,” and is used about seventy-two times. In Strong’s Expanded Exhaustive Concordance, the Greek word for bread is given the number 740, with the following definition: “artos;” bread (as raised) or a loaf: -- bread (72 times) Artos, as a noun, means (bread and signifies (1) “a small loaf or cake” (1a) composed of flour and water, and baked, (1b) in shape either oblong or round. In other words, this is plain bread with yeast that has raised and

been baked. This leavened bread, or “artos,” with Strong’s number 740, is used in the following scriptures. (References are from the Inspired Version).

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” (Matt. 4:4)

“Give us this day, our daily bread.” (Matt. 6:12)

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread and brake it, and blessed it, and gave to his disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is in remembrance of my body which I give a ransom for you.” (Matt. 26:22)

“And as they did eat, Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake, and gave it to them, and said, Take it, and eat.” (Mark 14:20)

“And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me.” (Luke 22:19)

“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” (John 6:35)

“But I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” (John 6:51)

“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and he continued his speech until midnight.” (Acts 20:7)

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?” (I Cor. 10:16)

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me.” (I Cor. 11:23-24)

All of the above references to bread refer to bread that has raised because it had yeast or leaven in it. All of the ones that refer to the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper which Jesus instituted with his disciples were done on Passover. This means they were using leavened bread during the time that the Jews were observing the Feast of Unleavened Bread. How could this be? To quote from Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible on Matt. 26:22, “Christ is to us the Passover-sacrifice by which atonement is made (1 Co. 5:7); Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. This ordinance is to us the Passover-supper, by which application is made, and commemoration celebrated of a much greater deliverance than that of Israel out of Egypt. All the legal sacrifices of propitiation being summed up in the death of Christ, and so abolished, all the legal feasts of rejoicing were summed up in this sacrament, and so abolished.” The Passover feast was a celebration of the time when physical death passed over the children of Israel when they came out of Egypt. Christ, our Passover, died on the cross that spiritual death might pass over all mankind for those who come unto him.”

When the gospel was restored in 1830 and the Church was organized, everything was put in it that was necessary for salvation, even the same that was from the beginning. Even though the Israelites were told in Exodus 12 that they were to keep the Feast of the Passover forever, the one who instituted it

had a right to fulfill and abrogate it by going to the cross and offering himself as the Lamb without blemish. So on the very night before he was crucified, he instituted the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and so memorialized his offering of salvation to all mankind. Passover only offered temporary deliverance from physical death, and was not a part of the plan from the beginning. It was added as a type and shadow of what was to take place in the meridian of time. From Adam to Joseph of Egypt, Passover was not observed, obviously, because it had not happened. But they did recognize that Christ would come at the designated time and make the ultimate sacrifice for mankind. (Genesis 4:5-9 I.V.) It is only in and through Christ that salvation is available to mankind.

## NEW TESTAMENT BREAD, UNLEAVENED

The Greek word for unleavened bread in the New Testament is "azumos," and is used about nine times. In Strong's Expanded Exhaustive Concordance the Greek word for unleavened bread is given the number 106, with the following definition: "azumos;" unleavened, i.e. (fig.) uncorrupted; (in the neut. plur.) spec. (by impl.) the Passover week:--unleavened bread (8x), unleavened (1x). Azumos denotes "unleavened bread," i.e. without any process of fermentation; hence, (1) metaphorically, (1a) "of a holy spiritual condition . . ."

This unleavened bread or "azumos," with Strong's number 106, is used in the following scriptures: (References are from the Inspired Version).

"Now on the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, the disciples came unto Jesus, saying unto him, where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover?" (Matt. 26:13)

"After two days was the passover and the feast of unleavened bread." (Mark 14:1)

"And now the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayest eat the passover?" (Mark 14:10)

"Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the passover." (Luke 22:1)

"Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed." (Luke 22:7)

"And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread). (Acts 12:3)

"And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days." (Acts 20:6)

"Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." (I Cor. 5:6-8)

It would appear that whenever unleavened bread is mentioned, it is identified as bread without yeast that has not risen, and was prepared specifically for the feast of unleavened bread.

We can reasonably assume that at the Passover when Christ was crucified and became the Lamb slain for humanities' sins, that this was to be the last Passover to be observed. Christ had come to take his

rightful place over the animal lamb that had been used as a sacrifice for over 1400 years. This is the interpretation that most Christian churches believe including the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Since the Jews did not accept Jesus as the Messiah, they continued to observe the Passover including the Feast of Unleavened Bread as they had been doing for so many years, and offering the lamb upon the altar.

Christ had said in many places that, I came unto my own, and my own received me not.” (3 Nephi 4:46; D.C. 3:14a) He had also prophesied to the Jews, that because of their wickedness and refusal to accept him as their Savior, their house would be left unto them desolate. (Matt. 23:38 I.V.) So as they continued to observe their Passover and to offer the lamb on the altar that was now not acceptable, it would have been very offensive to our Lord. The definition of “abomination” is “something very offensive to God.” In Matt. 24:12 I.V.: Christ said to them, “When ye therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel, the prophet, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, then ye shall stand in the holy place.” Jesus waited forty years (forty years symbolized earthy trials and tribulations) to fulfill this prophecy and bring judgments upon the Jewish nation. In 70 A.D. the Roman armies destroyed Jerusalem, including the Temple, and most of the people in the city. This was during their observance of Passover. Another indication that God no longer accepted their animal sacrifices is the story of the scarlet thread. On the Day of Atonement, a scarlet wool thread was placed on the door of the sanctuary. It was said that this thread turned white when the live goat was set free, indicating the forgiveness of their sins. But, beginning on the Day of Atonement in 30 A.D., this thread never turned white again. (Isaiah 1:18) (See Yoma 39b, Babylonian Talmud, pp. 166, 170 Mishnah, by Danby).

From 2 Nephi 11:24-37 we read, “And behold, it shall come to pass, that after the Messiah hath risen from the dead, and hath manifested himself to his people, unto as many as will believe on his name, behold, Jerusalem shall be destroyed again: for woe unto them that fight against God and the people of his church. Wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered among all nations; yea, and also Babylon shall be destroyed; wherefore, the Jews shall be scattered by other nations; and after they have been scattered, and the Lord God hath scourged them by other nations, for the space of many generations, yea, even down from generation to generation, until they shall be persuaded to believe in Christ, the Son of God, and the atonement, which is infinite for all mankind; and when that day shall come, that they shall believe in Christ, and worship the Father in his name, with pure hearts, and clean hands, and look not forward any more for another Messiah, then, at that time, the day will come that it must needs be expedient that they should believe these things, and the Lord will set his hand again the second time to restore his people from their lost and fallen state. Wherefore, he will proceed to do a marvelous work, and a wonder among the children of men. Wherefore, he shall bring forth his words unto them, which words will judge them at the last day; for they shall be given them for the purpose of convincing them of the true Messiah, who was rejected by them; and unto the convincing of them that they need not look forward any more for a Messiah to come, for there should not any come, save it should be a false Messiah, which should deceive the people: for there is save one Messiah spoken of by the prophets, and that Messiah is he who should be rejected of the Jews. For according to the words of the prophets, the Messiah commeth in six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem; and according to the words of the prophets, and also the word of the angel of God, his name shall be Jesus Christ, the Son of God. And now my brethren, I have spoken plain, that ye can not err.”

The Lord has made it clear, that the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is in recognition of his death and resurrection, and that should always be our focus, and that he truly fulfilled the Feast of Unleavened Bread and became “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” The scriptures so indicate.

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