



Scripture tells us that when Pharaoh freed the Yasharalites (Israelites), that they left in such a hurry that they could not wait for bread dough to rise (leaven). Thus the Yasharalites (Israelites) were to eat only unleavened bread every year during Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread as a commemoration of their Exodus from Mitsryim (Egyptian) bondage. Since the children of Yasharal (Israel) left Mitsryim (Egypt) hastily, they did not have time for the bread to rise, so it was made without leaven, also known as yeast. In describing this bread and why it was eaten, Scripture informs us of the following: "Do not eat it with bread made with yeast, but for seven (7) days eat unleavened bread, the bread of affliction, because you left Mitsryim (Egypt) in haste—so that all the days of your life you may remember the time of your departure from Mitsryim (Egypt)" (**Deuteronomy 16:3**). Further commands regarding the eating of unleavened bread are found in **Exodus 12:8; 29:2**; and **Numbers 9:11**.

According to the Hebrew lexicon, the term unleavened bread is derived from the word matzah, which means "bread or cake without leaven." The lexicon also states that matzah is in turn derived from a word which means "to drain out or suck." In referring to this second (2nd) Hebrew word, the lexicon states, "In the sense of greedily devouring for sweetness." So it is quite possible that unleavened bread, while it may have been heavy and flat, may also have been sweet to the taste.

There are seven (7) passages from the Hebrew Scriptures and two (2) in the Brit Hadashah (New Testament) that make reference to the Feast of Unleavened Bread:

1. **Exodus 12:15-20** Instructional
2. **Exodus 23:14-15** Instructional
3. **Leviticus 23:6-8** Instructional
4. **Numbers 28:17-25** Instructional
5. **Deuteronomy 16:3-4, 8,16** Instructional
6. **II Chronicles 30:23-27** Observance

This is a historical reference from the days of King Hezekiah with reference to two (2) additional points: they observed this feast with rejoicing in verse 25 with the greatest joy that Yarusalym (Jerusalem) had experienced since David and Solomon.

7. **Ezra 6:21-22** Observance

A historical reference to Ezra and the captives that return from Babylon and they celebrated the feast with joy.

8. Matthew 26:17; Mark 14:1, 12; Luke 22: Observance

In **וַיֵּאָכֵל** (Yahusha)'s day the feasts of Pesach (Passover) and Unleavened Bread were unified into one (1) celebration that lasted for 8 days. So often in the Gospels Pesach (Passover) was included in references to the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

9. 1 Corinthians 5:8 Applicational

Here in Corinthians Paul references it as a point of exhortation and application to both Hebrew and Gentile believers in Mashiach (Messiah).

There are ten (10) things that the passages above lay down as the foundations for the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the Turah [Books of Moshah (Moses)] in the first (1st) five (5) passages listed above:

1. Date of the Feast – Exodus 12:18:

It was to be observed on the month of Abib. After the captivity the first (1st) month was renamed Nisan. It was to begin on the Fifteenth (15th) day and be observed, which included Passover, the Fourteenth (14th), for eight (8) days through the Twenty First (21th) day of the first (1st) month.

2. Duration of the Feast – Exodus 12:17:

The Duration of the Feast: **Leviticus 23:6b** states that it was to last for seven (7) days, the 15th day of Abib [Nisan] through the 21st day of the first (1st) month.

3. Sanctity of the Feast – Exodus 12:16:

These were days of sanctity, the first (1st) and last day of the feast, which were Qadosh (holy) convocations.

4. Offering on the Feast – Leviticus 23:8; Numbers 28:19-24:

The offering of the feast: **Leviticus 23:8a** states that an offering was made by fire. In Numbers it states that there were daily offerings to be made. There were three (3) types of offerings:

- a. Burnt Offering in verse **19**
- b. Meal Offering in verses **20-21**
- c. Sin Offering in verse **22**

These are to be additional offerings and did not take the place of the regular daily sacrifices commanded by the Mosaic Law.

5. Reason for the Feast – Exodus 12:17:

It was on this day that Yasharal (Israel) began its exodus from Mitsryim (Egypt). It was a mandatory feast to be observed throughout their generations.

6. The Law of Leaven – Exodus 12:15:

For the next seven (7) days bread could be eaten but it must be unleavened bread. All leaven must be removed from the homes. This continued throughout the Feast of Unleavened Bread. So leaven was not only forbidden to be eaten, but it was forbidden to be found in Hebrew homes.

7. Instituted as a Pilgrim Feast – Exodus 23:14:

The meaning of a Pilgrim Feast was that all Hebrew males were to appear before **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) at the Tabernacle or Temple to worship Him.

8. Four (4) Laws of the Feast – Exodus 23:15:

(1) The feast was mandatory, not optional.

(2) Only unleavened bread was to be eaten.

(3) It was an appointed feast for it was the time of the Exodus.

(4) All were to come with an offering; none were to appear before **אֲדֹנָי** (Yahuah) empty.

9. Sanctity of the First (1st) Day – Leviticus 23:7:

The Sanctity of the First (1st) Day: **Leviticus 23:7** states that it is to be a Qadosh (holy) convocation with no servile work being done.

10. Sanctity of the Seventh (7th) Day – Leviticus 23:8:

The Sanctity of the Seventh (7th) Day: **Leviticus 23:8b** states that the seventh (7th) day was a Qadosh (holy) convocation and no servile work.

11. Rule Concerning the Absence of Leaven Bread – Deuteronomy 16:4:

a. First (1st), they could eat no leaven during these seven (7) days.

b. Second (2nd), there could be no leaven in their homes.

c. Third (3rd), There could be no leaven be found anywhere in all the borders of Yasharal (Israel) – the whole country had to be cleansed of leaven.

Leaven

In Scripture, leaven is almost always symbolic of sin. Like leaven that permeates the whole lump of dough, sin will spread in a person, an assembly, or a nation, eventually overwhelming and bringing its participants into its bondage and eventually to death (**Galatians 5:9**).

Romans 6:23 tell us that “the wages of sin is death,” which is **אֲדֹנָי** (Yahuah)'s judgment for sin, and this is the reason that Mashiach died—to provide a way out of this judgment of sin, if man will repent of his sins, accept **וְיֵשׁוּעַ** (Yahusha) as his Pesach (Passover) sacrifice, and have his heart changed so that he can conform his life to what **אֲדֹנָי** (Yahuah) commands.

All leaven is to be removed out of your house and from your property before the 15th begins until after the 21st. The 15th and 21st are Qadosh (Holy) Convocation days. (Getting the leaven out is a symbol of getting all of the Sin and false teaching out of our lives). All generations were to keep Pesach (Passover) forever! It is for all believers. This is a Memorial Feast to be kept forever unto **אֲדֹנָי** (Yahuah) by His people. In **Leviticus 23:14, 21, 31, 41** **אֲדֹנָי** (Yahuah) restates, these Feast Days are to be kept forever.

The first (1st) and most important thing that needs to be established is exactly what "leaven" is. Dictionary.com defines "leaven" as follows:

1. A substance, as yeast or baking powder, that causes fermentation and expansion of dough or batter.
2. Fermented dough reserved for producing fermentation in a new batch of dough.
3. An element that produces an altering or transforming influence.

The 1st definition is the most commonly understood definition of "leaven." But is this an accurate or complete understanding? We cannot remove the 1st part of this definition from the 2nd. (2) Two other things are mentioned here, dough and batter. Again, from Dictionary.com:

Dough

1. Flour or meal combined with water, milk, etc., in a mass for baking into bread, cake, etc.; paste of bread.
2. Any similar soft, pasty mass.

Batter

1. A mixture of flour, milk or water, eggs, etc., beaten together for use in cookery.

As we can clearly see both dough and batter contain some form of liquid such as milk or water. This is an important thing to understand. Flour, being dry by itself, cannot be "leavened" by yeast or any other leavening agent. The fermentation process cannot take place until the yeast is exposed to moisture and starts breaking down. The same also applies to wine. The yeast doesn't start breaking down the sugars in the grapes until it is exposed to the juice.

The fact is that yeast is all around us. It is probably inhaled with every breath you take. Yeast is a fungus that actually grows until it is exposed to the right conditions. Remember, fermentation only takes place when yeast is dying or breaking down. Yeast, along with baking soda and the like, is a leavening agent, not leaven itself, and certainly not leaven as scripture defines it, as we soon will see. Dictionary.com provides the following definitions of "agent":

1. An active cause; an efficient cause.
2. Chemistry. a substance that causes a reaction.
3. Pharmacology. a drug or chemical capable of eliciting a biological response.
4. Pathology. any microorganism capable of causing disease.

The common thread between all of these is that an agent is something that causes something else. Yeast, without being combined with some form of moisture, does not cause fermentation. It is a leavening agent in that when the proper ingredients are added to it, it causes fermentation.

Before proceeding it is important we must look back into the ancient days, when researching this subject. We cannot think of our baking processes as we have them today, we must look at this subject through the eyes of the ancients as best as possible. The ancients did not have nice little packets of Fleischmann's Instant Yeast like we can purchase today. Yeast was not cultured until much later.

So, how was bread made in the past? Yeast is a very abundant, naturally occurring organism present in the air. Have you ever heard of sourdough? This is a very similar, if not identical to the bread made in ancient times.

"Sourdough starter is likely the oldest, being entirely reliant on wild yeasts present in the grain and local environment. Sourdough starters are maintained over long periods of time. The Boudin Bakery in San Francisco for example, has used the same starter dough for over 150 years. These starters generally have fairly complex microbiological makeups, most notably including wild yeasts, lactobacillus, and acetobacteria."

Sourdough is made by mixing flour and water and then letting it stand in open air for several hours. The wild yeasts in the air fall on the dough and start fermenting it. Sourdough is indeed ancient and is something that can last indefinitely as long as certain conditions are maintained.

"Sourdough bread is made by using a small amount (20-25 percent) of starter dough (sometimes known as "the mother sponge" [pre-ferment,]), which contains the culture, and mixing it with new flour and water. Part of this resulting dough is then saved to use as the starter for the next batch. As long as the starter dough is fed flour and water weekly, the sourdough mixture can stay in room temperature indefinitely and remain healthy and usable... Sourdough likely originated in Ancient Egyptian times around 1500 BC, and was likely the first (1st) form of leavening available to bakers."

Bread making in the past, before cultured yeast, consisted of making a lump of leaven, which was then mixed and blended into a larger batch of dough that was to be baked into bread or other bread-like products.

Prior to baking, a small lump of the leaven was set aside for the next mixing. This process was then repeated over and over. Wine was made in a very similar way. The naturally occurring wild yeast would

rest on the skins of the grapes. As soon as the juice from the grapes was exposed to the yeast it would start to ferment, finally resulting in wine. But, can this be found anywhere in scripture? Absolutely! Let us first define "leaven" as it is used in scripture. From various scriptural references we find the Hebrew word **שֵׂוֹר** Seor (Strong's #H7603), is used throughout. (**Exodus 12:15, Exodus 12:19; Exodus 13:7; Leviticus 2:11**). "Seor is a lump of old dough in high fermentation." The Hebrew word Seor occurs only five (5) times in Scripture, in (4) four of which (**Exodus 12:15, Exodus 12:19, Exodus 13:7; Leviticus 2:1-11**) it is translated "leaven" and the (5th) fifth (**Deuteronomy 16:3**) "leavened bread." Its distinctive meaning is fermented or leavened mass.

In Bread-Making, the form of leaven used and the method of using it were simple and definite. The "leaven" consisted always, so far as the evidence goes, of a piece of fermented dough kept over from a former baking. The lump of dough thus preserved, was either dissolved in water in the kneading-through before the flour was added, or was "hid" in the flour (the King James Version "meal") and kneaded along with it, as was the case mentioned in the parable **Matthew 13:33**. The bread thus made was known as "leavened," as distinguished from "unleavened" bread. **Exodus 12:15**

"Various substances were known to have fermenting qualities; but the ordinary leaven consisted of a lump of old dough in a high state of fermentation, which was mixed into the mass of dough prepared for baking."

Preparation: In early times leaven was made from fine white bran kneaded with mold or with the meal of certain plants such as fitch of vetch, or from barley mixed with water and then allowed to stand until it turned sour. In later times it was made from bread flour kneaded without salt and kept until it passed into a state of fermentation."

"A small portion of fermented dough used to ferment other dough and often symbolizing a corruptive influence." "Sourdough, which is kept over from one baking to another, in order to raise the new dough."

The only way they could make bread is to allow the naturally occurring yeasts in the air to ferment a flour/water mixture (i.e. dough or batter) and knead the resulting leaven (Seor) into a larger lump of dough. When scripture speaks of "leaven" it is speaking of Seor, the lump of fermented dough set aside from the previous baking. When scripture speaks of something being "leavened," it is saying that it had been mixed with Seor.

"Take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments and the anointing oil and the bull of the Sin offering, and the (2) two rams and the basket of unleavened bread..." - **Leviticus 8:2**

"Bread" here is not in the original Hebrew and therefore the basket is the "basket of unleavened." Does that mean it contained samples of everything that they had that was unleavened? Not likely. Does it mean that the basket was only intended to carry unleavened things? Most likely. It is not described further. It is clear, however, that whenever this basket is mentioned it only contains bread products.

"From the basket of unleavened (bread) that was before **אֵלֹהִים** (Yahuah), he took (1) one unleavened cake and (1) one cake of bread mixed with oil and (1) one wafer, and placed them on the portions of fat and on the right thigh." **Leviticus 8:26**

Bread is once again not in the Hebrew. The "basket of unleavened" is shown to carry bread products. See also **Numbers 6:17**.

What can clearly be concluded from the scriptures above is that "unleavened" and "bread" can and are related to one another in scripture.

What Needs To Be Removed?

As was mentioned above, some believe that the fermentation process that takes place when wine and/or beer is made also makes that product "leavened," in the sense that it is not permitted to remain in or be brought into our households during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Any study done on the sacrifices

and offerings Commanded in scripture will show that there were at times certain drink offerings that were required. These drink offerings were wine. How does this relate to the Feast of Unleavened Bread and leavened products?

"(7) Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the (1st) first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the (1st) first day until the (7th) seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Yasharal (Israel)." **Exodus 12:15**

What do we see here? All leaven was supposed to be removed from their houses. There was to be no leaven found among them. The word for "houses" here in the Hebrew is **בַּיִת**, bayith (bah'yith) Strong's #H1004, which is most often translated "house(s)," but is also used when describing the temple later, since it was considered to be the house of **יְהוָה** (Yahuah). The same concept is repeated in **Exodus 13:7**.

"Unleavened bread shall be eaten throughout the (7) seven days; and nothing leavened shall be seen among you, nor shall any leaven be seen among you in all your borders." - **Exodus 13:7**

This verse seems to be even more expansive. **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) makes it very clear. Absolutely no leaven was to be found within the borders of Yasharal (Israel)...period. The following verse clearly shows that the Yasharalites (Israelites) did not consider wine to be among the products that were required to be removed.

Its grain offering shall then be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering by fire to **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) for a soothing aroma, with its drink offering, a fourth of a hin of wine." **Leviticus 23:13**

Now...there is something very intriguing about this verse. Guess when it was offered? It was offered on the day that the sheaf of the first (1st) fruits was waved, which was during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The important word is the Hebrew **יַיִן**, Yayin (Strong's #H3196), so let's examine it a little more closely.

"From an unused root meaning to effervesce; wine (as fermented); by implication intoxication: - banqueting, wine, wine [-bibber]." (1) "Wine, perhaps so called from bubbling up and fermenting; (2) meton. Effect of wine, intoxication".

It is clear from the definitions of these (2) two lexicons that the Hebrew word Yayin used in **Leviticus 23:13** above means wine as produced through fermentation. Why does this matter? Well, it seems very strange that the offering to be given unto **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) during the Feast of Unleavened (or, Un-fermentation, as some believe) contains something that is leavened (or, fermented; i.e. wine). According to **Exodus 12:15**, all leavened (or fermented) things were to be removed by the (1st) first day of the Feast. This restriction is expanded even more in **Exodus 13:7**, where it says no leaven was to be found within any of their borders. So, if all of the wine, a fermented/leavened product, was removed, where did they keep the wine for the required offering? Where is the Commandment which tells the priests to withhold some fermented wine away in the tabernacle, or elsewhere, for those offerings? Where is it mentioned that this particular leavened product was permitted, while everything else was utterly forbidden? It seems that the inclusion of a fermented product in an offering during a feast where all fermented products were to be removed is pretty significant. It seems that the wine, or fermented drink, that was used in the offering was not considered "leaven" (Seor) as scripture defines it and need not be removed. No tie is ever made between Matsah and Wine or other fermented drink.

It is also worth noting that several other food products contemporary to that time, such as curds and whey, are "Soured" or "Fermented" products, but were never mentioned as being prohibited. There is also no tie made between Matsah and any dairy product. Again, can we really think that the ancient Hebrews, or other cultures, had any knowledge of the tiny little bacteria that were fermenting or souring their dairy?

"You shall sacrifice the Pesach (Passover) to **יְהוָה** (Yahuah) your Aluah (God) from the flock and the

herd, in the place where **אֵלֹהִים** (Yahuah) chooses to establish His name. You shall not eat leavened bread with it; (7) seven days you shall eat with it unleavened bread, the bread of affliction (for you came out of the land of Mitsryim (Egypt) in haste), so that you may remember all the days of your life the day when you came out of the land of Mitsryim (Egypt)." **Deuteronomy 16:2-3**

This is also a very revealing scripture. The Hebrew for "leavened" is **חָמֵץ**, Chamets (Strong's #H2557), which means "that which is leavened" or "the thing leavened." The Hebrew word for "bread," in "bread of affliction," is **לֶחֶם**, lechem. The scripture says that we are not to eat any leavened thing (chamets) with the Passover. Chametz is to seor as T-shirt is to thread. Chametz is a thing leavened by Seor and a T-shirt is a thing made by thread. It also says that for (7) seven days we are to eat "unleavened," again the word "bread" is not in the Hebrew. However, the unleavened is then defined - it is the same as the bread of affliction. Now, the word for "bread," the Hebrew lechem, is used in the phrase "bread of affliction." So, it says "(7) seven days you shall eat with it unleavened (Matsah), the bread of affliction." This scripture makes it perfectly clear - unleavened (Matsah) = bread of affliction. To further clarify, this scripture refers to the fact that they came out of Egypt in haste, which is clearly a reference to the inability to leaven their dough. Again, to clarify even further, the purpose of eating the Matsah (bread of affliction) is to "remember all the days of your life when you came out of the land of Mitsryim (Egypt)." This scripture equates the word "unleavened," in the context of Pesach (Passover) and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, with the bread of affliction. What is also important here is the fact wine, beer, butter, yogurt, vinegar, soy sauce, cheese, and the like, if also considered to be Chametsim (leavened things), have absolutely nothing to do with the Exodus. Considering these products to be Chametsim completely removes it from its context - the fact that they didn't leaven their dough, not their wine, etc.

Chamets (Strong's #2556) is a verb meaning "to be leavened, be sour" (when relating to food).

So, to summarize what we have seen thus far:

1. Yeast is most commonly believed to be the same as leaven.
2. Yeast can only become leaven, something that has been through a process of fermentation, after some sort of liquid has been added to it.
3. The biblical definition of leaven is not yeast, a naturally occurring fungus, which, when not being mixed with a liquid, is growing and dividing, not breaking down. The same applies to any other living organism that can be a leavening agent such as the bacterial cultures in butter and cheese. Neither the yeast nor the bacteria are leaven, as scripture defines it. But, yeast can be an ingredient in making scripturally defined leaven.
4. The Scriptural definition of leaven is seor, which is a lump of dough that was allowed to sit in open air for several hours allowing the naturally occurring wild yeasts to begin the fermentation process. It is extremely similar, if not identical, to our sourdough today.
5. The word for "unleavened," Matsah, refers to a noun. Matsah is not an adjective and therefore cannot modify a noun.
6. The words "unleavened" and "bread" are related together numerous times in scripture.
7. All leaven was to be removed from Yasharal (Israel) as far as outside the borders of their land.
8. Wine, a product fermented with yeast, was not only permitted in the borders of Yisrael during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, but was commanded as a part of an offering during the Feast.
9. Unleavened (Matsah), the word used in the "Feast of Unleavened Bread," is clearly defined as and equated to the "bread (lechem) of affliction."
10. The whole purpose of eating Matsah during the Feast of Unleavened Bread is to remember how, when they were coming out of the land of Mitsryim (Egypt), they were unable to leaven their

dough. No other product is mentioned and no other fermented product has any relevance to the Exodus from Mitsryim (Egypt).

"And **OWYאז** (Yahusha) said to them, watch and take heed from the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees... Then they knew that He did not say to take heed from the leaven of bread, but from the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees." **Matthew 16:6, 12**

Here **OWYאז** (Yahusha) makes it very clear that leaven is a representation of false teachings, which obviously aren't good. In the Turah we also see something very similar.

"No grain offering, which you bring to **אזאז** (Yahuah), shall be made with leaven, for you shall not offer up in smoke any leaven or any honey as an offering by fire to **אזאז** (Yahuah)." - **Leviticus 2:11**

This verse mentions something else that some interpret to be leaven - honey. This word in Hebrew is **שֶׁבֶבֶת**, debash (Strong's #H1706). Although it is true that honey, when left alone long enough, can ferment, it again is not a fermented product that is under the ban during the feast. This honey would be fermented in very much the same way that wine is. The wild yeasts in the air land on the honey and break the sugars in it down into alcohol. Remember, all leaven was to be removed from all their borders. Honey, made naturally by bees, would be impossible to remove from within their borders.

OWYאז (Yahusha) is our perfect example. **אזאז** (Yahuah) gives us the true bread from Shamyim (heavens) through him (**John 6:31-35**). **OWYאז** (Yahusha) is the bread of life from Shamyim (heavens) (**John 6:38**). If we eat of this bread we will live forever (**John 6:50-51**). His flesh is the bread, which he gives to us (**John 6:51**). If we eat of this bread **OWYאז** (Yahusha) abides in us (**John 6:56**). It seems clear to me that the more we eat of this bread the more we taste the kingdom of **אזאז** (Yahuah) and the more we know what perfect bread tastes like.

אזאז (Yahuah), in His infinite power, love, and mercy, has given us the ability through **OWYאז** (Yahusha) to purge and clean out all of the leaven in us that he may bake us into perfect unleavened bread. The more perfect, unleavened bread from Shamyim (heavens), i.e. the Word we "ingest" (spiritually speaking) the more unleavened (Sinless) we become.

So we confidently conclude that there is a valid and clear definition of what leaven is, as it pertains to the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It is Seor, a lump of leavened dough set aside between each baking.

Leaven a picture of disobedience

Paul also referred to leavening when teaching the Galatians about obedience to **אזאז** (Yahuah)'s Torah (laws).

Galatians 5:7-10 contains his warning: "You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. I have confidence in you, in **אזאז** (Yahuah), that you will have no other mind; but he who troubles you shall bear his judgment, whoever he is."