

A Resource Study

Pesach (Passover) & Chag HaMatzot (Unleavened Bread)

by Glenn McWilliams

As the preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom reaches to the ends of the earth, there is an ever-increasing number of believers in Yeshua submitting to the Torah, the constitution of the Kingdom. As new believers desire to embrace a Torah-observant lifestyle, they are often filled with questions as to where to begin and how to keep the Torah. The Sabbath, keeping kosher, and learning to celebrate the *mo'adim*¹ and *mikra*² of YHWH seem to be the best beginning point for learning to walk in rhythm with the Holy One of Israel. In this teaching we will focus specifically on the celebration of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

In many ways the birth of the Nation of Israel took place in the events surrounding the exodus of the children of Israel out of Egypt. In a very real sense the Passover celebration is Israel's first Independence Day. During the events leading up to the actual exodus out of Egypt, YHWH made many distinctions between the children of Israel and the people of Egypt.³ YHWH further set the children of Israel apart from the nations by calling them to a new walk with Him. The very first thing that YHWH did at this time was to establish a new calendar for the children of Israel.⁴ This calendar contains the specific appointed times and rehearsals that the children of Israel are to keep throughout their generations.⁵ By keeping these appointed rehearsals, the children of Israel would be set apart from the rest of the nations and live in rhythm with the Torah.

Keeping these appointed rehearsals is a vital part of fulfilling the calling to be the manifest presence of Elohim in the world. In many ways the restoration of the image of YHWH in the world will begin with Israel keeping YHWH's biblical calendar with its appointed rehearsals. We should also realize that within the details of these feasts the history of YHWH's relationship with Israel is recalled: Passover, Unleavened Bread, and First Fruits celebrate the deliverance and birth of Israel as the firstborn of YHWH, as well as their calling to be leaven-free nation. Pentecost/Shavuot recalls entering into the covenant at Sinai through the giving and receiving of the Torah. The Day of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles also depict Israel crossing the wilderness, entering the Promise Land, and establishing a Kingdom. Thus there is clearly a historical nature to these appointed rehearsals. By keeping the calendar we are constantly reminded of what YHWH ELOHIM has done to bring us to this present day and age.

We should also realize that we remember these events not only to recall the past but also to shape the present. By connecting very specific actions or rituals to these appointed times, YHWH makes it evident that we are not merely to intellectually recall the past or read about these events, but that in some small way we are to relive it. By reliving the events recalled in each of these feasts we give every generation the opportunity to experience these events for themselves. As each generation experiences the exodus, they are connected to the preceding generation that came out of Egypt. Thus every generation of the children of Israel can claim, "I was at the Red Sea and YHWH delivered me! I was at Mount Sinai and I accepted the Torah!"

We must also realize that these appointed rehearsals have a prophetic future application as well. In this regard we see that the appointed rehearsals are shadow pictures of things yet to come. As Shaul wrote:

Colossians 2:16 *Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: ¹⁷Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Messiah.*

Within the various *mo'adim* and *mikra* of YHWH we witness the shadow pictures of the birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection, and return of the Messiah. Within the Spring *mo'adim* we witness the Messiah as the Passover Lamb slain; that by the application of his blood in faith, the judgment of Elohim passes over us. In the Feast of Unleavened Bread we celebrate the incorruptible nature of Messiah who did not decay in the grave. The First Fruits offering celebrates the resurrection of the Messiah as the first fruits from the grave.⁶ The Feast of Shavuot prophesies the Messiah pouring out the Spirit of the Holy One upon his *talmidim* in order that he may write the Torah upon the hearts of believers. The Day of Trumpets declares the return of Messiah. The Day of Atonement declares Messiah's Day of Judgment and the national redemption of Israel. The Feast of Tabernacles prophesies the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom upon the earth. By keeping the calendar of YHWH with all of its appointed rehearsals we proclaim in our actions and words the Gospel of the Kingdom. By keeping in rhythm with YHWH's prophetic calendar we also find ourselves being prepared for all that is yet to come. By keeping the appointed rehearsals, YHWH will have us in the right place at the right time when the fulfillment of all of these prophecies comes to pass.

Let us now turn our attention to the biblical requirements for the first of the annual appointed rehearsals of YHWH. I want to be very clear from the start that Pesach or Passover is not a "feast," but a slaughtering. The Pesach is the lamb or kid that is slaughtered and whose blood is applied to the doorposts of the house. The "feast" where the meat of the Pesach is eaten is Chag HaMatzot, or the Feast of Unleavened Bread. In time these two separate events have become so connected to one another that the name of the whole week in which unleavened bread is eaten has come to be called "Passover." With this in mind, let us now turn to the biblical teachings on Pesach and Chag HaMatzot.

The first question we will address is that of when Pesach and Chag HaMatzot are to be celebrated. The Torah is very clear on the timing of Pesach and Chag HaMatzot.

Exodus 12:1 *And YHWH spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt saying, ²This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.*

Exodus 13:4 *This day came ye out in **the month of the aviv**.*

Exodus 34:18 *The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee, in the time of the month of the aviv: for in **the month of the aviv** thou camest out from Egypt.*

Numbers 9:1 *And YHWH spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the **first month** of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, ²Let the children of Israel also keep the passover at His appointed season.*

Deuteronomy 16:1 *Observe **the month of the aviv**, and keep the **passover** unto YHWH thy Elohim: for in **the month of the aviv** YHWH thy Elohim brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.*

There are a number of important lessons to be learned from these few verses. First we should note that the Hebrew word *aviv* (Aleph, Vet, Yod, Vet) is a description of the state of the barley as being nearly ripe. The Torah gives us a general description of the barley in this state. We may remember that during the plagues YHWH used to smite Egypt, hail rained down on the fields and destroyed the barley, while the wheat which was just sprouting was not damaged.

Exodus 9:31 *And the flax and the barley was smitten: for the barley was aviv, and the flax was bolled. ³²But the wheat and the rye were not smitten: for they were not grown up.*

Here we see that the *aviv* barley was mature enough to be somewhat brittle and was therefore damaged by the hail that fell. The wheat was just beginning to sprout and was supple enough to withstand the falling hail. Another passage that helps us to determine the boundaries of the definition of *aviv* barley is one where the First Fruits offering is described.

Leviticus 2:14 *And if thou offer a meat offering of thy first fruits unto YHWH, thou shalt offer for the meat offering of thy first fruits **green ears of corn dried by the fire**, even corn beaten out of full ears.*

The barley is the first of the First Fruits offerings made during the year. Here we should note that the *aviv* barley was still moist, or green, and therefore was dried or roasted by fire before it was offered. Thus we see that *aviv* barley is mature enough to be brittle but still moist. We should also note that the First Fruits offering was made after Pesach and Chag HaMatzot. *Aviv* barley may thus be defined as being about fifteen days from ripe for the harvest.

We should also note that the word *aviv* is an adjective and not a proper name. The word *aviv* appears seven times in the Scriptures, four of which contain the definite article "the." This confirms the fact that *aviv* is the description of a stage of the barley's maturity; not the proper name of a month. Hebrew months did not have names until after the return of Judah from the Babylonian Exile.

Another detail that needs to be mentioned here is the sighting of the new moon. The biblical month is determined by the sighting of the first sliver of the new moon. At the end of the twelfth biblical month a search for the *aviv* barley began. If the barley was indeed *aviv* when the new moon was sighted and Rosh Chodesh was declared, this became the first month of the biblical year, also called Rosh HaShanah, or "the month of the *aviv*." If the barley was not yet *aviv*, then a thirteenth month would be added to the calendar and Passover and Chag HaMatzot would be celebrated in the following month. So we learn that according to YHWH's reckoning of time, the timing of Passover and Chag HaMatzot is determined by the barley being *aviv* and the sighting of the new moon.

This practice of determining the time of Passover continued throughout the Second Temple period and the lifetime of Yeshua. The current rabbinic calendar based upon the calculated calendar of Hillel II was not adopted until 359 C.E. Now that we have determined when Passover and Chag HaMatzot are to be celebrated, let us now turn our attention to the question of how they are to be celebrated.

Let me state here that there is provision made in the Torah for those who may have been defiled by death; or due to some other circumstance, were unable to bring the Pesach

offering to the Temple on the fourteenth day of the first month. They were allowed to make the Pesach offering on the following month on the fourteenth day.

Numbers 9:6 *And there were certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day: ⁷And those men said unto him, We are defiled by the dead body of a man: wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer an offering of YHWH in His appointed season among the children of Israel? ⁸And Moses said unto them, Stand still, and I will hear what YHWH will command concerning you. ⁹And YHWH spake unto Moses, saying, ¹⁰ Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto YHWH. ¹¹The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ¹²They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it.*

There are several aspects of preparation that must take place before the slaughtering of the Pesach or the meal of Chag HaMatzot is partaken of. The first step is the selection of the proper victim. The Pesach must be a male lamb or goat of the first year and free of any defects. Once selected, the lamb is to remain with the family until the day of slaughtering to assure that it is defect free.

Exodus 12:3 *Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house.*

Exodus 12:5 *Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats.*

Exodus 12:6 *And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.*

Another part of the preparation is the accounting of the household.

Exodus 12:4 *And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb.*

This accounting of the household is important, since the Torah teaches that nothing of Pesach is to be left over until morning.

Exodus 12:10 *And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.*

Numbers 9:12 *They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it.*

Deuteronomy 16:4 *And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days; neither shall there any thing of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.*

We learn from this accounting that everyone in Israel counts, regardless of how much or how little they eat. We may also reverse this lesson and say that the Pesach Lamb dies for all of Israel, regardless of how great or how small their sins or their contributions. We may also draw the conclusion that nothing of this sacrifice is to be wasted. In other words, we should make full benefit of Messiah's sacrifice and leave nothing unredeemed by his precious blood.

A third part of the preparation for Pesach and Chag HaMatzot is the removing of the leaven from our homes, property, and lives. Here we remember that leaven is a symbol of mixture or sin in our lives. We may remember that the forbidden tree in the Garden of Eden was unique in that it was the only tree of mixed fruit, for it brought forth the knowledge of good and evil. So it is that we are to remove all mixture from our lives.

Genesis 2:9 *And out of the ground made YHWH ELOHIM to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*

Genesis 2:17 *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

We may recall that we are likewise prohibited from adding to the Torah.

Deuteronomy 4:2 *Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of YHWH your Elohim which I command you.*

Deuteronomy 12:32 *What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.*

Yeshua pointedly taught that the Pharisaic additions to the Torah were to be considered as leaven.

Matthew 16:6 *Then Yeshua said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. ⁷And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. ⁸Which when Yeshua perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? ⁹Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? ¹⁰Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? ¹¹How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? ¹²Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.*

The apostle Shaul clearly understood Messiah's teaching when he wrote:

1 Corinthians 5:6 *Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? ⁷Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Messiah our passover is sacrificed for us: ⁸Therefore 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.

So it is that we prepare for Pesach and Chag HaMatzot by first removing all of the mixture and leaven from our hearts and homes.

Exodus 12:15 *Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.*

Exodus 12:19 *Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land.*

Exodus 13:7 *Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters.*

Exodus 34:25 *Thou shalt not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left unto the morning.*

Deuteronomy 16:4 *And there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coast seven days; neither shall there any thing of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.*

After the preparations are complete; the lamb chosen, observed, and declared acceptable; the household accounted for; and the leaven removed; it is time to slaughter the Pesach. Originally each family slaughtered their own kid or lamb at their own dwelling place. When the tabernacle was erected, all such ritual slaughtering was done at the tabernacle, or later yet at the Temple in Jerusalem. Once the tabernacle and Levitical priesthood began functioning, all private altars were forbidden by the Torah.

Exodus 12:6 *And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.*

Deuteronomy 16:2 *Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto YHWH thy Elohim, of the flock and the herd, in the place which YHWH shall choose to place His name there.*

Deuteronomy 16:5 *Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which YHWH thy Elohim giveth thee: ⁶But at the place which YHWH thy Elohim shall choose to place His name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt.*

It is because of this last command that we do not presently slaughter our own Pesach. Until the altar and priesthood are functioning again on the Temple Mount, we "celebrate" and "remember" the Pesach, but we do not "keep" or "perform" the Pesach slaughtering. While I believe that it is both acceptable and consistent with the Torah to eat roasted lamb on

Chag HaMatzot, we should avoid all appearances of slaughtering the lamb on the fourteenth or fifteenth day of the first month.

There is some debate as to when this slaughtering of the Pesach was to take place. Let me first give the Torah commandment and then I'll address the confusion that has emerged around it.

Exodus 12:6 *And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.*

Leviticus 23:5 *In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is YHWH's passover.*

Numbers 9:3 *In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in His appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it. ⁴And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the passover. ⁵And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that YHWH commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.*

Numbers 28:16 *And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of YHWH.*

Deuteronomy 16:6 *But at the place which YHWH thy Elohim shall choose to place His name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt.*

Clearly the slaughtering of the Pesach was to be done on the fourteenth day of the first month at evening. Remembering that the Hebrew day begins with the evening or the setting of the sun, the question is raised as to what is meant by the Hebrew phrase commanding that the Pesach be slaughtered "between the evenings." Since the day begins with evening and ends with evening, we must determine which part of the day the sacrifice was to be made. There are a few who believe and teach that the Pesach was sacrificed at sundown on the thirteenth day as it was going into the fourteenth day. This view is clearly contrary to the Torah. The Torah tells us that it was in the middle of the night when YHWH went through the land of Egypt judging the firstborn of the Egyptians.

Exodus 11:4 *And Moses said, Thus saith YHWH, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt:*

Exodus 12:29 *And it came to pass, that at midnight YHWH smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.*

The Torah also is clear that the children of Israel left Egypt that morning, the fifteenth day of the first month.

Exodus 12:37 *And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children.*

Numbers 33:3 *And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians.*

Two other details help to establish the time of day for the Pesach slaughtering. The first of these details is the fact that the blood had to be placed upon the doorposts of the house prior to the middle of the night of YHWH's passing over.

Exodus 12:22 *And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. ²³For YHWH will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, YHWH will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.*

The second detail is that none of the meat of the Pesach was to be left over until morning.

Exodus 12:10 *And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.*

From these verses we may deduce that the Pesach was slaughtered between the evenings (between noon and sunset) on the fourteenth and the first evening or beginning of the fifteenth. The blood of the Pesach was applied to the doorposts, and the meat of the Pesach was eaten at Chag HaMatzot at the beginning or first evening of the fifteenth before midnight. In the morning of the fifteenth the remaining meat of Pesach was burned upon the fire and the children of Israel began their exodus from Egypt.

The Torah is very specific as to how the meat of Pesach is to be prepared.

Exodus 12:8 *And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. ⁹Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.*

Exodus 12:46 *In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof.*

Tradition tells us that the entrails or "appurtenance" of the lamb were wrapped around the head of the lamb as it was roasted head down in a pit of hot coals, so that none of the toxins would be released into the meat. The Samaritans continue to use this method today. Beyond the meat of the Pesach, the Torah prescribes two other elements for the feast of Chag HaMatzot.

Exodus 12:8 *And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.*

Numbers 9:11 *The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.*

The Torah also tells us how we are to eat this meal, and why we are to eat this meal in such a specific fashion.

Exodus 12:11 *And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is YHWH's passover.*

Deuteronomy 16:3 *Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.*

We are also told by the Torah who is allowed to participate in this Pesach and Chag HaMatzot. Again, let us be clear that Pesach is the offering, while Chag HaMatzot is the feast. Pesach is a ritual slaughtering that is meant only for the children of Israel. Pesach and Chag HaMatzot are a remembrance and celebration of what YHWH did for the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and those whom He delivered, redeemed, and brought to Himself at Mount Sinai. Pesach and Chag HaMatzot are a celebration of the birth of a nation that lives by the Torah. Pesach and Chag HaMatzot are the remembrance and celebration of Israel's salvation by grace through faith and their entering into the covenant at Mount Sinai. Even from a Messianic perspective, Pesach (Yeshua's sacrifice) and Chag HaMatzot (our deliverance from a life of bondage to sin, the leaven of man-made religion) are a celebration of the deliverance from bondage to sin and death and the freedom to enter into the renewed covenant with YHWH. Pesach and Chag HaMatzot are always a celebration of the Torah. Therefore only those who are willing to leave the old leaven of their lives behind them, apply the blood of the Pesach to their lives, circumcise their hearts, and willingly enter into covenant with YHWH ELOHIM should participate in this event.

Exodus 12:43 *And YHWH said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof: ⁴⁴But every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. ⁴⁵A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof.*

Exodus 12:47 *All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.*

Exodus 12:48 *And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to YHWH, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. ⁴⁹One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.*

Numbers 9:10 *Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto YHWH. ¹¹The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ¹²They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it. ¹³But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he brought not the offering of YHWH in His appointed season, that man shall bear his sin. ¹⁴And if a stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the passover unto YHWH; according to the ordinance of the passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he*

do: ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land.

We must understand that Pesach and Chag HaMatzot are not the same as Thanksgiving dinner or some other family get-together. Pesach and Chag HaMatzot are YHWH's appointed rehearsals. It is a time for believers to gather together and celebrate and relive the wonderful and awesome things that YHWH did for us. It is a time for us to remember the great price that was paid for us so that we could once again reenter the covenant relationship with YHWH ELOHIM. It is also a time for us to rehearse for YHWH's future fulfillment of the greater exodus. Pesach and Chag HaMatzot are a time of waiting and watching for YHWH's signal that it is time to leave Egypt, Babylon, America, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Costa Rica, France, Germany, Russia, Africa, etc. and begin our journey home. This holy remembrance is a time for parents to solemnly explain to their children why we live like we live, why we walk like we walk, why we dress like we dress, and why we eat like we eat. It is a time to explain not only our awesome deliverance, but also our awesome calling and responsibility as the chosen people of YHWH ELOHIM.

Exodus 12:14 *And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to YHWH throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.*

Exodus 13:8 *And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of that which YHWH did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt.*

Exodus 13:9 *And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that YHWH's law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath YHWH brought thee out of Egypt.*

Exodus 13:14 *And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand YHWH brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage.*

While the children of Israel departed from Egypt on the fifteenth day of the first month, we remember this departure by departing from the slavery to the materialism of the world we are often in bondage to. Thus the first day of Chag HaMatzot is a day of rest. On this day we celebrate our freedom from labor and spend time worshipping, praying, and reliving the mighty deliverance that is at the heart of our identity as a people.

Exodus 12:16 *And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you.*

Exodus 12:27 *That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of YHWH's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.*

Numbers 28:16 *And in the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of YHWH. ¹⁷And in the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten. ¹⁸In the first day shall be an holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work therein.*

After seven days of eating matzot/unleavened bread we conclude this celebration with yet another day of rest on the twenty-first day of the first month.

Leviticus 23:5 *In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is YHWH's passover. ⁶And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto YHWH: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. ⁷In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. ⁸But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto YHWH seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.*

I believe that this final day of rest is to serve as parentheses around the seven day period of the week of unleavened bread. Here we may take note that seven is the number of spiritual perfection; thus this final *mikra* is to remind us that we are to live perfect before YHWH. We are to be holy as He is holy, and perfect as He is perfect. It is during this last special day of the celebration that we should truly understand that the leaven that matters is not that of yeast, but that of sin and mixture of YHWH's Word and man's word. It is during this last celebration that we should be resolved to truly keep the Torah to the best of our ability without leavening it with pagan practices or man's reason.

Shalom and enjoy the freedom that Pesach brings!

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¹ *Mo'adim* is the Hebrew word for "appointed times," and is often erroneously translated into English as "feasts."

² *Mikra* is the Hebrew word for "rehearsal," and is often translated as "convocation."

³ Exodus 8:22-23; 9:4-6, 26; 10:23

⁴ Exodus 12:1ff

⁵ Leviticus 23:1ff

⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23