

LESSON GUIDE - 34

DAYS OF UNLEAVENED BREAD -- YOUR PART IN YAHUWAH'S MASTER PLAN

You have probably heard the saying: "Amanuwal Ha' Mashyach led a PERFECT LIFE in YOUR STEAD -- there is NOTHING AT ALL for you to do but BELIEVE!"

Most ministers say: "Yahuwah's Torah was nailed to the stake. It is unnecessary to keep the Ten Commandments today!"

Are these commonly accepted ideas really true? Is there NOTHING YOU must do to inherit eternal life?

Amanuwal Our Passover

This world would have you think that Yahuwah's plan was COMPLETED at the stake. In reality it only BEGAN there.

IT WAS AMANUWAL HA' MASHYACH, our Passover -- not Yahuwah's Torah -- WHO WAS NAILED TO THE STAKE. Instead of Amanuwal doing away with the Torah, it was the TORAH which would have done away with your life. But Yahuwah accepted the PERFECT LIFE OF AMANUWAL HA' MASHYACH TO PAY THE PENALTY OF YOUR SINS IN YOUR STEAD. He died because YOU BROKE YAHUWAH'S TORAH!

"All have sinned," said the apostle Sha'ul, "and come short of the glory of Yahuwah!" (Rom 3:23) Your human nature, your carnal mind, NATURALLY rejects Yahuwah's ways. (Rom 8:7)

Amanuwal Ha' Mashyach's sacrifice -- his shed blood -- WIPES AWAY YOUR PAST SINS. It gives you the opportunity for a fresh, clean start. But what are you going to do about it -- continue to sin -- OR QUIT SINNING?

Do you realize there is something YOU MUST DO, before Yahuwah will give you the gift of ETERNAL LIFE? Listen to the answer of Amanuwal. When one came to Him asking: "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Amanuwal said: "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, Yahuwah: BUT IF THOU WILT ENTER INTO LIFE, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS." (Mat. 19:16-17) The Ten Commandments reveal Yahuwah's character.

Yahuwah is now creating RIGHTEOUS CHARACTER in those whom He is calling. Man, now only a clay model, is to be created in the CHARACTER-IMAGE of Yahuwah Almighty. Obedience is a test of that character. Yahuwah will not grant eternal life to anyone He cannot rule.

But why have Christians lost the knowledge that we must obey Yahuwah? For the same reason that the Jews lost the knowledge that Amanuwal was Ha' Mashyach!

In the time of Amanuwal the Jews rejected the True Ha' Mashyach. They did not understand the higher meaning to Passover; therefore, they lost the knowledge of the FIRST STEP in Yahuwah's plan -- and put their Savior to a reprehensible, painful death!

But Amanuwal Ha' Mashyach is not only the author, or beginner, He is also the FINISHER of our salvation (Heb. 12:2). That is what the Christian world has forgotten! They have lost the knowledge of the SECOND STEP in Yahuwah's plan -- that we must PUT SIN OUT OF OUR LIVES!

To help us in the knowledge of the second step, Yahuwah gave His Chosen People a special festival -- the Days of Unleavened Bread. They are to impress upon us the fact that we must NEVER AGAIN RETURN to the sins Amanuwal paid for with His shed blood.

Let's begin to understand the true significance, the deep meaning in this ANNUAL FESTIVAL commemorating another step in Yahuwah's plan. Let's learn why keeping the Days of Unleavened Bread is so important to your salvation, and just what your part is in Yahuwah's Master Plan.

LESSON 34 **Commanded Forever**

1. Every reader of the New Testament is admonished to diligently study the example of Israel coming out of Egyptian slavery. Why has this particular Old Testament record been specially written and preserved? I Cor. 10:1, 6.

COMMENT: Israel's experience is to teach us not to sin -- to teach us obedience.

2. Almighty Yahuwah commanded Israel to keep the Passover in Ex. 12:1-4. But were they to stop with the Passover? Or was there MORE for them to do? Verses 15-20.

Comment: Were the Days of Unleavened Bread given BEFORE the people of Israel reached Mount Sinai -- BEFORE THEY EVEN LEFT THE LAND OF EGYPT? Ex. 12:18, 19.

This festival was commanded before the Old Covenant was made. IT WAS NOT PART OF THE TORAH OF MOSES GIVEN NEARLY A YEAR AFTER THE ISRAELITES ARRIVED AT MOUNT SINAI. (See Ex. 40:17 and Lev. 1:1) What was not instituted by the Old Covenant or the Torah of Moses, WAS NOT DONE AWAY WHEN THEY CEASED.

Yahuwah did not give Israel sacrifices and burnt offerings when they came out of Egypt! (Jeremiah 7:22.) What He commanded them was to obey, to keep the Feast. Later, special Mosaic sacrifices were offered on the Days of Unleavened Bread as also on every day of the year. They were TEMPORARY and ceased with the sacrifice of Amanuwal.

3. How long were Yahuwah's people to continue keeping this Festival? Exodus 12:17.

COMMENT: Notice this verse in the modern wording of the Farrar Fenton translation, "consequently keep this period as an EVERLASTING INSTITUTION."

4. Did Yahuwah instruct the Israelites to explain the significance of this festival to their children so that each succeeding generation would remember its special meaning? Ex. 13:8. What were they to tell their children about the Days of Unleavened Bread? Verses 6-7, 9-10.

5. Did Amanuwal keep the seven days of Unleavened Bread, leaving Believers HIS OWN EXAMPLE to follow? Luke 2:41-43. Does the Bible show that Amanuwal NOT ONLY kept the Passover, but also the Feast of Unleavened Bread which followed it? Verse 43. Was Amanuwal Ha' Mashyach OLD ENOUGH at this time to thoroughly understand whether or not Yahuwah expects His people TO KEEP THIS ANNUAL FESTIVAL IN NEW TESTAMENT TIMES? Verses 42, 46-47.

6. Later on when Amanuwal came to FULL MATURITY, was He STILL KEEPING the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread? Mark 14:12-16.

7. In the year that Amanuwal was crucified, did His enemies expect Him to be keeping the Feast of Unleavened Bread? Mark 14:1-2.

COMMENT: Amanuwal's enemies knew that He would surely be keeping the Feast, but they were AFRAID to try to take Him when so many of the citizens would be gathered together. Amanuwal was popular because of the miracles He had performed. So, the Jews captured Him during the night of the 14th, after the PRIVATE Memorial meal He ate with the disciples.

8. After the stake -- after Amanuwal had been crucified, buried and resurrected -- did His disciples know that THEY WERE STILL EXPECTED TO KEEP the Feast of Unleavened Bread? Acts 12:3.

COMMENT: Why should Luke, years after the crucifixion, use the Feast of Unleavened Bread to indicate the time of Kefa's imprisonment? Because Believers WERE STILL KEEPING THIS ANNUAL FESTIVAL!

9. Didn't Sha'ul, THE APOSTLE TO THE GENTILES, wait until after he had observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread with the Believers at Philippi before he sailed for Troas? Acts 20:6.

COMMENT: Throughout the history of the early New Testament Chosen People of Yahuwah in the book of Acts, we find faithful Believers KEEPING the Days of Unleavened Bread.

10. Does Sha'ul, under the inspiration of the Ruwach Ha'Kadosh, COMMAND BELIEVERS TO KEEP THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD? I Cor. 5:8.

COMMENT: Here is the direct command for New Testament Believers from Yahuwah's apostle to the Gentiles to KEEP THE FEAST of Unleavened Bread. Notice because Amanuwal our Passover is sacrificed for us (verse 7) we must also continue to KEEP THE FEAST of Unleavened Bread -- a reminder that we are to put sin out of our lives.

Now what are you GOING TO DO?

Escape the Misery of Sin!

Let's return to the account of the Exodus from Egypt, and see what new lessons we can learn about the Days of Unleavened Bread.

1. Does Yahuwah show in His word that Egypt is a type of SIN? Hebrews 11:24-27.

COMMENT: Even in Revelation 11:8 SINFUL Jerusalem is called Egypt spiritually.

2. Did the people of Israel SUFFER in miserable slavery to the cruel taskmasters of Egypt? What was life in "sin" like? Ex. 1:14 and 2:23.

COMMENT: A modern example of this sort of persecution and human slavery is seen in Adolph Hitler's Nazi Germany! Slavery for Israel in sinful Egypt was very much like living in Hitler's concentration and slave-labor camps. There was one great difference however. Nazi Germany's domination lasted for only little more than one terrible decade, whereas ancient Israel served the Egyptians FOR SEVERAL GENERATIONS!

In the same way, the entire world has SUFFERED from its own sins since the creation of Adam - - NEARLY 6000 YEARS AGO! Today it is still a world of misery, frustration, discouragement and failure.

3. Did Moses have to choose between the immoral sins of Egypt and serving Yahuwah? Did this mean that by so doing Moses would probably suffer along with Yahuwah's people? Heb. 11:25. Why was Moses willing to make such a choice? Heb. 11:26.

COMMENT: Moses was willing to sacrifice sinful pleasures knowing that if he wanted to inherit the gift of eternal life he must UTTERLY FORSAKE THE WAYS OF SIN!

4. Just as Moses was willing to forsake the practices of sin, are New Testament Believers expected to do the same? Hebrews 12:1-4. Does Yahuwah command us to strive TO EXPEND EFFORT AND ENERGY -- to put sin out of our lives? Verses 1 and 4.

COMMENT: Yahuwah expects us -- through His help -- to expend every effort to QUIT SINNING. We must come TOTALLY out of -- no longer to participate in sin. If we are to become a part of His family and receive the gift of eternal life, we must PROVE OUR OBEDIENCE HERE AND NOW by getting the LEAVEN of sin out of our lives! This is OUR PART in Yahuwah's plan. (See Amanuwal's answer to the lawyer in Luke 10:25-28.)

5. Was any leaven to be found in the Israelites' homes, or on their property? Exodus 12:15.

COMMENT: Leaven is a type of sin. Leaven puffs up -- and so does sin. Unleavened bread IS BREAD which contains NO LEAVENING AGENT, and therefore typifies putting out sin.

A leavening agent is any substance used to puff up -- to produce fermentation, causing dough to rise -- a type of sin. Yeast, soda, and baking powder are such leavening agents. (They are, of course, proper to use at any other time of year.) Bread, crackers, some prepared cereals and most cakes contain leaven and are to be avoided during this festival.

ALL LEAVEN was to be removed from the premises. Yahuwah's people weren't allowed to store it in some other room, a shed or outbuilding. But it was and is Yahuwah's way of testing His people to see how much they prize obedience.

6. Does Yahuwah positively command His people to eat unleavened bread -- a symbol of obedience -- during this festival? Verse 20.

COMMENT: They were not merely to abstain from all leavened bread during these seven days. That would have meant ONLY PUTTING OUT past sin. They were commanded to do something positive, to eat unleavened bread in the festival. That symbolized obedience, actively OBEYING Yahuwah, SUBMITTING to His will.

Pharaoh a Type of the Devil

1. After Israel escaped slavery in Egypt, what was their attitude? Ex. 14:8. Were their spirits high? Same verse. However, were their troubles only just beginning? Same verse.

COMMENT: Pharaoh is a type of Satan the Devil. Satan does not want to let a sinner escape the bondage of sin (Rom. 6:16).

2. What were the physical circumstances that made escape from Egypt IMPOSSIBLE for the fleeing Israelites? Ex. 14:2-3.

COMMENT: Pi-hahiroth was a mountain range that made escape from Pharaoh impossible by land to the south and west. The Red Sea to the east was OVER EIGHT MILES ASTAKE at the point where Israel had encamped, and Pharaoh's army of chariots was thundering down on the trapped Israelites from the north!

3. Who had brought these circumstances about? Ex. 14:4. Why had Yahuwah done this? Same verse. Did Yahuwah want to demonstrate that He ALONE has the POWER to deliver his servants -- to deliver us -- from sin? Same verse.

4. When the Israelites understood their predicament, what was their reaction? Ex. 14:10. When Yahuwah tested them by not answering their prayer immediately, what was their reaction? Ex. 14:11-12. When the going really got tough, did they regret that they had escaped from the slavery and sins of Egypt? Same verse.

COMMENT: Immediately after Israel left Egypt they were pursued by Pharaoh! So today newly begotten Believers are often pursued by Satan. He will set any obstacle in your way -- he will attempt to discourage you, to cause you to stumble he will do ANYTHING to keep you from

receiving eternal life. His favorite trick is to make you WANT TO RETURN TO THE LIFE OF SIN YOU SHOULD BE FORSAKING.

Yet some people blindly prefer to continue in sin! They don't want to rejoice before Yahuwah on His annual Festivals because they don't WANT TO QUIT SINNING! Israel displayed this same SELFISH ATTITUDE as they journeyed out of Egypt through the desert to Sinai.

5. Who did they blame? Ex. 14:11-12. Was it Moses or Yahuwah Himself who was REALLY responsible? Ex. 14:8. Then it was Yahuwah that the people of Israel were REALLY rebelling against, wasn't it? Same verse.

6. Why did Israel rebel against Yahuwah? Ex.14:10.

COMMENT: Israel was afraid that Yahuwah would not save them from the terrifying situation in which they found themselves. They realized that they needed POWERFUL SUPERNATURAL help, and that they couldn't deliver themselves from the army of Pharaoh.

7. But did Yahuwah provide a means of escape? Ex. 14:13-23. Did Yahuwah even "sabotage" the Egyptian chariots when they tried to follow the Israelites into the now dry bottom of the Red Sea? Ex. 14:24-25. Who was it that fought Pharaoh to deliver Israel? Verse 25.

COMMENT: Yahuwah supernaturally delivered Israel from Satan and from the bondage of sin in Egypt.

8. Does Yahuwah want His people even today always to remember that it was His POWER that delivered Israel from the harsh bondage of Egypt? Exodus 12:42. Is the Feast of Unleavened Bread an everlasting reminder of this fact? Same verse.

9. Does Yahuwah promise to help any man or woman who is willing to flee the bondage of sin? I Cor. 10:13. How does Yahuwah intend for Believers to be able to resist sin? Rom. 8:13.

COMMENT: Yahuwah will provide a means of escape for anyone who really seeks to overcome sin, to mortify or kill his own selfish desires, just as Yahuwah made it possible for Israel to escape from Pharaoh through the Red Sea.

Feast of Unleavened Bread Is Sacred TIME

1. Who instituted these Festivals -- Yahuwah? Lev. 23:1-2. Are they called "the Feasts of Yahuwah"? Verse 2.

COMMENT: Each Feast or Festival is a segment of time ordained by Yahuwah for our spiritual and physical rejuvenation. One chapter in the Bible summarizes all of the festivals Yahuwah has ordained -- Leviticus 23. Though they were already ordained (Ex. 12) before Israel left Egypt, they are repeated here because they were to continue.

The first Festival occurs WEEKLY (Lev. 23:3). It is the seventh-day Sabbath. The weekly Sabbath is a period of rest from all usual business and labors, as well as our mundane pleasures. Each of the other Days mentioned here are to be observed ANNUALLY. They picture ANNUALLY the steps in Yahuwah's Master Plan.

2. What is to occur on these Feast Days? Verse 4. Notice the words, "Sacred convocation."

COMMENT: A "sacred convocation" is a COMMANDED CHOSEN PEOPLE. It is an Assembly of people where their presence is COMMANDED by a higher power or authority. Yahuwah Almighty Himself rules supreme over the universe. He CALLS A MEETING of His people 'A CONVOCATION' -- on each Festival. These times are "Set Apart" convocations because Yahuwah is Sacred, and He has commanded them. A Sacred convocation is a gathering called by Yahuwah for the purpose of worship.

3. On which specific days are there to be Sacred convocations in the Days of Unleavened Bread? Lev. 23:6-8.

4. Must these days fall at a SPECIFIC TIME of the month? Verse 6. At a specific time of WHICH month? Verse 5.

COMMENT: The first month of Yahuwah's year is called Abib. It corresponds to the time during the months of March and April of the PAGAN CALENDAR man has devised for common use today. Abib means, "the time of green ears of grain." The Sacred convocations, during the Days of Unleavened Bread are referred to in Exodus 34:21. These days during the Feast of Unleavened Bread occur during the season that grain comes to mature growth -- "earring time."

5. Notice the Days of Unleavened Bread begin immediately after the Old Testament Passover. Lev. 23:5-6. When was the Passover Lamb killed? When was it eaten? Ex. 12:6-9.

COMMENT: The Passover Lamb was killed between the two evenings (3:00 PM and 6:00 PM) on the 14th of Abib, just before it became totally dark -- at dusk. Exodus 12:9-11 describes how the *Passover lamb was eaten*. This was done during the evening at the beginning of the 15th of Abib.

6. What else happened the night of the first Passover? Verses 29-32. Wasn't it after the death plague passed over Egypt that Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron -- therefore after midnight? Same verses.

7. Were the Israelites on that first night permitted to leave their homes during the night of the 15th of Abib? Ex. 12:22. What did they do in the morning? Ex. 12:10.

8. How was the daylight part of the 15th of Abib spent? Verses 33-36.

Ancient Israel Forsakes Egypt

1. Does the Feast of Unleavened Bread continue for SEVEN DAYS? Compare Ex. 12:15 with Ex. 34:18 and Numbers 28:17. See also Deut. 16:3-4.

COMMENT: The Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on the 15th of Abib. It continues until the 21st of Abib. Both the 15th and the 21st were especially happy -- ANNUAL SACRED CONVOCATIONS and DAYS OF REST from usual labor. Seven is Yahuwah's special number signifying COMPLETION or PERFECTION. Yahuwah wants His people to come completely out of sin.

2. At what time did the Israelites finally get under way in their exodus from Egypt? Deut. 16:1.

COMMENT: They left from Rameses. Josephus records this city was called Letopolis, and later renamed Babylon by the Persians, because it was the city of Semiramis in Egypt. It is the city of Old Cairo today.

3. How far did they get in that first long day and night? Ex. 12:37; Numbers 33:5.

COMMENT: "Succoth" MEANS "tents" or "camping shelters." This was Israel's first night out, away from the buildings of Egypt! Here they paused -- though still in high spirits with their new-found freedom -- from utter exhaustion. This was their largest single day's journey.

4. After a night's rest where did they go to on the second day? Ex. 13:20.

5. What about the next day -- the weekly Sabbath -- the memorial of Creation and Yahuwah's Creation rest? Did they travel on that day? Ex. 14:2

COMMENT: Note that Yahuwah gave Moses special instructions to pass on to Israel. How was Moses to pass on Yahuwah's words to a congregation of excited ex-slaves? BY A SACRED CONVOCATION!

The column of cloud by day that blazed with fire at night (Ex. 13:21, 22) did not move on the Sabbath day! Yahuwah rested! (Compare Ex. 40:36-37.) The weary, footsore Israelites were ready to rest from their long march.

6. What did Moses tell them on that Sabbath? Ex. 14:2. Wasn't it to "Turn off this way, you are not really leaving Egypt -- a type of sin -- as long as you follow the well-traveled, popular road. Only by Yahuwah's deliverance can you actually escape from sin"?

COMMENT: Yahuwah knew Pharaoh would pursue and that it was necessary for the Israelites' own good they be trapped and supernaturally delivered by Yahuwah's own power, to prove to them, and to us in modern times that Yahuwah alone offers salvation.

As far as Etham, Israel was still in touch with civilization. But Etham was the edge of the wilderness (Ex. 13:20; Numbers 33:6). Now they were to strike out straight into the desert.

7. As soon as Israel turned away from populated places on that first day of the week (the day following the Sabbath), what message did Pharaoh's swift horsemen report back to headquarters? Ex. 14:5.

8. Could Pharaoh's army overtake Israel with their three days' head start? Verse 9.

COMMENT: No names are given of camping places for Sunday and Monday nights (the fourth and fifth days of Unleavened Bread. But by sunset Tuesday, the sixth day of Unleavened Bread, they had arrived and camped in a CUL-DE-SAC -- between the mountains and the sea -- just as Pharaoh's chariot spearhead legions thundered in behind.

Elation in the Israelite camp congealed into stark terror!

Then the pillar of cloud, in which Yahuwah was concealed, moved between the two camps as it flamed bright in the deepening dusk (Ex. 14:19-20 and 13:21).

9. Did Yahuwah Almighty get His people safely across the Red Sea before daylight? Exodus 14:21-27.

10. Then on the daylight part of Wednesday, the seventh and last day of Unleavened Bread, was there great rejoicing? Did you notice that they traveled on this day? On the seventh day of Unleavened Bread a Sacred meeting in which newly composed congregational hymns were sung in memoriam and thanksgiving to Yahuwah? Ex. 15:1-18, 20-21.

Hezekiah Restores Festivals

1. Did Yahuwah actually promise to PROSPER His people nationally and materially if they would keep His Sabbaths? Read thoroughly Deut. 28:1-14. Would they be chastened with CURSES when they disobeyed? Read thoroughly Deut. 28:15-68.

2. Now consider the national history of Israel -- preserved in the Old Testament for our admonition. Did Yahuwah stand firmly behind His promises and warnings? II Chron. 29:1-5.

3. What conditions did Hezekiah find in Judah when he took the throne? II Chron. 29:5-9. What did Hezekiah do? Verse 10.

COMMENT: The people had neglected to follow Yahuwah's Torahs that outline His plan for material as well as spiritual happiness. They had been suffering for their sins!

4. Did the leaders of the priesthood then clean up Yahuwah's temple which had fallen into disrepair through disuse? II Chron. 29:15-19. What did Hezekiah do after the priesthood had been rededicated to the service of Yahuwah? II Chron. 30:1-4.

5. Did Almighty Yahuwah, who could have justly punished Israel for their national sins, mercifully forgive His people, and permit them to worship on His annual Feast? II Chron. 30:19-20.

6. Did Hezekiah know that the spring festival season WAS NOT COMPLETE until the Days of Unleavened Bread were kept? II Chron. 30:21. Were the Israelites happy, rejoicing in Yahuwah's Feast Days as He had promised they would? Same verse.

7. Weren't they having such a wonderful time of fellowship (verses 25-26) that they wanted to keep a second period of seven days together in order to hear all the messages? Verse 23. Shouldn't we who have been given the opportunity to understand Yahuwah's Master Plan in this end time also rejoice as they did?

8. Did the Eternal Creator Himself also rejoice to see that His people had returned to worship Him according to the commandment -- did Yahuwah hear their prayers? Verse 27.

9. Does Yahuwah want His people to really enjoy these Feast Days? What is the principle that Yahuwah teaches concerning all of His annual Festivals? Deut. 16:12 and 14, Psalm 42:4.

Josiah Kept the Feast

After Hezekiah's death the people of Israel again forgot Yahuwah. They forgot His Festivals and they forgot His plan. They returned to idolatry under the self-willed ruler ship of kings Manasseh and Amon. Not until the reign of Josiah were the Feast Days again restored.

1. Was Josiah a righteous king in Yahuwah's sight? II Kings 22:2.

2. What sort of condition were Yahuwah's people in when Josiah took over the reins of government? Had they lost the knowledge of Yahuwah's Torah and His Feasts? II Kings 22:8-11.

3. How did Josiah react when he heard the words of the Torah? Verse 11. What else did he do? Verses 12 and 13. Why was Yahuwah angry with Judah? Verse 13.

4. As soon as Josiah understood that the nation had SINNED because they had not known to keep the Torah, did he punish the priests of the counterfeit religions? Read thoroughly II Kings 23:1-20. Then what was Josiah's command? II Kings 23:21.

5. Was Yahuwah pleased with Josiah's works? II Kings 23:22-25; II Chron. 35:1.

6. Did Josiah keep the Passover service according to the words of the Book of the Torah? II Chron. 35, verses 1 and 13. After the Passover had been kept, did Josiah stop, or did he also understand that Yahuwah expected His people TO CONTINUE AND KEEP THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD AS WELL? Verse 17.

COMMENT: Notice that Judah had reverted to worshiping pagan idols and lost the knowledge of the worship of their Creator. When the understanding of the Torah was restored they began to serve the Eternal again. IMMEDIATELY they restored the observance of the ANNUAL FEAST DAYS -- the festivals which are the SIGN between Yahuwah and His people!

7. What does Yahuwah say about the important part the keeping of His ANNUAL Feats and Sabbaths plays in His Master Plan? Ezek. 20:10-12. Was it by these annual Feasts and Sabbaths that Israel would recognize the true Yahuwah, and Yahuwah Himself would recognize the people who keep these days as HIS PEOPLE? Verse 20.

COMMENT: These ANNUAL FEASTS ARE A PART OF THE SIGN YAHUWAH'S PEOPLE MUST HAVE! Read this 20th chapter of Ezekiel carefully, and review Israel's history of Sabbath breaking, and what Yahuwah says about it. Notice the punishment Yahuwah enforces upon those who neglect to keep His annual Feast Days. Verse 25. Properly translated verse 25 reads, "Wherefore I gave them over to STATUTES THAT ARE NOT GOOD AND JUDGMENTS WHEREBY THEY SHOULD NOT LIVE," the ways that seem right to man!

This same principle is repeated in the New Testament. Yahuwah rejects those who reject the knowledge of His way (Hosea 4:6). He GIVES THEM OVER TO SERVE THE HOPELESS WAYS OF MAN WHICH END IN MISERY AND DEATH! (Rom. 1:20-32. See also Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25.)

When Josiah died Judah again lost sight of Yahuwah; they ignored His Sabbaths and rejected His annual Festivals. To bring them to obedience Almighty Yahuwah chastened them by sending them into NATIONAL CAPTIVITY! THIS SAME FATE AWAITS ANY NATION WHICH SPURNS YAHUWAH'S TORAHS AND NEGLECTS HIS FEAST DAYS! Yahuwah's methods remain eternally the same (Heb. 13:8)!

8. What was the attitude of the people who resumed from Babylonian captivity? Ezra 6:21-22.

COMMENT: Because they had been chastened for not properly keeping Yahuwah's Sabbaths, it was not long before they ADDED CARNAL, HUMAN RESTRICTIONS to the Torahs of Yahuwah, making the Sabbaths a BURDEN to Yahuwah's people. One of these HUMAN restrictions was to prohibit using leavened bread during the daylight part of Amanuwal's Memorial -- the 14th of Abib. YAHUWAH HAD NEVER MADE SUCH A RESTRICTION! But the Jews thought they could be more righteous than Yahuwah.

The Meaning of Spiritual Leaven

The Apostle Sha'ul, in writing to the Chosen People of Yahuwah at Corinth, explained the spiritual meaning and symbolism of the Days of Unleavened Bread to the Gentile converts there.

Notice what Sha'ul teaches NEW TESTAMENT BELIEVERS about "leaven," and why we need to become "unleavened" SPIRITUALLY AND PHYSICALLY!

1. Were the Corinthians permitting a person who was openly and actively practicing sin to fellowship with Yahuwah's Chosen People? I Cor. 5:1.

2. Was this sin in their midst causing them to feel guilty, or was it rather causing them to BECOME VAIN -- to be puffed up? Did they think they could be more righteous, more forgiving, than Yahuwah and the apostle Sha'ul by allowing this adulterer to remain in the Chosen People? I Cor. 5:2.

3. Sha'ul, knowing that this sin was causing foolish members of the Corinthian Chosen People to SWELL WITH VANITY and BECOME PUFFED UP, gave them specific instructions! What were those instructions? I Cor. 5:3-5.

4. What MORE does Sha'ul tell the vain Chosen People members who had BECOME PUFFED UP in Yahuwah's sight? I Cor. 5:6. What made their glorying not good? I Cor. 5:6-7.

5. Does the apostle Sha'ul compare this sinning member to a bit of leaven? Verse 6. Again what is his instruction? Verse 7.

COMMENT: The one individual who had been practicing sin in the Chosen People had been allowed to remain in their midst. Sha'ul explains that just one bit of leaven -- a sinful person -- can cause the whole lump of dough -- the whole Chosen People -- to become saturated with sin.

The whole Chosen People had become guilty of vanity -- just as guilty as was the fornicator in their midst. The sin of fornication sprang from the same HUMAN NATURE which caused the other members of the Corinthian Chosen People to become PUFFED with vanity!

By putting out the one adulterer, they put OUT THE SPIRITUAL LEAVEN that had begun to permeate the Chosen People.

6. What, then, is SPIRITUAL LEAVEN? I Cor. 5:8.

COMMENT: Here is the symbolism of leaven interpreted! Not by men, but by your own Bible! LEAVEN TYPIFIES SIN!

7. Is there any other place in Yahuwah's word where He clearly shows that leaven is a type of sin? Mat. 16:6, 11-12 and Luke 12:1.

COMMENT: Now let's understand. Sha'ul commanded the Corinthian Chosen People members to PUT OUT the sinful, "LEAVENED" member of their congregation (verse 7), that the Chosen People might be spiritually "UNLEAVENED."

8. What does Sha'ul mean by the last part of verse 8? Doesn't he mean they should put out this "spiritual leaven," JUST AS THEY HAD PUT OUT PHYSICAL LEAVEN in preparation for the Days of Unleavened Bread? Verses 7 and 8.

COMMENT: The Corinthians were to keep the feast without the spiritual "leaven" of sin, as well as without the physical leaven of yeast. One was a type of the other. They were to keep it not only with the symbolic flat bread of the Festival, but in spiritually "unleavened" sincerity and truth!

Remember Lot's Wife!

Few people realize the absolute necessity of coming out of sin and forsaking the sinful ways of this world. They are like Lot's wife. Turn in Genesis 18 and 19 to the vivid example of Lot and his family escaping the debauchery of Sodom.

1. Had Yahuwah determined to destroy Sodom because of the wickedness of the people living there? Gen. 18:20-21; 19:13.

2. When Yahuwah's angels arrived in Sodom, who greeted them? Gen. 19:1 Does Scripture tell us Lot was righteous in Yahuwah's sight, even though he was living in the midst of sinful Sodom? II Pet. 2:7-8. What was Lot's attitude toward the city of Sodom? Same verses.

COMMENT: Even though Yahuwah commands us to come out of -- FLEE from -- sin and the WRONG WAYS of this present evil world, we still must live IN the world (I Cor. 5:9-10; John 17:14-15).

3. After seeing the degradation to which Sodom had fallen, and determining to carry out Yahuwah's command to destroy it (Gen. 19:13), what did the angels command Lot? Gen. 19:12.

COMMENT: Lot was commanded to leave -- UTTERLY FORSAKE -- the wicked city in which he and his family lived.

4. When morning came, did Lot IMMEDIATELY OBEY? Gen. 19:15-16.

COMMENT: Lot found it difficult to leave his home and business (his past way of life). Lot hesitated. And so the angels had to drag him and his family out of SINFUL Sodom!

5. What else did the angels command Lot and his family? Verse 17. But what did Lot's wife do? Verse 26. How was she punished? Same verse.

COMMENT: The Bible teaches that Lot's wife became a pillar of salt. The salt has long since washed away. But salt itself is a SYMBOL of something that is lasting, or enduring. Lot's wife is a PERPETUAL EXAMPLE of one who was NOT willing to completely forsake sin as Yahuwah commands.

6. Does Yahuwah teach us that life in these perilous end times is very much like life was in the wicked city of Sodom? Luke 17:28-30.

7. What is Yahuwah's instruction to us today? Verses 31-33.

COMMENT: Lot's wife wanted to turn back -- to disobediently continue her life in sinful Sodom. SO SHE PAID WITH HER LIFE! Her example is a WARNING for us today that we should be willing to give up sin and the sinful ways of this world and rather submit to Yahuwah's Torahs -- lest we cling to the FLEETING PLEASURES OF THIS PRESENT EVIL SOCIETY ONLY TO BE DESTROYED WITH IT!

The decision to FORSAKE SIN is up to you. It is YOUR PART in Yahuwah's Master Plan. Yahuwah will not force you, but if you don't forsake sin willingly -- here and now -- you can NEVER FULFILL Yahuwah's purpose for your life -- the development of righteous, Sacred character. And you will never receive the gift of eternal life!

Forsake Sin!

Amanuwal's sacrifice blots out all PAST SINS. Should you now CONTINUE in sin? This question was asked of the apostle Sha'ul. Let's see how he answered it!

1. When Sha'ul asked if we should continue in sin, what did he say? Rom. 6:15-16. What was his apostolic command? Rom. 6:12.

COMMENT: We are all, by nature, suffering the penalty of sin, which is DEATH! (Rom. 6:23.) But Amanuwal's sacrifice gives us "grace" -- FREE UNMERITED PARDON from the penalty of our past sins. Amanuwal died so that WE would not have to die eternal death! Now Yahuwah expects us to obey His Torah, to "unleaven" our lives! Yahuwah does not want us to willfully continue in sin -- to incur the penalty of death again -- for then we would have to die and remain dead FOR ALL ETERNITY! (Heb. 10:26.)

2. Does Yahuwah promise to help us escape the temptations of sin, just as He helped the Israelites escape from Egypt? Won't He be as MERCIFUL to us as He was to Lot? II Pet. 2:9.

3. Does Yahuwah remind us that He will reject anyone who has understood His Master Plan and DELIBERATELY returns to the sinful ways of the world as did Lot's wife? Heb. 6:4-8. Why? Verse 6.

COMMENT: Almighty Yahuwah MEANS BUSINESS! Those who deliberately rebel, those who have rejected the sacrifice of Amanuwal, who have forgotten that their sins were taken away (II Pet. 1:9) -- they have WILLFULLY REJECTED THEIR CHANCE for salvation.

4. What does the apostle Kefa tell us about people who have begun in Yahuwah's way but have not done their part in "unleavening" their lives -- forsaking their old ways -- and are again overcome by their old sins? II Pet. 2:20-22.

5. What then was Sha'ul's example? I Cor. 9:25-27. Did Sha'ul understand that unless he was continually putting sin out of his life he might be CAST AWAY -- never to receive eternal life? Same verses.

6. Does Yahuwah promise to SUPERNATURALLY HELP those who repent and believe because He is merciful and understands the pressures of man's human weaknesses? I Cor. 10:13.

Amanuwal's Answer!

1. What is it that YOU MUST DO to inherit eternal life? When Amanuwal was asked this question what did He reply? Mat. 19:16-17. Was this rich young ruler concerned about HIS PART -- what Yahuwah expected HIM TO DO -- to receive the gift of eternal life? Same verses.

COMMENT: If Almighty Yahuwah expected men to do nothing at all -- if the plan of salvation was REALLY completed at the stake -- this was Amanuwal Ha' Mashyach's GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY TO SAY SO!

2. But what was Amanuwal's answer? Verse 17. Did the young ruler understand immediately which commandments Amanuwal referred to, or was he confused by the numerous Pharisaic additions to Yahuwah's Biblical Torahs? Verse 18. Didn't Amanuwal quote from the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20) to indicate WHICH COMMANDMENTS He meant? Mat. 19:18-19.

3. Now that he understood, did the young ruler affirm that he had kept the Ten Commandments from his youth? Verse 20. What was his next question? Verse 20, last part.

4. Did Amanuwal Ha' Mashyach know what ONE THING the rich young ruler had not yet overcome? His GREED FOR PERSONAL WEALTH -- the LEAVEN of sin that was still in his life? What did Amanuwal say? Verse 21.

5. When the rich man heard this, was he willing to submit to Yahuwah? Verse 22.

COMMENT: Yahuwah knows what you are seeking first. If you value ANYTHING connected with the carnal, mundane society of this evil age MORE THAN your opportunity to receive the gift of eternal life and be born into His Kingdom, you will never inherit eternal life. Almighty Yahuwah promises to TEST YOU, to see if you are REALLY WILLING TO submit yourself to Him and DO YOUR COMMANDED PART IN HIS MASTER PLAN!

6. One other time in his ministry Amanuwal was confronted with this same question. Turn to Luke 10 and see how Amanuwal answered the Lawyer who tested Him. What was the Lawyer's question -- wasn't it the VERY SAME one the rich young ruler asked? Luke 10:25.

COMMENT: Every faction, every religious denomination in Palestine had THEIR OWN pet ideas on "salvation," without obedience to Yahuwah. They all tried to impress their human ideas upon people in much the same way the religious denominations today obscure Yahuwah's truth and SUBSTITUTE THEIR OWN VAIN TRADITIONS. The Lawyer was trying to trick Amanuwal, but Amanuwal asked him a question in return.

7. What did Amanuwal ask? Verse 26.

8. Did the Lawyer know which the greatest commandments were? Verses 27 and 28 compared with Mat. 22:37-40 and Mark 12:30-31. What was Amanuwal Ha' Mashyach's teaching? Luke 10:28.

COMMENT: Notice that UPON THESE TWO COMMANDMENTS HANG ALL THE TORAHS OF YOUR BIBLE, AND ALL THE WRITINGS OF THE PROPHETS! The expression, "the Torah and the prophets" actually refers to the ENTIRE OLD TESTAMENT!

These two commandments are SIMPLE SUMMARY COMMANDS. The first, love of Yahuwah, summarizes basically the first four of the Ten Commandments which teach us HOW TO LOVE YAHUWAH. The second great commandment, love of neighbor, summarizes the last six of the Ten Commandments which teach us HOW TO LOVE OUR NEIGHBOR! (Ex. 20:1-17.)

Amanuwal told the Lawyer EXACTLY WHAT HE TOLD THE RICH MAN. He revealed to him the spirit and intent of Yahuwah's Torah.

For examples of what Amanuwal expects us to do -- to take the Ten Commandments in their SPIRITUAL RAMIFICATIONS -- read thoroughly Matthew 5:17-47.

We must dedicate our lives to continual growing -- overcoming the leaven of sin in our lives. We are never to stop STRIVING with ALL OUR MIGHT to overcome. Amanuwal's command is, "BECOME YE PERFECT, EVEN AS YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN IS PERFECT!" (Mat. 5:48, corrected translation.)

HOW MUCH does Yahuwah expect us to do? To surrender 100% to Him! We must give EVERY OUNCE of our abilities to conquering the downward pull of our human nature and learn more perfectly to obey Yahuwah's commandments. Only in this way do we partake of Yahuwah's own character.

As we grow, we will become strong. The stronger we are, the MORE we can do -- and the more Yahuwah expects from us. Finally we will be FULLY MATURE, ripe fruit -- ready for Yahuwah's spiritual harvest!

This is the message now revealed for you in the seven perfect Days of Unleavened Bread!

The Days of Unleavened Bread remind us annually that unless we are actively working, striving with all our might to put the leaven of sin out of our lives, we are not doing OUR PART. It is a FULL TIME JOB!

Yes, Yahuwah expects you to do YOUR PART in His plan, but there is NO WAY YOU can EARN salvation! Eternal life in Yahuwah's Kingdom is a FREE GIFT -- (Rom. 6:23). No one but Amanuwal Ha' Mashyach has EVER DESERVED IT! No matter HOW MUCH YOU DO, YOU WILL fall far short, Yahuwah will not OWE you salvation. He gives it to you as a free gift on condition that you accept Amanuwal's sacrifice and strive to obey Him!

Yahuwah knows that to overcome your human weaknesses, to thoroughly and PERFECTLY "UNLEAVEN" YOUR LIFE, your own PUNY HUMAN POWERS AND ABILITIES ARE NOT ENOUGH! YOU need His POWER!

Almighty Yahuwah promises to give you the supernatural strength of His Ruwach Ha'Kadosh! THIS THIRD STEP in Yahuwah's Master Plan for spiritual creation will be covered in the Lesson on Pentecost.

And REMEMBER, Yahuwah's eyes are on you TODAY! He sees what you are doing with the knowledge He has graciously revealed TO YOU!