

## LESSON - 13

---

# FESTIVALS OF UNLEAVENED BREAD AND FIRST FRUITS

**Reading** : Exo.12:15-20;  
Deut, 16: 2-8; Lev.23:6-14

**Memory verse** : 2 Cor. 7:1

**Theme** : The child of God who is saved through Jesus Christ, the Passover Lamb, must forsake sin and live in holiness and hope with the power of resurrection.

**Introduction** : Passover is the first and most important festival of Israel. The festivals of unleavened bread and first fruits are also observed in the same month as the Passover. All the three festivals are some times referred to as the Passover or the feast of the unleavened bread. Passover lamb is killed in the evening of 14<sup>th</sup> of 1<sup>st</sup> month. Festival of the unleavened bread is observed for a week from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>. Since Jews count the day from evening to evening, the feast of the unleavened bread actually starts when Passover is observed in the evening of 14<sup>th</sup>. Festival of the first fruits is also falling in the same week. It is observed on the day after the Sabbath (first day of the week) which immediately follows Passover.

**Feast of the unleavened bread**: People have to eat unleavened bread on all the seven days of this festival. Burnt offering should be sacrificed for the Lord every day. Holy assemblies should be held on the first day and the seventh day. No regular work should be done any day.

### SPIRITUAL LESSONS

1. 'Leaven' represent malice and wickedness. 'Seven' points to perfection. We are saved when we put our faith in the atoning death of Christ. After that we must live a perfect and holy life. Just as He who called us is holy, we must be holy in all that we do as obedient children (1 Pet. 1:14-16; Heb.12:14; 1Cor.5:7-8).

2. Leaven represents false doctrines (Matt. 16:5-12). We must hold fast to the pure doctrines that have been entrusted to us once for all (Jude 3:2; Tim. 1:13; 2:15; Titus 1:14; 2:1).

3. Hypocrisy is also pictured as leaven (Luke 12:1). Jesus Christ condemned hypocrisy vehemently. Believers must keep all such leaven out of their lives.

4. Believers must also present themselves as burnt offerings to God continually (Rom. 12:1-2). Moreover they must assemble together with other believers and worship God (Heb. 10:24-25).

Festival of the first fruits (Lev. 23:9-14): The head of the family brings a sheaf of first fruits from his field to the priest on the day after Sabbath following Passover. The Priest raises the sheaf in his hand and waves it. On the same day he offers a burnt offering of a blemishless lamb, a meal offering of two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil and a drink offering of the quarter of a hin of wine.

We can reasonably suppose that when Jesus Christ rose up from the dead on the first day of the week, the priests were waving the sheaf of first fruits in the Temple. The festival of the first fruits was a foreshadow of the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus Christ rose up from the dead as the first fruit (1 Cor. 15:20-23). The speciality of Christian faith is that our Lord is risen and living. A child of God who is saved identifies himself not only with Christ's death, but also with His resurrection. As Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4).

The waving of the sheaf of first fruits reminds us about the harvest that is to follow. The resurrection of Jesus Christ assures us of our resurrection. Christ is the first fruit; afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming (1 Cor. 15:52-58; 1 Thes. 4:14-17; Rom 8:11). At the second coming of Christ, the saints who are dead in Christ will be raised and those who are alive will be transformed and caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. This is the first resurrection (Rev. 20:5). After the great tribulation which is to follow and the millennial rule, those who died without Christ will also rise up (Rev. 20:5, 6, 11-16; Acts 24:15). This is the last resurrection. Life of man does not end with this world. The sufferings of this life should not be taken seriously as we look forward to the

glory that is in store for us. Therefore let us live happily considering our sure and blessed hope.

Waving the sheaf by the priest in all direction points to the preaching of the message of deliverance in the name of Jesus throughout the world. Let us dedicate ourselves to bear witness for the salvation through Jesus Christ by living a holy life.

### **QUESTIONS**

1. What is the relation between the festivals of Passover and first fruits?
2. What are the spiritual lessons that we learn from the feast of the unleavened bread?
3. What does 'leaven' represent in the scriptures?
4. Whom does the sheaf of the first fruit signify?
5. Describe the spiritual meanings of the festival of first fruits.

## **LESSON - 14**

---

### **FESTIVAL OF PENTECOST**

**Reading** : Lev. 23:15-22; Acts 2

**Memory verses** : Acts 2:17-18

**Theme** : To lead a spirit-filled life after being anointed by the Holy Spirit.

**Introduction** : What is the name by which churches giving importance to the anointment of the Holy Spirit are known? What is the reason for that? It was on the Israeli festival day of Pentecost that Jesus Christ poured out the Holy Spirit on His disciples after His ascension to heaven (Acts 2:1). Pentecost stands for the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. This festival was celebrated on the 6<sup>th</sup> of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of Sivan. It was the 50<sup>th</sup> day after the festival of the first fruits.