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# Passover and Unleavened Bread

## Some Questions Answered

by James McBride

Who takes part in the Passover (*Lord's Supper*) celebration? All Christians, baptized members of the Church, take part in the entire service. However unbaptized adherents are welcome to be present and to take part in the foot-washing part of the service.

### Where is the Passover celebrated?

When there are a reasonable number of participants in a locality, the leadership will arrange a suitable venue. This is the best way by far, as the Lord's Supper is by definition a fellowship assembly. If a service has been arranged, you are strongly urged to make every effort to attend!

Where it is impossible to attend with other brethren, the service may be held at home, preferably with at least one other participant of the same sex - this because of the foot-washing ceremony. Husband and wife, of course, may freely wash one another's feet!

### How do I celebrate at home?

First, some general considerations. The Lord's Supper is a most

solemn celebration, and all that's done should reflect this. For example, part of the preparation might be to have young children either in bed or supervised. A period of quiet reading of appropriate passages of the Scriptures may also be useful (e.g. Psalm 22, Isaiah 52, 53, the Gospel accounts of the death of Jesus). And, of course, ahead of time lay out a sufficient number of glasses containing a little red wine, and a small plate of unleavened cracker, A bowl with some warm water and a towel for each person needs to be at hand.

Open the service with prayer, and perhaps a reading of Psalm 51 followed by John 13:1-17. Then read 1 Corinthians 11:26-34. Next follows - if more than one is present - the foot-washing, which is symbolic of the attitude of service to the brethren and to the world throughout the year. Now read 1 Cor. 11:23-24, after which each takes a portion of the bread. Next read v.25 and each then takes a glass of the wine representing the blood of Jesus shed for our sin.

After introducing the disciples to this new institution in memory of His death, Jesus spoke to them at

length on various matters. It's our practice to at this point read from the Gospels some portions of what He then taught the disciples (John 13:31 through ch. 17). You could select portions of this in advance.

Finally, they sang a hymn (Mark 14:26) - a practice we follow where possible.

### When do we celebrate the Lord's Supper?

It is always observed at the beginning of the 14th of Nisan (i.e., just after sunset on the 13th) on the Bible calendar - the "*night in which he was betrayed*". This date varies from year to year on our Roman calendar.

If you don't have a calendar card giving dates of all God's festivals for several years, please write to the Home Office.

## Passover and Unleavened Bread

### What is the Festival of Unleavened Bread?

In brief, this is a seven day festival which begins at sunset the day following the Lord's Supper or Passover. The first day and the last day are annual Sabbaths. Often there is also a weekly Sabbath included. For Christians it is symbolic of the necessity to live a righteous life, pictured by our eating unleavened bread - and no leavened (i.e. yeasted) bread or cakes - for the seven days.

For further explanation request the articles *The Christian Holy Days* and *The Passover - Is It For Christians?*.

### What is meant by "unleavened" bread?

The expression "*unleavened bread*" means bread (or cakes, biscuits etc.) made without a raising agent such as yeast, baking powder, bicarbonate of soda. (Brewer's yeast, cream of tartar, yeast extracts are not raising agents.) In line with Bible practice (Ex 13:6-7) we check that all leavened products are consumed or removed from our homes in the daylight hours before the first day of Unleavened Bread begins at sunset. And, of course, be careful when eating away from home! Incidentally, wine or beer, though fermented, is in no way prohibited. The Bible permits it, if appropriate in your situation, especially during festivals (Deut 14:26).

### Must everyone in my home observe the Festival?

If observing the Festival is a new practice in your household, you are urged not to impose abstinence on disinterested members of the family. Christian practice is a personal matter. However, it is decidedly more rewarding if all the family can be gently persuaded to observe the days.

If, during the Festival, you find overlooked leaven - don't panic! Just dispose of it, and learn the spiritual lesson that we all have sin in our lives that's been overlooked - and repent. Even long-time Christians forgetfully overlook - or eat - leavened products during the seven days!

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