

PASSOVER



The Feast of New Covenants

GARY HARGRAVE



Remove All the Leaven

At the first Passover, the children of Israel walked into a new day and a new covenant with God. It was also during Passover that Yeshua (Jesus) said, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood” (Luke 22:20, NKJV). The experience of a new covenant, or a new unfolding of the covenant, is a characteristic of the Feast of Passover. When we celebrate the Passover, we should have a tremendous expectation in our own hearts for something new to happen for us.

Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.

EXODUS 12:14-15

The Feast of Unleavened Bread is observed by not eating anything leavened. It is also called the Feast of Pesach or Passover, as it was known even in the time of Christ (Luke 22:1). The Seder meal, celebrating the night of Passover when Israel was delivered from bondage, is an evening observance on the first day of Unleavened Bread (Mark 14:12). This is the day the Lord

commanded Moses to remove all leaven from the house. This fact is significant for us as well. Before the Passover lamb was killed, before the Passover happened and the Lord delivered His people from bondage, they were told to take the initiative and remove all leaven from their homes. Paul tells us that we are to have this same initiative.

Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

1 CORINTHIANS 5:6-8



Sweep Out the Leaven of Your Conditioning

What does the leaven represent? It represents sin, as well as those things within us that hold us back from a relationship with God. So God told the children of Israel, “Get rid of the leaven. You take the initiative to remove everything that would keep you from walking in the new day I am giving you.” As we celebrate the Passover today, it is our initiative to remove everything that would hinder us in the new day God is launching us into.

The children of Israel were told to be in a hurry. In one day they had to remove all the leaven from their homes, kill the Passover lamb and apply its blood to their doorposts, cook and eat all the lamb, then be dressed—sandals on and staffs in hand—ready to leave Egypt the next day (Exodus 12:6-11). Think about what that must have been like for them. They had been slaves in Egypt for four hundred years. They had no living ancestor who could remind them of any lifestyle other than slavery in Egypt. Talk about conditioning! Why would they be in a hurry? Their only expectation for the next day was going back to making bricks without straw (Exodus 5:8-11). Who wants to hurry to do that? There could not have been a more conditioned, passive people. That is why they had to sweep out the leaven. They had to sweep out the fact that they had never had a meeting with God. They had to sweep out the fact that God had never done anything for them in their lifetimes. These people had to fight everything that was in their minds and hearts while they swept out every bit of leaven from their houses.

This idea of being hurried is important to us. We must be aware that if God is getting ready to do something, we should be rushing into it. We should be intensely pursuing what God wants to do. That means we cannot mess around with anything of our old lives. We cannot be held back by anything that could hinder our freedom to go after Him and what He is presenting before us. Passover carries with it this experience of standing at the doorway into a new day.



The New Fulfills the Old

Passover has always represented ending something old to enter into something new. It is very much related to the idea of God establishing and renewing His covenants with His people. To help you understand this, read Jeremiah 31.

“Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them.”

JEREMIAH 31:31-32

God made a covenant with Abraham, and part of that covenant was that Abraham’s descendants would be “strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years” (Genesis 15:13). Then they would possess the land God promised them (Genesis 15:14-21). At the first Passover, a new covenant began to unfold. The Lord led the descendants of Abraham out of Egypt and into the wilderness where He made a new covenant with them as His people (Exodus 19:3-8). This is the same covenant they broke, as Jeremiah explained. Therefore, God said He would make a new covenant with them. As Christians we need to understand that this new covenant is a covenant with Israel, not with Christianity. I dislike the terms “old covenant” and “new covenant” because God is not eliminating His original covenant with Abraham. The new covenant is a reinstatement of the original covenant with the purpose of bringing the fulfillment of what was in God’s heart from the beginning.

Even as God made a new covenant with Israel in the wilderness, they were living in the previous covenant. It still took them another forty years to possess the land God had promised in that covenant. At the end of those forty years, they came to the Jordan River. Then what happened? They celebrated the Passover. They left their old life in the wilderness and entered their new life in the land of promise. There they were circumcised, which was the sign of the covenant God had made with Abraham (Genesis 17:9-10). In the new land they made a new covenant with God. But it was also an unfolding expression of what God had spoken to Abraham. We are in a similar situation. We are in the place where God is ready to do something for us.





There Is a New Day for Us

You might say, “Well, I’m not sure there is anything new God can do for us. We are already living in the new covenant. That’s what I was taught in Sunday school. Christ our Passover Lamb has been slain and now we are in the new covenant.” I think that is part of our misunderstanding of how a covenant works, and it limits our ability to press into what the Passover really means to us. Passover signals a new day. It is an open door to a new covenant. This does not mean the old covenant is gone. It simply means there is an unfolding of a different aspect of the covenant God has already promised because there are things yet to be fulfilled. It happened that way for Abraham himself. God told him that his descendants would be “AS THE STARS OF HEAVEN IN NUMBER, AND INNUMERABLE AS THE SAND WHICH IS BY THE SEASHORE” (Hebrews 11:12). But he first had to get the one promised son before he got the multitude (Genesis 15:4). Keep this in mind as we read about the Passover Yeshua celebrated before His crucifixion.

He said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, “Take this and share it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes.” And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.”

LUKE 22:15-20

In the new covenant of His blood, Yeshua went to the cross and died, and salvation was released to all mankind. Because of that Passover, we are living in the day of that salvation experience. We have lived for two thousand years in this aspect of the new covenant. But when I read the new covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34, I see promises that are unfulfilled. The new covenant says the Word of God will be written on our hearts so that we never again violate His law. Yet Christians continue to violate the laws of God. The new covenant says we will know the Lord to the point that no one will ever need to be taught to know Him. Yet Christians still teach one another and tell the world to know the Lord.



Sweep Out Your Lack of Expectation

Because more of the covenant needs to be fulfilled does not mean salvation no longer applies. You do not say, “What Yeshua did on the cross—that’s old! I don’t need that anymore.” You need it more than ever because you need to press into the completion of what God provided for us in salvation. The Israelites lived in days of the unfolding aspects of the covenants. The covenants kept unfolding for them because there was a new day waiting for them. I think there is a new day waiting for us as well, and we should go into each Passover with tremendous expectation. We are looking for the new day when we walk in His Word because His law is in our hearts, when we no longer need anyone to teach us about the Lord because we will all know Him. The Passover we celebrate this year could be the one that leads us into this new day.

We should not celebrate Passover with our old conditioning. We are just as conditioned by our circumstances as the Israelites were in Egypt. It is easy for us to think, “Well, this is all there is. After Passover I’ll have the same job—like making bricks without straw. Nothing will ever change. It’s always been this way and it will always be this way.” No. Sweep out that leaven from your heart. Sweep it out. Something must create in us the kind of anticipation and boldness the Israelites had when they went throughout Egypt and collected the wealth of the Egyptians (Exodus 12:35-36). In one day they went from being slaves to being rich.

What does God have for us? Can we even fathom it? We cannot even conceive of what God can do for us (1 Corinthians 2:9). Let us sweep out the leaven that holds us in the bondage of today, that holds us in the jail cell of no anticipation. We do not want hype, but we do want an anticipation in our spirits that is reaching up on tiptoes, leaning into the fulfillment of the covenant that God has for His people in this day.

All Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible 1995 (NASB1995).

ABOUT GARY HARGRAVE



GARY HARGRAVE has a passion for leading people into spiritual maturity. Gary effectively ministers the life-changing truth of God's Word through Bible teaching and prophetic revelation that emphasizes the Lordship of Christ.

Gary embraces the teachings and insights of the Hebrew Scriptures as the essential foundation of God's Kingdom and the roots of Christian faith.

By cultivating spiritual maturity in Christians, Gary is deeply committed to teaching and inspiring unity in the Body of Christ and between Christians and the Jewish people.

Throughout decades of ministry, Gary has worked closely with leaders in the Jewish, Catholic and Protestant communities to build relationships based on commonality and understanding. He frequently leads study tours to Israel and the lands of the Bible.

Gary is the host of a weekly podcast entitled *Growing In God*, and is the founder of Shiloh University, an accredited online Bible college and seminary.

Gary and his family reside in Hawaii.

For other insightful resources by Gary Hargrave, including podcasts, books, articles, videos, and other educational materials, please visit: www.HargraveMinistries.org.

ABOUT HARGRAVE MINISTRIES

The calling of the Lord upon this ministry is to lead people into spiritual maturity by revealing biblical truth. **Our passion is to see the Kingdom of God manifest on earth** as the Body of Christ grows in unity, power and love.

Everything we do flows from the revelation of the Jewish roots of our Christian faith. It is our desire and privilege to bless the land and people of Israel. Our Israel outreach includes:

- **Feed the poor and break the cycle of poverty in Israel**
- **Support the orphans and widows of fallen Israeli soldiers**
- Provide physical and emotional care to **child victims of terrorism**
- **Build bridges between Christians and Jews with biblical study and research**
- Support archaeology and preservation of the **biblical City of David**
- Provide 24/7 **care for Holocaust survivors**
- **Help persecuted Jews around the world return to Israel and start new lives**
- Plant trees to **reforest Israel** and help create **"The Gospel Trail"** between Nazareth and Capernaum

Hargrave Ministries is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization supported through the generous contributions of ministry friends and partners. To learn more about the work of Hargrave Ministries or to partner in its outreach to Israel, please visit: www.HargraveMinistries.org

