

# Do We Honor Yeshua When We Remember Him With Leavened Bread?

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We have, on occasion, watched a very popular weekly Shabbat program that has attracted many who have been drawn to the Hebrew Roots Movement. In a recorded segment of each program the host, dressed in what appears to be the authentic attire of an ancient Jewish rabbi, makes a point of setting aside a few minutes to share his perspective of Yeshua's connection to the Passover. Here is what he says in a solemn, reflective tone: "The composite of the gospel records tell us that before the Passover lamb was sacrificed the following morning, that Yeshua had His last supper with His disciples in which He took bread -- *arton*<sup>1</sup> -- leavened bread and He took wine and He said, 'This represents My body which will be broken for you. This cup represents My shed blood which will pay for the iniquity.'"



Aside from the fact that we disagree with the host's perspective of when the Passover lambs were killed (we believe they were killed in the afternoon, not in the morning), for the purpose of this study we would like to focus on his use of the Greek word *arton*. As we will see later, *arton* is a generic word for *bread*. Since this word is used in the Greek text of the gospels in reference to the bread that Yeshua offered to

His disciples at "the Last Supper"—instead of a more specific word that can *only* mean *unleavened bread* (*azumos*), many have concluded that the authors of the Messianic accounts understood that the bread offered by Yeshua to represent His body was in fact *leavened*. Before accepting this conclusion, we invite you to take a more in-depth look, not only at the Greek word *arton*, but also at the very notion that Yeshua would have used leavened bread to represent the sinless body that He willingly offered for the redemption of mankind.

In Luke 12:1, Yeshua warned His disciples, "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." In Matthew 16:11-12, when Yeshua cautioned His disciples to beware of the leaven of both the Pharisees and the Sadducees, they understood that He was admonishing them to beware of false doctrines as taught by both groups. Certainly, in this context, *leaven* is not a noble characteristic. In addition to the negative characteristic of *hypocrisy*, leaven is most commonly regarded as a reference to *sin*. This is why, during the days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, we remove leavening from our homes as a symbolic reminder to remove *sin*

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<sup>1</sup> The Greek word *arton* (αρτον), as we are about to see, is a generic word for *bread*.

from our lives. In spite of this unmistakable analogy, June and I have made the acquaintance of several individuals who insist that when this same Yeshua broke bread, telling His disciples that it was His body, the bread He broke was *leavened*. Can this be true? Is it possible to honor Yeshua by remembering the body He offered as our substitute by breaking *leavened bread*? This study addresses various arguments that we have encountered supporting the belief that at His last supper with His disciples, Yeshua broke *leavened* bread, telling them, “Take, eat; this is My body.”

Several years ago, I found myself participating in an online discussion forum where the topic was the bread that Yeshua offered to His disciples on the night that He was betrayed.<sup>2</sup> A participant named Missy claimed that, although she agrees with our position that Yeshua did not keep the Passover with His disciples the year He was crucified, she nevertheless maintains that proof that Yeshua didn’t keep the Passover that year can be found in the *apparent* “fact” that the bread Yeshua broke with His disciples the night before His death was *leavened* bread, which lawfully could not be eaten with the Passover meal. Although I was stunned that anyone could believe that Yeshua would present a loaf of leavened bread as a representation of His sinless body, I was even more surprised that others shared her belief. Let’s read an excerpt from her commentary:

This is another thing that I find interesting. **IF Yeshua actually did have the Passover why would he serve bread with yeast in it at his Last Meal with the Apostles?**

In Matthew 26:26 it says this:

Mat 26:26 And as they were eating, Yeshua took bread, and having blessed, broke and gave it to the taught ones and said, “Take, eat, this is My body.”

Well I looked up bread in this instance because I have the *Scriptures* version and the KJV version on e-sword that has the *Strong’s* number by every single word of the Bible so you can easily see what it means.

Here is what *Strong’s* says for that verse for the word "bread" in this passage of Scripture:

G740  
**artos**  
*ar'-tos*  
 From G142; *bread* (as *raised*) or a *loaf*: - (shew-) bread, loaf.

And the word ARTOS is definitely used in Matthew 26:26.<sup>3</sup> How is bread raised? with yeast!

Now when you go to Luke 22:1, it says this:

<sup>2</sup> Last I checked the link to that forum discussion is still active and may be accessed at the following URL: <http://www.elijah.com/forum2/Forum10/HTML/002959.html>

<sup>3</sup> The actual Greek word appearing in Matthew 26:26 is not *artos*, but *arton*. They are actually forms of the same word, with *arton* being the accusative singular form of the Greek word *artos*.

Luk 22:1 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh,  
which is called the Passover.

So of course I looked up unleavened bread in *Strong's* in this Scripture and it said this:

G106

**azumos**

*ad'-zoo-mos*

From *G1* (as a negative particle) and *G2219*; *unleavened*, that is, (figuratively) *uncorrupted*; (in the neuter plural) specifically (by implication) the *Passover* week: - unleavened (bread).

And AZUMOS is surely used in Luke 22:1.

So we all know that Passover is the 14th of Abib at even, which is technically the 15th (which is the first day of the feast of unleavened bread), so how in the world could Yeshua be serving bread with yeast in it at his Passover?

To me, that makes no sense whatsoever. So I am going to have to go with Yeshua did not have the Passover. He had a meal. I used to believe that perhaps it was some form of a Passover meal and Yeshua knew he would be taken for slaughter before he got a chance to eat it. But having examined the differences in the bread and the names used for them, I have no choice but to believe Yeshua didn't have a Passover because he served yeasted bread.<sup>4</sup>

I will concede that there is quite a bit of truth in Missy's commentary, but if we aren't careful we miss out on the wrong turn she made, which often leads to a mistaken conclusion. We read in Proverbs 18:17 that he that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him. We need to be a noble neighbor and search Missy's words to see if everything she writes is accurate. Although on the surface her reasoning may seem correct, we will soon see that she veered away from the truth and reached a conclusion that, in our humble opinion, *dishonors Yeshua* and that's what makes this topic such an important one. Let's take a closer look at Missy's commentary, sorting out fact from fiction.

To begin with, Missy's introductory statement employs a psychological term known as "inference-observation confusion," which is a fancy term for jumping to conclusions without first examining all the available evidence. Here's what she writes: "IF Yeshua actually did have the Passover why would he serve bread with yeast in it at his Last Meal with the Apostles?"

Based on Missy's understanding of what the Greek word *arton* means, she assumes that Yeshua and His disciples must have eaten bread containing yeast at the Last Supper. We really need to ask Missy where in the Messianic Accounts do the authors come right out and state that the bread that Yeshua broke with His disciples was *leavened*. Frankly, none of the authors

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<sup>4</sup> Posted by Missy on 04-20-2006 in the EliYah's Forums thread titled "Was the "Last Supper" the Passover meal?"

record any such understanding; nevertheless, Missy is certain that she has the key to determining what type of bread Yeshua offered to His disciples. Let's carefully review her reasoning:

- A. The Greek word for "bread" used in each account of Yeshua's "Last Supper" is *artos*<sup>5</sup>, which can, though not necessarily, be used in reference to a *raised* loaf of bread. Missy punctuates this fact by asking the rhetorical question, "How is bread raised?" She then answers her own question, "With yeast!"
- B. The Greek word for "unleavened bread in Luke 22:1 is *azumos*, which can only be understood as a reference to "unleavened."
- C. Since Yeshua and His disciples had *artos* at their meal instead of *azumos*, this (according to Missy) validates believing that Yeshua used *leavened bread* in referring to His sinless body.

Another gentleman joined the forum discussion to lend his support to Missy's conclusion, offering an even more succinct summary of *artos* versus *azumos*. Matthew Janzen listed four points outlining his reasoning and here is point #1:

**1:** Every place where the Last Supper or the "Master's Supper" is mentioned uses the Greek word *artos* instead of the Greek word *azumos*. This includes 1 Corinthians 11:23 which is the verse where Sha'ul is instructing the New Covenant Assembly to follow the institution of Yeshua which he gave on the night of his betrayal. These texts could have used the word *azumos* which most assuredly means "unleavened bread" but they did not. This leads me to believe that Yeshua used "leavened bread" and broke / blessed it to give to the disciples.

Years later, in a sermon he preached to his local congregation, which is still available online, Matthew Janzen further stated his opinion that there is only *one* instance in which the Greek word *artos* may be understood as being a reference to unleavened bread.

There are two different Greek words for leavened bread and unleavened bread: *artos* and *azumos*. The Greek word *artos* is the general word for leavened bread and the Greek word *azumos* always refers to bread that is unleavened. Now it is quite probable that sometimes the word *artos*, which is the general word for leavened bread, regular bread, can be used to refer to unleavened bread as well, but it's not the norm. Most of the time *artos* -- 99% of the time when you see *artos* in the Greek -- it's leavened bread. One hundred per cent of the time when you see *azumos*, it's unleavened bread.<sup>6</sup>

Is it true, as Matthew states in his sermon, that 99% of the time *artos* is used in reference to leavened bread? No, as we are about to see, this is simply a false assertion on his part. Nevertheless, if it were indeed true that *artos* means unleavened bread 1% of the time, then we should be willing to concede the possibility that Yeshua and His disciples ate unleavened bread

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<sup>5</sup> The Greek word *artos* (ἄρτος) is also written and pronounced *artous* (ἄρτους), as we will see in the LXX translation of Exodus 25:30. As previously mentioned, the actual Greek word appearing in Matthew 26:26 is not *artos*, but *arton*.

<sup>6</sup> See [www.ministersnewcovenant.org/passover-studies.html](http://www.ministersnewcovenant.org/passover-studies.html), sermon titled "Was the Last Supper a Passover Meal?" by Matthew Janzen, commentary beginning at the 26:40 mark and ending at 27:20.

at His Last Supper. Matthew's math is as follows: 99% = 100%. However, we are about to illustrate that *artos* was commonly used in reference to *unleavened bread*.

For us to see that the common understanding of *artos* could include “unleavened,” we need go no further than the bread that was used in the temple, i.e., the *shewbread*. The Hebrew term for shewbread is actually two words, *lechem pānīm*, which literally means “Bread of the Presence”). The Hebrew word “lechem,” like *artos*, is a general term for bread and is word #3899 in *Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*:

**3899.** לֶחֶם *lechem*, lekh'-em; from 3898; *food* (for man or beast), espec. *bread*, or *grain* (for making it): —([shew-]) *bread* x eat, food, fruit, *loaf*, meat, victuals. See also 1086.

As displayed above, the Hebrew word *lechem* is a general term for bread and it is also used in reference to the temple shewbread. The word “shewbread” first appears in Exodus 25:30:

<sup>30</sup> And thou shalt set upon the table shewbread before me always.

Displayed below is the Hebrew text of Exodus 25:30, showing us the Hebrew words for “shewbread” (*lechem pānīm*):

פ :	תָּמִיד	לְפָנַי	פָּנִים	לֶחֶם	עַל-הַשֻּׁלְחָן	וְנָתַתְּ
p :	thmid	l·phn·i	phnim	lchm	e·shlchn - ol	u·nthth
	continually	to·faces-of·me	faces	bread-of	the·table	on and·you-give

The Hebrew words *lechem pānīm* (literally “bread of faces”) are translated into Greek as *artous enopious* (bread of the face). Shown below is the Septuagint translation of Exodus 25:30:

4160	1473	<b>25:30</b>	2532	2007	1909	3588
ποιήσεις	αὐτὰ		καὶ	ἐπιθήσεις	ἐπὶ	τῆν
you shall make	them.		And	you shall place	upon	the
5132	740	1799.1	1726	1473	1275	
τράπεζαι	ἄρτους	ἐνώπιους	ἐναντίον	μου	διαπαντός	
table	bread loaves	face to face	before	me	always.	

The reason we bring the temple *shewbread* into this discussion lies with the fact that the shewbread was *unleavened*. It is true that Scripture does not come right out and specify that the temple shewbread was unleavened. Nevertheless, Jewish historians agree that it was. In fact, the 1<sup>st</sup> century Jewish philosopher Philo explains why it *had* to be unleavened:

This unleavened cake is so sacred that it is enjoined in the holy scriptures, “to place in the innermost part of the temple, on the golden table, twelve loaves of unleavened bread, corresponding in number to the twelve tribes; and those loaves shall be called the shew-bread.” And again, it is in the law expressly “forbidden to offer any leaven or any honey upon the altar;” for it is a difficult

thing to consecrate as holy either the sweetnesses of the pleasures according to the body, or the light and unsubstantial elations of the soul, since they are by their own intrinsic nature profane and unholy.<sup>7</sup>

Not only did Philo understand that the shewbread was unleavened, but elsewhere in his writings he addressed the negativity symbolized by leaven:

And leaven is forbidden on account of the rising which it causes; this prohibition again having a figurative meaning, intimating that no one who comes to the altar ought at all to allow himself to be elated, being puffed up by insolence; but that such persons may keep their eyes fixed on the greatness of God, and so obtain a proper conception of the weakness of all created beings, even if they be very prosperous; and that so cherishing correct notions they may correct the arrogant loftiness of their minds, and discard all treacherous self-conceit.<sup>8</sup>

Philo definitely understood the negative attributes associated with leavened bread. We are unaware of *any* negative attributes being linked with unleavened bread (this is important, by the way). With regard to the attributes of the temple shewbread, we are persuaded that Philo, who was a contemporary of Yeshua, knew a thing or two about how the various temple functions, including the making of shewbread, were carried out. Philo clarifies why the temple shewbread had to be unleavened: It's because the law forbids offering either leaven or honey upon the altar. This law is found in Leviticus 2:11:

<sup>11</sup> No grain offering that you bring to YHWH shall be made with leaven, for you must not turn any leaven or honey into smoke as an offering by fire to YHWH.

It is helpful to understand that the grain offering consisted of fine flour (Lev. 2:1) and that only a handful of it was burned on the altar; the remainder was designated for the priests to use, which would most certainly include the flour used in making the temple shewbread. Robert Deffinbaugh, in his online commentary series titled *Leviticus: Sacrifice and Sanctification*, offers informative insight into the nature of the grain offerings:

The Grain Offering was not a “whole burnt offering,” but only a portion of it was burned on the altar, while the rest was eaten by the priests. The Burnt Offering was totally consumed upon the altar, with the priests benefiting only from the hide (Lev. 1:5-9; 7:8). With the Grain Offering only a handful of the offering was burned on the altar, while the rest was given to the priests: ‘He shall then bring it to Aaron’s sons, the priests; and shall take from it his handful of its fine flour and of its oil with all its memorial portion on the altar, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to the LORD. And the remainder of the grain offering belongs to Aaron and his sons: a thing most holy, of the offerings to the LORD by fire’ (Lev. 2:2-3).

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<sup>7</sup> From *The Works of Philo*, “The Preliminary Studies,” ch. XXX (168-169), translated by C. D. Yonge, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 1993, p. 319.

<sup>8</sup> From *The Works of Philo*, “The Special Laws, I,” ch. LIII (293), translated by C. D. Yonge, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 1993, p. 562.

The greater portion of the Grain Offering served as the livelihood of the priests, just as the tithe was God's appointed means for supporting the Levites (Num. 18:21-24). **A handful of the Grain Offering was burned on the altar, while the rest was given to Aaron and his sons.** The portion that was offered was called the "memorial portion" (Lev. 2:2, 9, 16), while the other portion was called "a thing most holy" (Lev. 2:3, 10; cf. 5:17).<sup>9</sup>

In summary, we can hopefully by now agree and understand that the grain offering consisted of fine flour, only a small portion of which was burnt on the altar, with the remainder designated for the priests' use. The priests, in turn, used the remaining fine flour to make the temple shewbread. Most significantly, however, is the fact that this fine flour had to be offered *without leaven*.

We have found that many believers question the veracity of the historians' report that the temple shewbread was unleavened. Such was certainly the case during my 2006 internet forum discussion on this topic, so for the sake of those who are reluctant to accept the historians' testimony, I am including the following insightful commentary by C. F. Keil in *Keil and Delitzsch's Commentary on the Old Testament*:

The preparation of the shew-bread and the use to be made of it are described here for the first time; though it has already been offered by the congregation at the consecration of the tabernacle, and placed by Moses upon the table (Ex. 39:36; 40:23). Twelve cakes (*challoth*, Lev 2:4) were to be made of fine flour, of two-tenths of an ephah each, and placed in two rows, six in each row, upon the golden table before Jehovah (Ex. 25:23ff.). Pure incense was then to be added to each row, which was to be (to serve) as a memorial (*Azcarah*, see Lev 2:2), as a firing for Jehovah. **עַלְיָן** to give upon, to add to, does not force us to the conclusion that the incense was to be spread upon the cakes; but is easily reconcilable with the Jewish tradition (*Josephus*, Ant. iii. 10, 7; *Mishnah*, *Menach.* xi. 7, 8), that the incense was placed in golden saucers with each row of bread. The number twelve corresponded to the number of the twelve tribes of Israel. The arrangement of the loaves in rows of six each was in accordance with the shape of the table, just like the division of the names of the twelve tribes upon the two precious stones on Aaron's shoulder-dress (Ex. 28:10). By the presentation or preparation of them from the fine flour presented by the congregation, and still more by the addition of incense, which was burned upon the altar every Sabbath on the removal of the loaves as *azcarah*, i.e., as a practical memento of the congregation before God, the laying out of these loaves assumed the form of a bloodless sacrifice, in which the congregation brought the fruit of its life and labour before the face of the Lord, and presented itself to its God as a nation diligent in sanctification to good works. **If the shewbread was a *minchah*, or meat-offering, and even a most holy one, which only the priests were allowed to eat in the holy place (Lev 24:9, cf. Lev 2:3 and Lev 6:9-10), it must naturally have been unleavened, as the unanimous testimony of the Jewish tradition affirms it to have been.** And if as a rule no meat-offering could be leavened, and of the loaves of first-fruits prepared for the feast of

<sup>9</sup> Deffinbaugh, Robert, *Leviticus: Sacrifice and Sanctification*, Chapter 3, "The Grain Offering (Leviticus 2:1-16; 6:14-18; 7:9-10; 10:12-13), [www.bible.org/seriespage/3-grain-offering-leviticus-21-16-614-18-79-10-1012-13](http://www.bible.org/seriespage/3-grain-offering-leviticus-21-16-614-18-79-10-1012-13), © 2017 Bible.org, All Rights Reserved.

Pentecost, which were actually leavened, none was allowed to be placed upon the altar (Lev 2:11-12; Lev 6:10); still less could leavened bread be brought into the sanctuary before Jehovah. The only ground, therefore, on which *Knobel* can maintain that those loaves were leavened, is on the supposition that they were intended to represent the daily bread, which could no more fail in the house of Jehovah than in any other well-appointed house (see *Bähr, Symbolik* i. p. 410). The process of laying these loaves before Jehovah continually was to be "an everlasting covenant" (Lev 24:8), i.e., a pledge or sign of the everlasting covenant, just as circumcision, as the covenant in the flesh, was to be an everlasting covenant (Gen 17:13).<sup>10</sup>

In layman's terms, the above commentator, C. F. Keil, expended considerable time and effort into explaining that it just doesn't make sense for the temple shewbread to have been leavened. We are persuaded that his reasoning is sound.

First-century Jewish historian Flavius Josephus validates Philo's understanding pertaining to the shewbread. The following is taken from Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*:

However, out of the common charges, baked bread was set on the table of shewbread, **without leaven**, of twenty-four tenth deals of flour, for so much is spent upon this bread; two heaps of these were baked; they were baked the day before the Sabbath, but were brought into the holy place on the morning of the Sabbath, and set upon the holy table, six on a heap, one loaf still standing over-against another;<sup>11</sup>

We thus have two ancient witnesses testifying that the shewbread was *unleavened*, even though the commonly-understood Greek word for "unleavened" (*azumos*) is not used in reference to that bread. Since the Greek words for "shewbread" (*artos enopios*) are so frequently used in the Septuagint, and since we now understand and agree that the shewbread was unleavened, we can also see Matthew Janzen's error in stating that "99% of the time when you see *artos* in the Greek, it's leavened bread."

For those who appreciate typology, it should be easy to understand that the temple shewbread pointed to the "true bread from heaven," Yeshua the Messiah. Many scholars share this same understanding. Here is what we read in *Jamieson, Fausset & Brown's Commentary on the Whole Bible*:

**30. showbread** lit., presence bread, so called because it was constantly exhibited before the Lord, or because the bread of His presence, like the angel of His presence, **pointed symbolically to Christ**. It consisted of twelve unleavened loaves, said traditionally to have been laid in piles of six each. This bread was designed to be a symbol of the full and never-failing provision which

<sup>10</sup> From *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 1, by C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MS, 2001, p. 621 (originally published by T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1866 – 91).

<sup>11</sup> From *The Works of Flavius Josephus*, Vol. II, translated by William Whiston, A.M., *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book III, ch. 10, 7, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1992, p. 219. See also *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book III, ch. 6, p. 200.

is made in the Church for the spiritual sustenance and refreshment of God's people.<sup>12</sup>

Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., in his contribution to *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, adds the following:

**30** "The bread of the Presence" is referred to here and also in I Samuel 21:6 and 1 Kings 7:48. In this phrase "presence" (lit., "faces") stands for the Divine Person himself, just as the "angel of his presence" (lit., "face[s]") in Isaiah 63:9, or in Exodus 33:14-15, "my Presence [lit., 'my face'] shall go with you," is an OT designation of Christ. The twelve loaves symbolize the twelve tribes of Israel as constantly being under the scrutiny, care, and preservation of God (cf. John 6:32-38). Just as that bread also supplied the needs of priests on the Sabbath in the Holy Place (see Lev 24:5-9), so Jesus also meets the needs of his children in this generation (John 6:32-35).<sup>13</sup>

If we can understand that leavening in general is used to represent sin, hypocrisy and pride, if we can understand that the temple shewbread was unleavened, and if we can understand that Yeshua is the antitype of the temple shewbread, then why is it so difficult to understand that Yeshua would not have offered *leavened bread* as representing the body that He gave as the greatest sacrifice of all time?

### Was Yeshua's Sacrifice Offered With Leavened Bread?

Those who appreciate typology understand that Yeshua is the antitype of the Passover lamb (I Cor 5:7). What these same people may *not* appreciate is the fact that the law forbids offering leavened bread with the blood of a sacrifice. Here is what we read in Exodus 23:18:

<sup>18</sup> Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain until the morning.

Hopefully, we already understand that the cup Yeshua offered to His disciples represented the blood that He was about to shed for the remission of sins, but what about the bread that He offered? Since the bread that Yeshua offered to His disciples constituted a portion of His last meal, those who believe that it was *leavened* have no choice but to believe that the greatest sacrifice of all time was offered *with leavened bread in His system*. On the other hand, June and I are persuaded that Yeshua, the fulfillment of the sacrificial lamb, also fulfilled the commandment of Exodus 23:18 to *not* be offered with leavened bread. The Apostle Paul had this same understanding when he penned I Corinthians 5:6-8:

<sup>6</sup> Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

<sup>12</sup> From *Jamieson, Fausset & Brown's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1961, p. 74.

<sup>13</sup> *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 9, Frank E. Gæbelein, General Editor, "Exodus," by Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1990, p. 456.

<sup>7</sup> Purge 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:

<sup>8</sup> Therefore 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.

Was Yeshua the Messiah offered as a *leavened* sacrifice? Yahweh forbid! Yeshua's shed blood (the cup of wine) and the body He was willing to give for the redemption of mankind were both pure and unleavened, just as prescribed in Exodus 23:18. We must remember that the Passover sacrifice is a lamb and Yeshua is the fulfillment of that lamb, without blemish, just as prescribed in Exodus 12:5:

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

The Apostle Peter understood that Yeshua is the fulfillment of the Passover lamb:

1 Peter 1:18-19 – Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Messiah, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

When we remember the ultimate sacrifice for our sins, let's purge out the old leaven and remember the price Yeshua paid when He willingly offered a pure, sinless body for our redemption.

### **Did Yeshua Break *Leavened* Bread During the Feast of Unleavened Bread?**

For some reason, many who are persuaded that Yeshua and His disciples ate leavened bread at the Last Supper have the impression that if the Feast of Unleavened Bread has not yet begun, then it is unthinkable or maybe even *wrong* to eat unleavened bread prior to the onset of Abib 15. Here's what an anonymous author from a group known as Hope of Israel Ministries writes:

Also, according to Jewish law of the times (halakha), it was absolutely forbidden to eat unleavened bread during the 24-hour period prior to the first night of Unleavened Bread! This was a distinction made by law to sanctify (set apart) the sacred meaning of the Feast from whatever they may have eaten for bread on the previous days. This means that Yeshua and the disciples could not have eaten unleavened bread the evening prior to the "night to be much observed"!<sup>14</sup>

Please notice that the above commentary stating that it was forbidden to partake of unleavened bread during the 24-hour period prior to the first night of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is lacking supportive documentation. It is crying for validation, but the author either

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<sup>14</sup> "Have We Been Neglecting the Sacred Fellowship Meal?" by HOIM Staff, Hope of Israel Ministries, P.O. Box 853, Azusa, CA 91702, U.S.A., [www.hope-of-israel.org/fellmeal.htm](http://www.hope-of-israel.org/fellmeal.htm).

voluntarily chose to omit it or maybe he just forgot. Either way, neither June nor I are aware of any “law” prohibiting the consumption of unleavened bread. But even if such a “law” did exist, it would be a law of man, not a law issued from Yahweh because no such law is found within Torah.

Even among those who are unaware of any Jewish “halakhah” forbidding the consumption of unleavened bread prior to the feast, some have told us that such an act would be paradoxical because to them it doesn’t make any sense to have unleavened bread in one setting, then eat a meal with leavened bread followed by seven days of unleavened bread. Therefore, since the Greek word used for the bread eaten at the Last Supper (*arton*) is a word that can be used in reference to *any* bread in general, many are persuaded that this must mean that Yeshua broke a loaf of leavened bread. But if this is true, did Yeshua *also* break a loaf of leavened bread during the Feast of Unleavened Bread? As we are about to see, if the Greek word *arton* is a strong clue that Yeshua offered leavened bread to His disciples at the Last Supper, then it must likewise be considered a strong clue that Yeshua offered leavened bread to the two men with whom He visited on the way to Emmaus, a journey that took place during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. A participant in that 2006 online discussion forum named Chuck Baldwin supplied the following commentary to bring out this very significant point:

I would like to offer a proof that "artos" does NOT mean "leavened bread"; it simply means "bread". The type, if significant, would either be stated explicitly, or inferred from the context.

I believe that the "artos" eaten at Yahshua's last Passover Meal was the same kind of "artos" that was eaten later on the 1st day of the week (or beginning of the 2nd) by Yahshua and the 2 disciples from the Emmaus Road:

quote:

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Lu 24:13 And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs...

Lu 24:30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread <740=artos>, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

Lu 24:35 And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread <740=artos>.

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Since this was still within the Days of U/B, the "artos" must have been unleavened.

Needless to say, Chuck’s observation that the *artos* broken by Yeshua that evening must have been *unleavened* is absolutely correct. Yeshua would not have blessed and broken a loaf of leavened bread during the Feast of Unleavened Bread; yet the Greek word for the bread He broke that evening is *artos*, the same word the opposition claims “proves” that the bread He had with His disciples at the Last Supper was leavened. The author of the Hope of Israel Ministries article quoted above actually cites the story of Yeshua and the men on the road to Emmaus, but

for some reason he doesn't make the connection that the *artos* that Yeshua broke that evening must have been *unleavened*.

### But What's Wrong With Leavened Bread?

There is some debate as to whether or not leavening is *always* a reference to sin or hypocrisy; there is no debate regarding the term *unleavened*, which consistently carries a righteous and positive connotation. Nevertheless, those who support believing that Yeshua offered leavened bread as the representation of His sinless body have found what they believe are righteous intrinsic meanings that should be attributed to this form of bread. Matthew Janzen, in an additional contribution to that online forum discussion that I participated in back in 2006, offered the following defense of leavening:

**2:** Leavened bread or leavening in general is not always a type of sin in Scripture. We hear much about a "little leaven, leavening the whole lump" (1 Cor. 5:6) in reference to sin, but we hear very little about the positive use of leaven in Scripture. Leaven does not always symbolize evil as the following Scriptures prove:

Besides the cakes, he shall offer for his offering leavened bread with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace offerings. {Lev. 7:13}

Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto Yahweh. {Lev. 23:17}

Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. {Mt. 13:33}

Not only do Scriptures present a positive side to leaven, Yeshua even refers to himself as the *artos* - "leavened bread" which came down from heaven (John 6:35, 41, 48, 51). Some may find this inappropriate because they have been taught that all uses of leavened bread in Scripture are a reference to sin. This must be an erroneous teaching because the passages in John are not in reference to the Messiah being a sinner at all.

We have already shown that Matthew's preconceived understanding that *artos* must refer to "leavened bread" is simply wrong. Nevertheless, we will concede that leavened bread doesn't always have a negative connotation in Scripture. The only thing is, can any of those noble leavened bread references be applied to Yeshua the Messiah? In response to the above commentary, I countered that whenever leavened bread was offered in sacrifice, it was not representative of Yeshua. I am persuaded that it was representative of the saints who, though sinners, are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Here's one of the verses that Matthew Janzen cited:

Lev. 23:17 --Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto Yahweh.

Who are the “firstfruits unto Yahweh” referenced above? I believe the answer is in Revelation 14:4:

Rev. 14:4 -- These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being* the firstfruits unto the Almighty and to the Lamb.

At the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Passover lamb, with the accompanying wine and unleavened bread, can properly be understood as being symbolic of Yeshua the Messiah. At the Feast of Pentecost, the two leavened wave loaves can be understood as being representative of the saints who, though sinners, were redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. These – the saints – are referred to as “the firstfruits unto the Almighty.” We understand that many will counter that Yeshua is also referred to as a “firstfruit,”<sup>15</sup> and there should be no question that Yeshua is the “first of the firstfruits,” but when you combine the perfect “first of the firstfruits” (Yeshua) with those imperfect saints whom He redeems, it’s easy to see how such a mixed arrangement could not be represented by unleavened bread. Thus, if you wish to use leavened bread for the Memorial Supper, I can see doing it if you wish to memorialize those who are to be redeemed among men, but I cannot see doing so if you wish to memorialize the One who gave His sinless body to redeem us.

### Why Would We Want to Eat the “Bread of Affliction”?

The author of the Hope of Israel Ministries article “Mystery of Mysteries -- What Is the Showbread?” unveils a disturbing aversion to unleavened bread. He not only attempts to validate believing that the Temple shewbread was leavened, but he goes to great lengths to glorify leavened bread while attempting to denigrate unleavened bread as depicting “adversity and affliction.” Here’s an excerpt from his article:

Contrary to that many may assume, leavened bread is the MOST DESIRABLE of all bread. Its “nature” has been changed, by the yeast, into a product totally unlike the original grain from which it was made. The yeast changes the nature of the ground flour into a wonderful delicious product, appealing to YEHOVAH God and to man! This is a “type” of how YEHOVAH’s holy spirit changes our human nature into his divine and holy GOD nature (II Pet. 1:4). Furthermore, the showbread was a picture of the prosperity that YEHOVAH would bless His people with -- and **delicious leavened loaves of bread picture prosperity, whereas unleavened bread pictures adversity and affliction.**<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Cf., 1 Corinthians 15:23: “But every man in his own order: Messiah the firstfruits; afterward they that are Messiah’s at His coming.”

<sup>16</sup> “Mystery of Mysteries -- What Is the Showbread?” by HOIM Staff, Hope of Israel Ministries, P.O. Box 853, Azusa, CA 91702, U.S.A., [www.hope-of-israel.org/showbred.htm](http://www.hope-of-israel.org/showbred.htm).

Where in Scripture does the above author find just cause to identify unleavened bread with adversity and affliction? Perhaps it is from Deuteronomy 16:2-3, cited below:

<sup>2</sup> Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto Yahweh thy Almighty, of the flock and the herd, in the place which Yahweh shall choose to place His name there.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

The anonymous author of the Hope of Israel Ministries article would have his constituents believe that we should loathe unleavened bread. After all, it's the bread of *affliction*. Who in their right mind would want to eat the bread of *affliction*? Well, June and I would and we're about to explain why.

First, though, let's read Matthew Janzen's allusion to unleavened bread as the "bread of affliction." He contributed the following to our 2006 online forum discussion on this topic:

Someone who uses leaven bread for the Master's Supper is not wishing to consider Yeshua as a sinner. That would be like me saying that someone who uses *unleavened* bread for the Master's Supper wishes to consider Yeshua an affliction (Deuteronomy 16:3); I would never make such an accusation. I understand the Scriptures to teach both a positive and negative connotation to both leavened and unleavened bread.

Shown below is my response to the above and I stand by the following response 11 years later:

I reply: Your analogy about considering Yeshua as an "affliction" (Deut. 16:3) doesn't work because, for one thing, I believe you misinterpret the text of that verse. If this is how you understand the intent of that verse, then all I can say is, you must observe a **miserable** Feast of Unleavened Bread each year! We eat the "bread of affliction" with joy because it is a remembrance and acknowledgement that our ancestors were once slaves in Egypt, but we **celebrate** the deliverance. It's been said that we cannot really appreciate the celebration unless we experience the pain of humiliation. This is why we are to eat the "bread of affliction" during the feast, not because we are to experience affliction, but to remember and appreciate the victory.

Indeed, in this sense, we can even appreciate Yeshua as the "bread of affliction," as He was afflicted for us, suffering because of our sins ... but He has delivered us from the bondage of sin, and for that we can celebrate. So Matthew, if you wish to accuse me of considering Yeshua the "bread of affliction," that would be just fine by me.

We are so thankful that Yeshua is our “bread of affliction”!

### **Make Ready the Passover – How?**

In April 2016 we were saddened by the loss of a dear friend in the faith. After his memorial service, a friend and I drove to a nearby assembly where a fellowship meal was to be held in his honor. Although the Feast of Unleavened Bread was still a week away, there were signs in the building asking everyone to please refrain from bringing leavened products into the area because it had already been “deleavened.” This makes sense. Why would you go to all the trouble of deleavening an area prior to the Feast of Unleavened Bread only to bring in leavened products between the two time periods? Yet, this is precisely what those who regard the bread that Yeshua offered to His disciples as having been leavened bread must believe occurred prior to the Last Supper. According to their scenario, the disciples deleavened the upper room, then they brought in leavened bread so Yeshua could use that form of bread as the most fitting representation of His sinless body. Does such a scenario make sense? On the contrary. You see, we read that the disciples “made ready the Passover” in Luke 22:13, which presumes that they removed all leavening from the room in which they were expecting to eat the Passover meal with Yeshua, and no leavened products would have been allowed in the room or building until the conclusion of the Feast of Unleavened Bread:

Luke 22:8 -- And he (Yeshua) sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

Luke 22:13 -- And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

Question: If Peter and John *didn't* remove any and all leavening from the room in which the disciples were about to have the Last Supper with Yeshua, then exactly what did they do to “make ready the Passover”? Are we truly supposed to believe that those same disciples brought *leavened bread* back into the room in order for Yeshua to demonstrate that leavened bread is a more fitting representation of His body than *unleavened bread*?

The plain understanding brought forth in the Bible is that leavened bread is a general representation of sin and hypocrisy – as exemplified by the general state of mankind, whereas unleavened bread is symbolic of the removal of sin, which is what we should all strive to symbolically do during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, even though we know the best we can do is try. Yeshua is the standard. He’s the perfect, unblemished Lamb of Yahweh, without sin and therefore properly represented by *unleavened bread*.

