

Feast of Unleavened Bread

Weekly Sabbath Service

Songs of Praise
Opening Prayer

The week-long Feast of Unleavened Bread symbolises the continuing changes in our life as we learn to walk in Jehovah's Way. This weekly Sabbath is special as it is a combination of a regular weekly Sabbath and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It thus reflects on our Lord Jah as the Creator and also reminds us of our coming redemption and joyous everlasting life with Jeshua, our saviour.

First, let us reflect on Jehovah and Jeshua as our Creators:
(Hebrews 1:1-12)

God, who in various places and in different forms,¹ spoke with our fathers by the prophets from the beginning, He has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed the Heir of all things,² and by Him He made the universe; for He is the brilliance of His glory and the image of His being, and is upholding all things by the power of His Word, and when He had personally accomplished the cleansing of our sins, He sat down at the right side of the Majesty on high,³ and this One is far greater than the representatives, just as the Name He possesses is so much greater than theirs. For to which of the representatives did God ever say: "You are

¹ See Joh 1:18 footnote.

² See Jeshua's parable on this in Mat 21:33-44, Mar 12:1-11 & Luk 20:9-18.

³ Psa 110:1

Unleavened Bread Weekly Sabbath

My Son, today I have begotten You.”⁴ And again: “I will be His Father, and He will be My Son.”⁵

But again, when He brings the Firstborn into the universe, He says: “All the representatives of God shall worship Him.”⁶ And of the representatives He speaks in this way: “He makes His representatives spirits and His servants flaming fire.”⁷ But about the Son He says: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Your Kingdom.⁸ You have loved righteousness and You have hated evil. Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions.”⁹

And again: “You, in the beginning, laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands.¹⁰ They will pass away, but You will remain; and they will all wear out like a garment; and like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You will remain Yourself, and Your years will not end.”¹¹
Hebrews 1:1-12

What wonderful Creators we have! And how fantastic will it be to watch as they collapse our universe when it is old and then totally renew it?

And what of the Feast of Unleavened Bread as it was being kept by the Israelites as they were fleeing from Egypt? They had God leading, supporting, protecting and sustaining them as they walked rapidly towards freedom, enduring long marches that some days continued day and night: (Exodus 13:20-22)

⁴ Psa 2:7

⁵ 2Sa 7:14

⁶ Deu 32:43 (Septuagint), less directly in Psa 97:7

⁷ Psa 104:4

⁸ Num 24:17

⁹ Psa 45:6-7

¹⁰ Genesis chapters 1 & 2, Joh 1:1-3

¹¹ Psa 102:25-27

So they took their journey from Succoth¹² and camped in Etham¹³ at the edge of the wilderness. And Jehovah went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people.¹⁴

But they had to do the walking to become truly free from Egypt. Like them, we need to participate in God's transformation of our lives. Like them, we need to be willing to keep on going, even when it is beyond what we can do in our own strength. Just as God enabled them with extra strength, He is merciful and will enable us in our struggles to overcome Satan and our fallen nature.

The Book of Romans teaches us that we all need Jehovah's mercy, which is given to us through His Son Jeshua. This passage also shows that the Gentiles are being accepted by Jehovah now, but in the future the nation of Israel will also be redeemed: (Romans 11:26 to 12:2)

And then all Israel will live, just as it is written: "The Redeemer will come from Zion, and He will turn away evil from Jacob;¹⁵ Then there will be a covenant for them from Myself, when I shall forgive them their sins."¹⁶ But in the Good News they are enemies for your sake, but in the selection they are beloved because of the fathers. For God is not changeable in His gifts and in His calling.

For just as you at the first were disobedient to God,

¹² Means "Booths"

¹³ Means "Their plowshare with them"

¹⁴ Isa 40:28-31 & 1 Cor 10:1-3

¹⁵ Isa 59:20

¹⁶ Isa 61:7-8

Unleavened Bread Weekly Sabbath

now you have favour because of their disobedience, even as these also have been disobedient to the mercy upon you now, there shall also be mercy upon them. For God has confined everyone to disobedience, so that He shall have mercy on everyone.

Oh, the depth of the riches and the wisdom and knowledge of God! For man cannot search out His judgements and His ways cannot be traced!¹⁷ “For who has known the mind of Jehovah? Or who has become His counsellor?”¹⁸ “Or who has first given to Him and then been paid back by Him?”¹⁹ For all is from Him and all is by Him and all is in His hand, that praises and blessings be to Him for an eternity of eternities. Amen.

Therefore I beg you, my brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is a reasonable service. And you are not to imitate this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, and you shall discover what is the good, acceptable and perfect will of God.

And so we are all to be living sacrifices to our God, and must be transformed by the renewing of our minds. And we must always remember that every one of us have our role to fulfil in Lord Jah’s church: (Romans 12:3-16)

For I say, through the grace given to me, to all of you, that you should not value yourself beyond what is necessary, but you should only value yourself modestly, as God distributes to every person a measure of faith. For just as there are many parts in one body, and all of

¹⁷ Dan 1:17, Psa 139:6

¹⁸ Isa 40:13, Lord Jah (MarJah) in the Peshitta, councillor is literally “Lord of Council”.

¹⁹ Job 35:7, Job 41:11

the parts do not have the same function, so we also, who are many, are one body in the Anointed, and each one of us is a part of each other.

Now there are a variety of gifts corresponding to the grace that is given to us. There is that of prophecy, according to the measure of his faith; there is that of service, it is for that one in his service; and there is that of a teacher, used in his teaching; there is that of comforter, used in his comforting; and giving, used with generosity; and a main leader, used with diligence; and that of a caregiver, used with cheerfulness.

And do not let your love be deceitful, for you are to hate evil and cling to good. You are to be affectionate to your brethren and love one another, preferring to give honour to each other; be diligent and not lazy, be enthusiastic in spirit, and serving your Lord; be rejoicing in your hope, be enduring in your tribulations, be persistent in your prayers; be supportive of the needs of the saints, be friends of strangers. Bless your persecutors; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

And whatever you esteem about yourselves, do it also for your brethren. And do not esteem your opinions highly, but go to those who are humble. And do not think yourself wise in your own opinion.

We must always remember to do good to everyone: (Romans 12:17 to 13:14)

Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but you should be committed to doing good before all the children of men. If it is possible, according to all that comes from within you, make peace with everyone.

Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but put wrath in its place; for it is written, “If you do not execute

Unleavened Bread Weekly Sabbath

judgement for yourself, I will execute judgement for you.” says God.²⁰ And if your enemy hungers, feed him; and if he thirsts, give him a drink; and if you do these things for him, you will heap coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority that does not come from our God, and the authorities that exist are under instructions from God. Therefore whoever stands against the authority stands against the Instructions of God, and those who stand against them will bring judgement on themselves. For judges are not a terror to the doer of good, but to the evil. Therefore, if you do not want to be afraid of the authority, do good, and you will have praise from him. For he is God’s servant to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not wear the sword in vain; for he is God’s servant, a wrathful avenger on those who practice evil. Because of this, it is necessary for us to be subject, not only due to wrath but also for conscience’ sake.

Also because of this you pay taxes, for they are God’s servants established to do these things. Therefore render to each one what is owed: taxes to whom taxes are owed, customs to whom customs, reverence to whom reverence, and honour to whom honour. And you should not owe anyone anything except to love one another, for whoever loves his neighbour has fulfilled the Instructions. For this also, which says, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not covet,” and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, “You shall love your

²⁰ Probably derived from Deut 32:35, which has Jehovah, the Peshitta uses God in this instance.

Unleavened Bread Weekly Sabbath

7

neighbour as yourself.”²¹ Love does no evil to a neighbour, because love is the fulfilment of the Instructions.

And know this: that it is now the time, even the hour, to awake from our sleep; for now our Life²² is nearer to us than when we first believed. The night is now passed and the day has arrived. Therefore let us cast the works of darkness from us, and let us put on the armour of Light. And as those in the day, let us walk properly, not in revelry and not in drunkenness, not lying down in unchastity, not in envy and strife. But put on our Anointed Lord Jeshua, and make no provision for the lusts of your flesh. Romans 12:17 to 13:14

Let us always behave in a way that brings joy to Jeshua and our elders: (2 Corinthians 3:2 to 5:7)

For you are our letter, written in our hearts, and known and read by everyone; and you know that you are the Anointed’s letter, which is served by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of the heart of flesh. And in this way our trust is through the Anointed to God. We do not think we are sufficient in ourselves in anything, as our power is from God. He made us worthy to be servants of the new covenant, not by writing but by the Spirit; for the writing kills, but the Spirit gives life.

But if the service of death, written and carved in stone, was glorious, so that the children of Israel were not able to gaze at Moses’ face because of the glory of his face in that which is passing away, therefore how will the service of the Spirit not be greater in glory? For if the service of condemnation had one glory, how much more

²¹ Exo 20:13-17, Lev 19:18, Mat 22:38

²² Or salvation.

Unleavened Bread Weekly Sabbath

will the service of righteousness exceed it in glory? For what was glorified was not even glorious in comparison to the excellent glory of this. For if what is passing away has had its glory, that which remains is so much more glorious.

Therefore, because we have this hope, we all the more conduct ourselves with boldness; and not like Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not gaze at the end of what was passing away. But their understanding was blinded. For until this day, whenever the Old Covenant is read, that veil remains over them, and it is not revealed to them that it is being abolished by the Messiah. And even today, whenever Moses is read, the veil lies over their heart. But whenever anyone turns to Jehovah, the veil is taken away from him.²³

Now Jehovah is the Spirit; and there is freedom wherever the Spirit of Jehovah is.²⁴ But we, all of us with unveiled faces, see as in a mirror the glory of Lord Jah, and we are being changed into that image from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord Jah. Because we hold this service, this is not tiresome to us, as this mercy has come upon us. But we reject shameful secrets and we do not walk in craftiness and we do not deny the word of God, but by revealing the truth we show our souls and our minds to all the children of men before God.

But even if our Good News is hidden, it is hidden to those who are lost, those whose intellects the god of this world has blinded because they do not believe, lest the light of the Good News of the glory of Messiah, who is the image of God, should dawn on them. For we do not preach ourselves, but the Messiah, Jeshua our Lord, and we who are your servants for Jeshua's sake. For it is God

²³ As in Exo 34:33-35, Lord Jah (MarJah) in the Peshitta.

²⁴ As in Isa 61:1-2, Lord Jah (MarJah) in the Peshitta.

Unleavened Bread Weekly Sabbath

who said that from the darkness the light shall shine. He has dawned in our hearts and enlightened us with the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeshua the Anointed.

But in us this treasure is in earthen vessels, that the greatness of the power will be from God and not from us. For in all things we are hard pressed, yet not strangled; we are harassed, but we are not condemned; we are persecuted, but we are not forsaken; we are struck down, but we are not defeated; all the time we bear the dying of Jeshua in our bodies, that the life of Jeshua may also be revealed in our bodies.

For if we, the living, are delivered to death for Jeshua's sake, in this way also the life of Jeshua will be revealed in our mortal body. Now death labours in us and life in you. Therefore, as we all have that one spirit of faith in us, as it is written, "I believed and because of this I spoke,"²⁵ we also believe and because of this we speak. And we know that He who raised our Lord Jeshua will also raise us by Jeshua, and will bring us to Him with you. For everything is for your sakes, and when grace abounds through many, thanksgiving will abound to the glory of God.

Because of this, it is not tiresome to us, even if our external being is being destroyed. Conversely, we are being renewed from within day by day. For though the suffering of this time is very small and fleeting, it prepares us for great glory without limits, for ever and ever. For we do not rejoice in these things which are seen, but in these things which are not seen. For the things seen are for this time, but the things which are not seen are those that are eternal. For we know that if our house on earth, this body, is destroyed, there is a building from God for us, a house made without the work of

²⁵ Psa 116:10

Unleavened Bread Weekly Sabbath

hands, eternal in the heavens.

And concerning this we are made to groan, as we long to wear our house which is from heaven, for indeed, though we are clothed, we seem to be naked to us. For while we are now in this house we are made to groan from its weight; not because we want to be stripped, but that we want to put on Life, that this mortality may be swallowed up.

And He who prepares us for this is God, who gives us the pledge guarantee of His Spirit. Therefore, because of this we know and are convinced that as long as we live in the body we are living away from our home with our Lord. For we walk by faith, and not by sight. 2 Corinthians 3:2 to 5:7

Let us pray that our Lord Jah will guide our hearts: (2 Thessalonians 2:16 to 3:5)

Now He, our Lord Jeshua Messiah Himself, and God our Father, who have loved us and given us everlasting comfort and good hope by His grace; may He comfort and establish your hearts in all words and every good work.

From now on, brethren, pray for us, that the word of our Lord will be running and be glorified in every place, as it is with you, and that we will be saved from evil and vicious men; for not every person is of the faith. For Lord Jah is faithful; He will keep you and will deliver you from evil.

And we put our trust in you in our Lord, that whatever we command you, you have done and you will also do. And our Lord will guide your hearts into the love of God and into preaching the Anointed.

Let us all become imitators of those who are heirs of the Promise:

(Hebrews 6:10-20)

For God is not evil, that He would forget your works and your love which you have shown in His name, in that you have served the saints, and you do serve. And we desire that each one of you have this diligence for the perfection of your hope until the end, and that you do not become faint, but that you become imitators of those who in faith and in patience have become heirs of the promise.

For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, and He said, "Blessing, I will bless you, and multiplying, I will multiply you." And so, he was patient and he received the promise.

For the children of men, they swear by that which is greater than them, and in every dispute there is among them, a sure end is brought to it by an oath. Therefore God was all the more willing to show the heirs of the promise that His declaration would not change, so He bound it with an oath, that by two things which cannot be changed, because God cannot lie, it is great comfort to us who have sought refuge in Him, and we may lay hold of the hope which has been promised to us.

It is He who is to us like an anchor which holds fast in our soul, that we will not be moved and will enter inside the veil, where Jeshua has entered already, for our sake, and has become the eternal High Priest in the image of Melchizedek.

Never forget that Jehovah God is both our Creator and our Anchor. He will lead us through the veil, to where He and Jeshua are waiting for us.

Last, and certainly not least, as this Sabbath ended in the year of our Messiah's Impalement, it marked the moment of His

12

Unleavened Bread Weekly Sabbath

Resurrection. We will rejoice in this further in the Wave Sheaf Offering ceremony.

Closing Prayer

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