

Question & Answers

Questions for His Grace Bishop Youssef

H. G. Bishop Youssef answers your questions concerning the Holy Bible, spirituality and living everyday life. Send your questions to: MightyArrows@Suscopts.org



In the Last Supper when the Lord Jesus Christ, Himself a Jew, was celebrating the Passover He would have used unleavened bread. In the Coptic Orthodox Church the bread is not unleavened. What is the reason for this?

The bread at the Mysterious Supper was leavened bread. This we know because in the Greek original manuscripts of the Holy Gospels, it is referred to as 'artos', not as 'aksimon' (unleavened bread).

Following is the order of the events:

First, the Lord Jesus Christ ate the Passover with unleavened bread (this is the Last Supper)

Then after washing the disciples' feet, He instituted the Eucharist with leavened bread (this is the Mystical or Mysterious Supper)

How did the Lord use leavened bread although it was not allowed for Jews to keep any leaven during the Passover?

Actually there are many opinions regarding this point. The most acceptable opinion is the following:

The Passover is a lunar feast (calculated based on the moon). Usually there is no consensus about what is the first day of

the lunar month (as it happens till today in the calculating the Muslims' feasts which are lunar feasts). This was the case with Jewish feasts too. So on the year of the crucifixion of the Lord, some people calculated the Passover Day to be Thursday and others to be Friday. So when the Lord Jesus Christ ate the Passover on Thursday, He followed the group that celebrated the Passover on Thursday and when He used leavened bread for the Mysterious Supper, this was not breaking of the Law because there is another group who was celebrating the Passover on Friday. Also this proved very meaningful because He offered His Body and Blood in the Mysterious Supper during the slaying of the Passover Lamb and on the next day, He offered Himself also on the Holy Cross during the slaying of the Passover Lamb, thus He became our Passover Lamb (1 Corinthians 5: 7).

Why did the Lord Jesus Christ use leavened bread?

- 1) Leaven is a symbol of sin (1 Corinthians 5: 7, 8) and our Lord is the Lamb of God Who carried the sin of the whole world (John 1:29).
- 2) Leavened bread is living bread which represents the rising of the Lord Jesus Christ.

