

First Day of Unleavened Bread Unleavened In Jesus Christ

Fred R. Coulter—April 4, 2015

Greeting's, brethren! Welcome to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, 2015. Time just seems to keep going, and the days in which we are living are getting more difficult and more trying. This is why we need to keep the Feasts of God. They're very important. As a matter of fact, the key to understanding them is keeping them and growing in grace and knowledge, so that every year we learn even more.

It's just like Jesus said, 'A scribe, when he's teaching, will bring some things out that are old, some things that are new,' and when you combine them together, we grow in grace and knowledge, and understanding of the Word of God, of ourselves and of our calling.

We always begin in Lev. 23, because this is exactly like a seed. You can look at the seed but you can't tell what the plant will be. You can look at the seed and some of them are so small that they are insignificant. But yet, stored within that seed is everything that the plant will be. Likewise with the Word of God: 'line upon line, here a little, there a little,' going back and looking at the things that we already know, looking at certain things that are new that we put together. Also, understanding ourselves and the reason for it.

This is why Lev. 23 starts out with the Sabbath, the appointed weekly day that God wants us to come before Him. It is *the Lord's Sabbath!* Likewise with the Holy Days.

Leviticus 23:4: "These *are* the appointed Feasts of the LORD..."

- Who appointed them? *God did!*
- Who owns them? *God does!*
- Who tells us what we are to do on those days? *God does through His Word and led by His Spirit!*

"...Holy convocations, which you shall... [meaning you are obligated to do it. This is for the Levites and for the ministers and elders, as well.] ...proclaim in their appointed seasons" (v 4).

- Who did the appointing times? *God did!*
- On what day of creation did He set it in motion? *Day four!*

God gave His Calculated Hebrew Calendar, and any other calendar is not a calendar of God; it's just that simple. When does the day starts and end? *Sunset!* It's that simple! Notice the first thing that we

have already covered and observed. We have had the Passover:

Verse 5: "In the fourteenth *day* of the first month, between the two evenings... [between sunset and dark] ...is the LORD'S Passover, and **on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD....**" (vs 5-6). That is today. It began last night with The Night to be Much Observed unto the Lord. That is a day that God commands us to keep. It's not something that men have devised; it is what ***God has devised.***

How that on that night—as we saw last night—the children of Israel began to leave Egypt, just as the sun was going down. We'll look at that in just a minute in relationship to the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

"...**You must eat unleavened bread seven days....** [That's simple enough—isn't it?] ...On the first day you shall have a Holy convocation.... [which is what we're doing today] ...You shall not *do any servile work therein*, but you shall offer a fire offering to the LORD seven days...." (vs 7-8). That's what the priests were to do; we are to bring an offering to God during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The other instructions go for counting the Wave Sheaf Offering, so we'll save that for that time. These are things that we are to know, understand, follow, believe and obey.

Deuteronomy 16:16: "Three times in a year shall all your males appear before the LORD your God in the place which He shall choose..." The reason that the males are to be there, because they're the heads of the families. Women, because of childbirth, may not be able to come. So, God says that all the men are to come. Of course, when the rest of the family is able to come, they are all to come.

"...in the Feast of Unleavened Bread... [that's now] ...and in the Feast of Weeks... [Pentecost; we will observed that on May 24 this year] ...and in the Feast of Tabernacles. And they shall not appear before the LORD empty, very man *shall give* as he is able..." (vs 16-17).

In giving these offerings we're also to look at many things:

- our spiritual blessings
- our physical blessings

- how much that we want to devote to God

All of those are something that each one of us must choose to do. It is coming before God to thank Him for all the things that He has done:

- thank Him for His knowledge
- thank Him for His Truth

There isn't one of us that got here without hearing the Gospel first, and the Gospel being preached in all the world. Some of us years ago, some of us just recently. But nevertheless we are to bring these offerings, which are *thank offerings* to God of our own free will, by our own free determination.

Verse 17: "Every man *shall give* as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God, which He has given you." This is between you and God!

God will bless you for it, as the Apostle Paul says, 'God has sufficiency in all things' to provide for us in all of our circumstances. God does not want us to give what we don't have. But what we are able to give, and we have determined in our own mind what to give, remember that God loves a generous giver, and God's blessings come because—not of the amount that we give—of our heart, attitude and willingness to God, and our love to God to obey Him!

(pause for the offering)

We're going to learn some lessons here that apply to us in the New Covenant. It applied to the children of Israel, and remember that in many of the things that are in the Bible, you have the *physical command* for the children of Israel, letter of the law. In the New Testament you have the *spiritual command*, the Spirit of the Law. Of course, Jesus came and magnified the Law to make it glorious, and to put the Law in its proper perspective in how God wants it to be accomplished in our lives and in our relationship with Him, as well.

Exodus 12:51: "And it came to pass **the very same day...**" That's the Night to be Much Remembered unto the Lord, the very same day that God made the covenant with Abraham (Gen. 15).

"...when the LORD brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies" (v 51). This looks back for us, God calling us out of the world. The world is called *Sodom and Egypt* (Rev. 11). That's sure the way that it is turning out! Remember:

- the Word of God is *always true*
- the Word of God is *always meaningful*
- the Word of God *will take place and come*

to pass just exactly as God has said

Exodus 13:1: "Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Sanctify all the firstborn to Me, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, of man and of beast. It *is* Mine.'" That's interesting, because we are called *The Church of the Firstborn* registered in the *Book of Life* in heaven above (Heb. 12:23)

- we are special to God
- we are the Church of the Firstborn

That means that we are dedicated to God for all eternity! That's something to really consider and understand.

Verse 3: "And Moses said to the people, 'Remember this day *in* which you came out of Egypt...'" We are to remember that God has called us out of this world. Just like He told the children of Israel not to go back to Egypt, *we are not to go back into the world!*

"...out of the house of bondage..." (v 3). Pharaoh was a type of Satan. We have been released from Satan the devil. We have been bought with the price of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, redeemed to serve God.

When we go through and read these things, there are many spiritual applications that apply.

"...for the LORD brought you out from this place by the strength of His hand..." (v 3). We can say today, *by the might of His Spirit!*

"...There shall be no leavened bread eaten. On this day you are going out, in the month Abib. And it shall be when the LORD shall bring you into the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall keep this service in this month" (vs 3-5).

We know that in the New Testament the Apostle Paul said, 'Therefore, let us keep the Feast because Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us!' So, we have the Old Testament and we have the New Testament.

Verse 7: "Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And there shall be no leavened bread seen with you, nor shall there be leaven seen with you in all your borders."

If you think you had a difficult time getting the leaven out of your house, think about if it were the whole country! The way they did it was they had collection areas, and they burned it. They did it *before* the Passover Day. The Passover Day is a

separate unleavened bread day *before* the seven days of Unleavened Bread.

Verse 9: “And it shall be a sign to you upon your hand, and for a memorial between your eyes...” Where do we have it today? *Heb. 10—in our heart and mind!*

“...that the LORD’S law may be in your mouth... [actually become a very part of us, spiritually speaking] ...for with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt. You shall, therefore, keep this law in its season from year to year” (vs 9-10).

We are set aside as the firstborn. Here’s what the children of Israel were to do when they got into the land:

Verse 12: “You shall set apart to the LORD all that opens the womb, and every firstborn that comes of any animal which you have; the males *shall be* the LORD’S.... [in addition to the tithes and offerings] ...And every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb. And if you will not redeem it, then you shall break its neck...” It’s going to live to serve the Lord or die, but you can’t use it for yourself unless you redeem it.

All of these things fit in, like we find with *we have nothing we didn’t receive, and everything that we have comes from God!*

- every breath of air
- every morsel of food
- everything that there is, to have our lives with the physical things, that surround us

God has made it! We have to put it together with the raw materials. *God has made all the raw materials* is what I’m referring to.

Verse 14: “And it shall be when your son asks you in time to come, saying, ‘What does this *mean?*’ you shall say to him, ‘The LORD brought us out of Egypt by the strength of *His* hand, from the house of bondage. And it came to pass when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, the LORD killed all the firstborn of the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of animals. Therefore, I sacrifice to the LORD all that opens the womb, that are males. But all the firstborn of my sons I redeem.’” (vs 14-15). And the firstborn who was a female would go to the festival fund that they would have for keeping the feasts.

Let’s look at some things that are very important and get some spiritual applications of this. Let’s see that leaven is likened unto sin. Then Paul makes some very interesting statements. Here is a New Testament command to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread, as well as the Passover (1-Cor

5). The Corinthians had a problem with sin, with incest with the step-mother, and they had to put that man out of the Church for the sin. So, Paul says:

1-Corinthians 5:7: “Therefore, purge out the old leaven, so that you may become a new lump, *even* as you are unleavened [in Christ]...” Paul was telling them to get rid of the sin, purge it out, disfellowship the man; don’t let him be coming to church. You are to do that because you have *unleavened your home!*

Here’s a very great principle: What good does it do to unleaven your homes *if you don’t unleaven your lives?* Think of that! That can only come through Christ, and we will see how that will be done.

“...For Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us” (v 7). We have forgiveness of sin through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, His death and His resurrection. He is at the right hand of God as our High Priest right now.

Verse 8: “For this reason, **let us keep the Feast...**” It’s right there for everyone to read it. It doesn’t say not to keep it, it was for the Jews. It doesn’t say not to keep it because it has been done away.

It’s says, “...**let us keep the Feast** not with old leaven, nor with *the* leaven of malice and wickedness... [leaven equals sin] ...but **with the unleavened bread of sincerity and Truth**” (v 8). That is from the heart, the Truth coming from Christ, in Whom there is no sin.

Verse 6: “Your glorying *is* not good. Don’t you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?” *Leaven works in incrementalism* just like sin and Satan the devil. Paul says this in Gal. 5, as well. *A little leaven leavens the whole lump!*

Galatians 5:14: “For the whole law is fulfilled in this *commandment*: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’.... [in relationship with other people] ...But if you bite and devour one another, watch out *lest* you be consumed by one another. Now *this* I say...” (vs 14-16).

Here’s the whole purpose: You get rid of sin, which is getting rid of *spiritual* leaven, and you put in the way of Christ, which is symbolized by the Passover, the unleavened bread symbolizing God’s Word. That we put in God’s Word with God’s Spirit.

Verse 16: “Now *this* I say, walk by *the* Spirit... [of God] ...and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.” Don’t be devouring one another. Don’t be going back into the world and doing these things.

There is all too much warring and fighting

within the Churches of God, because men want to exalt themselves, want to have private doctrines. All of those are leaven!

Verse 9: “A little leaven leavens the whole lump.” It soon leads to great problems. Here is what we are fighting, and here is the way to overcome it:

Verse 16: “Now *this* I say, walk by *the* Spirit, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit...” (vs 16-17). There is that inner battle that goes on, that is very, very difficult to overcome. That’s something we need to realize.

Also, with the Holy Spirit of God, this is an important thing to remember: ***The Holy Spirit of God, in leading you, will bring to your remembrance the sins that you have committed. It will convict you in thought when you do something that’s not right against the laws and commandments of God, so that you can repent!***

“...and the Spirit against the flesh; and these things are opposed to each other...” (v 17). That’s the struggle! People in the world don’t have the same struggle we do. They live in sin; they accept sin. They like their little deceptions; they like their big deceptions. But with us, what are we focusing on? *The Spirit of loving God with all our heart, mind, soul and being!* Being led by the Holy Spirit to do those things. They “...are opposed to each other...”

“...so that you cannot do those things you wish to do” (v 17). Yes, it is hard, because *the whole purpose in overcoming is to overcome: self, Satan and sin!* All of those are part of getting the leaven out of our lives. They are opposed to each other, “...so that you cannot do those things you wish to do.”

We will see a little later what the Apostle Paul said about how he had to overcome. We will go through Rom. 7, which is a difficult chapter. I will go into it so that you will see that Rom. 7 tells us a great story, a great account of the Apostle Paul. Remember this:

- ***We are being perfected!***
- ***We are being saved!***

We haven’t arrived there, yet! Nor will we arrive there until the resurrection. Therefore, we always have to be growing in grace and knowledge and overcoming.

Verse 18: “But **if** you are led by *the* Spirit, you are not under *works* of law.” That means your relationship with God is not as the world, lorded over by the law, all subject to the law all the time.

We, with the grace of God, under grace, have direct access to God, and we are to have God’s Spirit to lead us.

Let’s see what the Apostle wrote when he had been an apostle for more than 20 years. I won’t explain everything in Rom 7, but know that when he uses the term *law* or *the law* he uses it to apply to many different things:

- the Law of God
- the law of marriage
- the law of sin and death

We will see part of that as we go through it.

Romans 7:6: “But now we have been released from the law... [the Old Covenant law of marriage] ...because we have died *to that* in which we were held so that we might serve in newness of *the* spirit, and not in *the* oldness of *the* letter.”

This tells us that in loving God and keeping His commandments, we are to do it in the spirit, motivated by the Spirit of God. It is the Spirit of God—Christ and God the Father dwelling *in us*—that gives us the energy, power and strength to overcome, to get rid of that leaven *within!*

Why, when we are baptized and receive the laying on of hands, doesn’t God remove ‘the law of sin and death’ within us? *That would mean that we’d be perfect!* But perfection is a process. Perfection is living, growing and overcoming. Being perfected and led by the Holy Spirit of God is the unleavening agent of God—pure, true and sinless—leading us in the way that we need to go.

God leaves the ‘law of sin and death’ in us ***so that we can understand that we have to put the effort*** forth in conjunction with God’s Spirit to be perfected, to be transformed with the renewing of our mind.

Verse 7: “What then shall we say? *Is* the Law sin? **MAY IT NEVER BE!** But I had not known sin, except through the Law. Furthermore, I would not have been conscious of lust, except *that* the Law said, ‘You shall not covet.’” Now we’re getting into the spiritual activation of the laws of God. Coveting is

- what you think
- what is in your heart
- what you are lusting after

Paul didn’t fully understand that until God called him. Notice how he expresses it, because **IF** you are following certain parts of the Law, but you’re rejecting other parts of the Law or—as the Apostle Paul was before he was converted—following the traditions of the elders instead of the laws and commandments of God, without the Spirit of God, you are in effect without law; from the point of view that you’re not led by the Spirit, you don’t

have the Spirit of God to lead you to keep the laws and commandments of God any way that is pleasing to Him.

Verse 8: “But sin, having grasped an opportunity by the commandment, worked out within me every *kind of* lust...” That’s what God’s Spirit does:

- it reveals the lust
- it reveals the leaven of sin:
 - ✓ lust
 - ✓ greed
 - ✓ vanity
 - ✓ jealousy

all the works of the flesh! It convicts us in heart of mind so that we will put it out, get it out of our lives, repent of it.

Verse 9: “For I was once alive without law; but after the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” How did he die? *In the watery grave of baptism!* He had to be alive to write it.

Verse 10: “And the commandment, which was meant to result in life, was found to be unto death for me.” Now he’s not keeping it in the letter of the Law, externally from him, while in his mind he has hate, murder, lust, covetousness and all the works of the flesh. When we’re converted, God is changing, renewing and converting the mind.

Verse 11: “Because sin, having taken opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed me.” *The wages of sin is death!* Then he died in the watery grave of baptism to come out of there to walk in newness of life with the Spirit of God.

Notice what Paul says of the laws and commandments of God. These things can only be spiritually understood. This explains why God has not removed ‘the law of sin and death’ from within us, because we must overcome. We must build in righteous character, which are the very attributes of God, spiritually, that we need so that when we are resurrected then we’ll be given a spirit mind and body, and all the things of the flesh will be left behind.

Verse 12: “Therefore, the Law *is* indeed Holy, and the commandment Holy and righteous and good. Now then, did that which *is* good become death to me? MAY IT NEVER BE! But **sin**, in order that it might truly be exposed as sin **in me** by that which *is* good... [the Holy Spirit] ...was working out death; so that, by means of the commandment, sin might become exceedingly sinful” (vs 12-13).

Just like Jesus said, ‘You’ve heard it in ancient times you shall not commit adultery, but I

say to you that anyone who lusts after a woman in his mind has already committed adultery. You can see the different standard. This is what Paul is bringing out here, the *spiritual standard*. Then we see that the thoughts that we are fighting and warring against, in our mind and heart, how exceeding sinful it is, and where it will lead if we don’t repent: *to spiritual death!*

- God has called us to life, through Christ
- God has called us to forgive our sins, through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ

We are to work on overcoming every single day, because we’ll see that there is a battle that goes on. You have the battle, I have the battle, everyone who has the Holy Spirit has the battle. ***That is purging out the internal leaven within***, by putting in—with God’s Spirit—the unleavenness of the purity of Christ, and of the laws of God, love of God and character of God.

The world doesn’t know this, v 14: “For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am carnal... [of and by himself without God’s Spirit he’s carnal] ...having been sold *as a slave* under sin.”

Now then, he explains the problem of growing and overcoming. This is why we keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because:

- we are to grow and overcome
- we are to develop the mind of Christ
- we are to have our minds transformed

To have it transformed doesn’t mean an instantaneous change, because we have the earnest of the Spirit to lead us

- so we can overcome
- so we can grow
- so we can recognize sin
- so we can repent of it
- so we can put it out

That’s why God has left it in there to have it erased bit-by-bit as we see and recognize the depths of sin that’s within the human mind.

Verse 15: “Because what I am working out myself, I do not know....” Doesn’t understand it. You don’t know what you’re doing. Have you ever gone along and done something and said, ‘I don’t know why I did that’? *Yeah, we’ve all done that!*

“...For what I do not desire to do, this I do; moreover, what I hate, this *is what* I do. **But if I am doing what I do not desire to do, I agree with the Law that it is good**” (vs 15-16)—and you begin to cease doing it.

Verse 17: “So then, I am no longer working

it out myself; rather, it is sin *that is* dwelling within me.” The way of human nature, and the way of the spirit of man with the lust of the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life—there and the vanity of vanities of human behavior.

Verse 18: “Because I fully understand that there is not dwelling within me—that is, within my fleshly being—*any* good. For the desire to do good is present within me; but how to work out that which is good, I do not find. For the good that I desire to do, I am not doing; but the evil that I do not desire to do, this I am doing. But if I do what I do not desire to do, I am no longer working it out myself, **but sin that is dwelling within me**” (vs 18-20). *Yes!*

Now you know why Christ had to have ‘the law of sin and death’ in Him—yet, never sin—in order to abolish ‘the law of sin and death,’ and the final step in doing that is the resurrection from the dead; to be changed from flesh to spirit.

Verse 21: “Consequently, I find this law *in my members*, that when I desire to do good, evil is present with me.” You’ve done that! You’ve done something really, really good, something really, really nice, felt good about it and know that you’re motivated by God to do it. The next day you turn around and you sin. BANG! ‘Where did that come from? I didn’t mean to do it

Well, that’s why God has left it there, because we still need to be cleansed. We still need to be unleavened. We still need to put in

- the unleavened bread of Christ
- the unleavened Word of God
- the pure, right, good and Truth

Verse 22: “For I delight in the Law of God according to the inward man; but I see another law within my own members, warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin that is within my own members” (vs 22-23).

It is part of the flesh, every cell of our being! That’s why keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. So that we understand that we are not going to accomplish the things of God *by our own ways!* We must have the Holy Spirit of God, and we must have the sacrifice of Christ.

There’s this battle going on that Paul says that he relies on Christ and serves Him with the mind, but the flesh is still goading him to go along, but he’s overcoming it. If you’re going through this:

- don’t feel down
- don’t feel bad
- don’t feel depressed
- **Go repent!**

Ask God to cleanse your mind, cleanse your heart, to help you with right thoughts and motivations, and that’s why there is prayer and study. If you are doing that, you are overcoming ‘the law of sin and death.’

Romans 8:1: “Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit; because the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus...” (vs 1-2)—**faith, repentance, receiving God’s Holy Spirit**; that’s the Spirit of Life within you, and **that is exposing the sin within so you can repent** and you can build the right character that you need.

Verse 2: “Because the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death.” That means ‘has given me the ability, through the law of the Spirit of Life—through Christ—to overcome ‘the law of sin and death.’ The last enemy to be destroyed is death!

Verse 3: “For what *was* impossible for the Law to do...”—outside of us. The Law cannot make anyone do anything. But within us—written in our heart and mind, led by the Holy Spirit of God—we *can overcome*. That is the deliverance that has been given to us.

So, don’t be discouraged with the process of overcoming. Don’t be discouraged because you find thoughts in your mind that you say, ‘Oh, where did that come from?’ *Well, that’s an evil thought that has been there, that you need to repent of and have it washed away through the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ and ‘the washing of the water by the Word!’*

Verse 3: “For what *was* impossible for the Law to do in that it was weak through the flesh... [without the Spirit of God you can’t do it] ...God, having sent His own Son in *the* likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh”—**Jesus’ own flesh, because He didn’t sin!** Like we’ve seen, He’s tempted in every way like we are. That is quite a fantastic thing that He was able to not sin!

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Let’s see how we are to overcome. We saw that we can overcome the sin through Christ and God’s Spirit. Overcoming self is the same thing, because man at his very best state is vanity. Remember, Solomon wrote the whole book of Ecclesiastes about the vanity of life without God. What does it amount to? *No one can take anything with them when they die!* All the great, important people of the past, you don’t know anything about them. All of those who are not great and important, we don’t have a clue as to who they are. But God

knows everyone.

There will be those in the first resurrection whom God has called now, and there will be those in the second resurrection that will be after the Millennium, who knew nothing about God. Think of the great love of God with that. They never had an opportunity for salvation in their first fleshly life, so He gives them a second fleshly life for an opportunity for salvation.

However, He has called us to be the firstborn church, and also the firstfruits, all pictured by Unleavened Bread and Pentecost.

Notice the spiritual application of this, as we have covered, Psalm 39:1: “I said, ‘I will take heed to my ways so that I do not sin with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked are before me.’” That is you do it mentally. We will see how God wants us to do it. That we are to get rid of the sin through repentance and the Spirit of God, and ***we are to put in:***

- the way of God
- the love of God
- the Truth of God
- all the attributes of the Spirit of God

through His Spirit!

God the Father and Jesus Christ are dwelling *in us* and making all of that possible. God is doing a work in us. God is the One Who is getting rid of the leaven within our lives, through the sacrifice, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Verse 2: “I became dumb, keeping silent; I said nothing good, and yet, my sorrow grew worse. My heart was hot within me; while I was musing, the fire burned; then I spoke with my tongue” (vs 2-3). Just thinking about human life and the futility of it. That’s what all of the philosophers go through: What is life? Where are we going to go? Look at all the good! Look at all the evil! They don’t have a clue!

So, David said, v 4: “O LORD, make me to know my end... [the end of every human life without the Spirit of God is death] ...and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how short lived I am.” *That is true!*

I’ll be 81 in July, but that seems like a short time to me. For someone in their early 20s, that seems like a long time. A lot of people get upset when they’re going to be 30-years-old. ‘That’s getting old.’ All of us with gray hair would that we were 30-years-old again. No, we don’t want to go through all of that again. We want to go forward and enter into the Kingdom of God at the resurrection.

Verse 5: “Behold, You have made my days as a handbreadth, and the span of my days is as nothing before You...” Solomon said, ‘What good is it if a man lives a thousand years twice told, but has nothing to do with God. That is vanity!’

“...Surely every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah” (v 5). You take that sentence and you put right up there alongside your television for a while, and when you’re watching things, notice the vanity, *vanity*, ***vanity***. Not only the pride and arrogance of it, vanity is more than that. Vanity is the futility of life. Vanity is doing good things, but die. You can’t take anything with you. *Vanity is that your life without God ends up being nothing!*

Verse 6: “Surely every man walks about in a vain show! Surely they are in an uproar in vain...” Sounds like Washington, DLC—District of Liars and Corruption!

“...He heaps up riches and does not know who shall gather them. And now, LORD, what do I wait for? **My hope is in You. Deliver me from all my transgressions;** make me not the reproach of the fool” (vs 6-8).

Let’s see how that is done! This is all important for us to understand. The process of conversion is an on-going operation that is taking place, with the Spirit of God combined with our choices, our prayer and study, desiring to do the will of God.

Romans 12:1: “I exhort you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God... [we need God’s mercies every day] ...to present your bodies a living sacrifice...”—totally dedicated to God. Why? *Because you belong to the Church of the Firstborn, dedicated to God! **We are God’s children!*** Think on that!

“...Holy and well pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service” (v 1). Let’s understand that too many people think that when they have trials, troubles and difficulties that they can’t please God.

Well, if you’re trying to do it in the flesh, no, you can’t please God. But *you can do* the things that please Him. Remember, the key thing about everything for the New Covenant is:

- the love of God
- the love of brethren
- the love of the laws of God
- the love of the commandments of God
- the love of the Word of God

All of that is to be brought into our heart and mind to transform it, which is another way of saying *being converted and developing the mind of Christ!*

1-John 3:18: “My little children, we should not love in word, nor with *our* tongues; rather, *we should love* in deed and in Truth... [from our heart and by our actions] ...And in this way we know that we are of the Truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him” (vs 18-19).

No need to be discouraged! No need getting down! When you hear someone say, ‘You’ve got to get sin out of your life.’ *All right! You can do that, but that’s only the first step! We grow in grace and knowledge and do the things that please God, because:*

- we are eating the unleavened bread of the Word of Truth
- we are using the unleavenedness of the Holy Spirit, which is Truth
- we are using the Spirit from God the Father and Jesus Christ to grow and overcome

Verse 20: “That if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts, and knows all things.” That’s why there’s repentance. That’s why if your conscience strikes you, it is the Spirit of God working within you to bring out that sin within your life so you can recognize it and repent of it.

Verse 21: “Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, *then* we have confidence toward God. And whatever we may ask we receive from Him **because we keep His commandments**... [How? *From our heart and mind!*] ...**and practice those things**... [growing in grace, knowledge, love, Truth and understanding] ...that are pleasing in His sight” (vs 21-22).

We *can do* those things that please God, and keeping the Feast of Unleavened Bread is pleasing to God. Getting rid of sin, thoughts of sin—lust and vanity—is pleasing to God. Overcoming Satan and the world is pleasing to God. Overcoming self is pleasing to God.

Verse 23: “And this is His commandment: that we believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and that we love one another, exactly as He gave commandment to us.” That’s what we need to be doing.

Do this: If you have a problem with someone—especially if it’s a long lasting problem, or you don’t like that person, or are bitter against that person—know this: ***Unless you repent and go make it right with your brother or sister, you’re not doing what is pleasing to God!*** God wants us to love one another as Jesus commanded us. So, we cannot have these petty, carnal, satanic things causing friction within the Body of Christ, within the fellowship groups, within our minds.

We can do these things, because of His Spirit, v 24: “And the one who keeps His commandments is dwelling in Him...” God is dwelling *in us*; He’s exposing these things; He’s wanting us to repent of it. He’s wanting us to see it and overcome it and get rid of it.

“...and He in him; and by this we know that He is dwelling in us: by the Spirit which He has given to us” (v 24). Let’s see what this is to do for us.

Romans 12:2: “**Do not conform yourselves to this world**...” That’s the mistake that people and Churches of God make. They want to be accepted by the world. You’re never going to be accepted by the world, so don’t worry about it. You be as nice as you can to people, but don’t be accepted by the world. They have a different standard. They have a different thing.

Sidebar: I talked to a man who thought this was a good thing. He thought that if we help the political system then we can change things so it won’t be so bad in the country. He went to a Tea Part Convention, and guess what, it was totally carnal! Though they mentioned God, and they do some things that are good, ***the Spirit of God is not there!*** Now is not the time to save the world, or save this government. Now is the time for Christ to be saving each one of us.

“...but **be transformed**... [a change everyday, every week, every month, every year—that’s conversion] (How?): ...by the renewing of your mind in order that you may prove what *is* well pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God” (v 2). That’s what God wants us to do.

Let’s see how that is done. This is something that shows all of this together working for the conversion and transforming of our mind:

2-Corinthians 10:4: “For the weapons of our warfare... [We’re fighting against Satan, self and sin!] *are* not carnal...” You cannot use humanly devised human self-improvement to produce spiritual results in your life. Without the Spirit of God, it will never last.

“...but mighty through God to *the* overthrowing of strongholds” (v 4). What is the strongest stronghold of all? *The thoughts in your mind!* Here’s how you do it:

Verse 5: “Casting down *vain* imaginations...” Those thoughts that come in are thoughts of:

- sin
- lust
- being contrary to God

- being contrary to the Word of God

Satan is there with his missiles, sending them into us. He's the 'prince of the power of the air' and those things will happen.

Have you ever been driving down the road and everything is just fine and all of a sudden BANG! Here comes this terrible thought into your mind, and you wonder where that came from! Well, probably from the 'prince of the power of the air.' Do we not have to war and fight against him? *Yes! Spiritually! Absolutely!* Maybe it is something that is lodged in there because of television. Maybe it is something that is lodged in your mind because of past experience.

God wants to bring it to your attention so you can repent of it. If it happens you can repent right there, rebuke it right on the spot, quietly, silently in your own mind. If you're in a car by yourself, you may shout out loud. That's up to you.

"...and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God..." (v 5). What do we pray every day? *Your will be done on earth*—that means in our lives—*as it is in heaven!* Casting it down!

"...and bringing into captivity every thought into the obedience of Christ" (v 5). That is the heart and core of transformation, conversion and spiritual-mindedness, right there.

Verse 6: "And having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience has been fulfilled."

Let's see how this is done. Let's see how our heart and mind is cleansed. This is a daily operation, and then we will see how we do it. We will see what we are to get rid of, and what we are to put in place of it.

Ephesians 5:26: "So that He [Christ] might sanctify it..." That is make the Church Holy, and that means making each individual part Holy, righteous and true:

- through the Spirit of God
- through the Word of God
- through the laws of God

—from the heart; sanctify it and make it Holy, "...having cleansed *it*... [our mind needs to be cleansed *continually*] ...with the washing of the water by *the Word*" (v 26). How does that work? This way:

- you study
- you pray
- sin is exposed in your mind
- you bring that vain thought into captivity

- you repent of it
- you expunge it from your life through the forgiveness of God
- ask for God's Spirit, through the Word of God, for the cleansing "...with the washing of the water by *the Word*" to renew and transform your mind

—so that you can have the mind of Christ. *That's the whole goal in it!* Notice that this is the *work of Christ in us!* Christ is doing it, but He wants our full cooperation. He wants our full attention with it, as well, without a doubt; no question about that at all.

Let's see how we are to accomplish this. The same operation:

- put the leaven out of your home
- *put the unleaven within your home*
- put the leaven out of your life
- *put the unleavenness of Christ within*

Let's see what we are to do. We are not to be like the world:

Ephesians 4:17: "So then, I declare and testify this in *the Lord* that you are no longer to walk even as the rest of *the Gentiles* are walking, in *the vanity* of their minds." That's why Paul said with the 'washing of the water by the Word.' *and* 'Bringing every thought and evil imagination into captivity to the obedience of Christ.' *You get rid of it! You repent of it!*

Verse 18: "Having *their* understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their hearts." Our hearts have been circumcised through the operation of baptism, so that:

- we are sensitive to God
- we are sensitive to His Word
- we respond to it

Verse 19: "They have cast off all feelings, *and* have given themselves up to licentiousness, to work every uncleanness with insatiable desire." That just the way the world is today, without a doubt. That's why we are not to be like that.

Verse 20: "But you have not so learned Christ; if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, according to *the Truth* in Jesus: That concerning your former conduct, you put off the old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts" (vs 20-22).

- get rid of the leaven
- get rid of the way of thinking
- get rid of the vanity

- get rid of the selfishness
- get rid of the lust within

through the Spirit of God! Put in, with the Spirit of God, what we are to do!

Verse 23: “And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind... [through the operation of God] ...and that you put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and Holiness of the Truth. Therefore, let each one put away lies...” (vs 23-25). They had their problems in overcoming, too. Is getting trapped in a lie something you don’t want to do, but you do? Doesn’t that sound like Rom. 7: *What I hate*—don’t you hate lying? *But you just did it. Why? Because of the law of sin and death’ within you! Repent! Put away lying!*

Verse 24: “And that you put on the new man, which according to God is created... [*being created*, not fully complete; fully complete at the resurrection] ...in righteousness and Holiness of the Truth. Therefore, let each one put away lies *and* speak the truth with his neighbor because we are members of one another. *When...* [or IF] ...you become angry, do not sin.... [that’s a real challenge] ...**Do not let the sun go down on your anger**” (vs 24-26). Why? *Because it opens the door for Satan!*

Verse 27: “Neither give place to the devil. Let the one who stole, steal no more; rather, let him labor with *his* hands, working *at* what *is* good, so that he may impart *something* to the one who has need. Do not let any corrupt communication come out of your mouth...” (vs 27-29). That’s a real challenge! Hit your thumb with a hammer and see what happens!

“...but that which is good and needful for edification that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not vex [grieve] the Holy Spirit of God...” (vs 29-30). What grieves the Holy Spirit of God? *Doing things that are not right and are sin, that are contrary to the will of God, and you don’t repent of it!* It grieves, it vexes, if frustrates the working of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit only works with Truth and repentance and yieldedness to God.

“...by which you have been sealed for *the* day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and indignation, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking be removed from you... [***all the leaven of sin***] ...together with all malice; and be kind *and* tenderhearted toward one another, forgiving one another, even as God has also in Christ forgiven you” (vs 30-32). What is the example that we are to follow?

Ephesians 5:1: “Therefore, **be imitators of God**, as beloved children.” You can do that with

- the Spirit of God

- the righteousness of God
- the Truth of God

Verse 2: “And walk in love...” How?

- loving God with all your heart, mind, soul and being
- loving your neighbor as yourself
- loving the brethren as Christ has loved us
- love your enemies

“...even as Christ also loved us, and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor” (v 2).

Look at what Jesus did for all of us, and eventually the whole world! That is an awesome thing, indeed!

Other behavior to get rid of: *the physical act and also the mental lust*, v 3: “But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, do not permit it even to be named among you, as is fitting for saints; nor filthiness, nor foolish talking or jesting... [dirty jokes and things like that] ...which are not becoming; but instead, thanksgiving. For this you know, that no fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous *person*, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Do not let anyone deceive you with vain words...” (vs 3-6).

Prove all things! There are so many false doctrines recycled and coming back over and over and over again. Just recently I got a paper that says ‘between the two evenings’ is late in the afternoon. How old is that stupidity?

Another one is that the day begins as sunrise. Well, what does it say in Gen. 1? *The evening and the morning were day one, two, three, etc.!* The day starts at *sunset!*

“...for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, **do not be joint partakers with them**” (vs 6-7). What a great command! Don’t put up and tolerate with any false doctrine, regardless of how persuasive the words may be. Remember, ***Satan brings very clever sounding counterfeits that sound blessedly true, but are not!***

This tells us why we keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This also tells us why, every year, we keep the Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost and the rest of the Holy Days, and why we keep the Sabbath every week.

- God is working with us!
- God is training us!
- God is teaching us!
- God is leading us!

- God is molding His character and the mind of Christ within us!
—*which is a spiritual work!*
- He wants our full participation
- He wants our full cooperation

That's why we have the Feast of Unleavened Bread!

Verse 8: “For you were once darkness; but now *you are* light in *the* Lord. Walk as children of light, (because the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and Truth); proving what is well pleasing to the Lord; and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose *them*” (vs 8-11).

There's a lot of exposing of that to be done today. You talk about '***crying aloud and sparing not***' there it is right there! There's an awful lot of that today.

Verse 12: “For it is shameful even to mention the things being done by them in secret. But all of these things being exposed by the light are openly revealed. Therefore, He says, '*You* who are sleeping—***wake up...***” (vs 12-14). That's why we have the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Wake up from our half-sleeping and half-praying, half-studying and all of this sort of thing

“...and ***arise from the dead!*** And Christ shall shine upon you” (v 14).

How are we going to have the things accomplished in us that God wants? *We are to be taught of God!* Psa. 25 is so spectacular in telling us what God is doing. God's Spirit is *in us*.

Remember what it says in John 6:45: “...“***And they shall all be taught by God.***”....”

We in the Churches of God with the Holy Spirit of God have the greatest, most fantastic wonderful loving program of learning, growing, overcoming, being converted and developing the mind of Christ. Can that be compared to anything in the world that's filled with leaven and vanity? The end result will be complete unleavenness with the resurrection! Psa. 25 is how we're going to do this:

Psalms 25:1: “To You, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.” You're whole being is coming up to God as it were.

Verse 2: “O my God, ***I trust in You...*** [don't trust in the flesh, trust in God] ...do not let me be ashamed, let not my enemies triumph over me. Yea, let none who wait on You be ashamed...” (vs 2-3). That includes us. Here's a prayer of David for us, going down through time! Remember, ***the Word of God is eternal! Continuously applicable to***

every person and every generation down through time!

“...let them be ashamed who deal treacherously without cause. ***Show me Your ways, O LORD...***” (vs 3-4). How does God show you His ways?

- by study
- by prayer
- by living
- by thinking with God's Spirit
- by bringing every thought into captivity

“...***teach me Your paths***” (v 4). God is going to teach us. Who is He going to teach?

- Those who *are willing!*
- Those who *are repentant!*
- Those who *are loving God!*
- Those who *are desiring eternal life!*
- Those who *are growing and overcoming!*

He will teach through everything through:

- God's Word
- life
- experience
- thought

Verse 5: “***Lead me in Your Truth and teach me,*** for You are the God of my salvation; on You do I wait all the day long.” *Always wait on God!*

Verse 6: “Remember, O LORD, Your tender mercies and Your loving kindness, for they have been of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth... [repent of them] ...nor my transgressions; according to Your loving kindness remember me for Your goodness sake, O LORD. Good and upright is the LORD; therefore, ***He will teach sinners in the way***” (vs 6-8). Again, *teaching!* You're going to see how much teaching this is. This is a tremendous Psalm; how we grow, change, overcome and learn from God.

You can take this Psalm and use it as a guide. You can study other Psalms, then you can study other parts of the Bible. You can go through the Epistles of Paul. You can go through the *General Epistles* and all of it you're learning, building and putting things together. You are having an education in eternal life that cannot be found anywhere, in any school or in any university of this world. ***But in the Word of God and with the Spirit of God, with your conversion and yieldedness to Him!*** That is really something to think on!

Verse 9: “The meek... [those are the ones He's going to teach] ...***He will guide in judgment...***” How does He do that? *He brings*

things to your remembrance so you can make a proper judgment!

“...and **the meek He will teach His way**” (v 9). Jesus said, ‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no one comes to the Father except through Me.’ See how all the Bible fits together; how great and fantastic this is, and why it’s so important that we keep the Feasts of God. Why it’s so important when the Feast of Unleavened Bread comes along we preach in season the things that are needed for us:

- so we can be renewed
- so we can be transformed
- so we can be changed
- so we can grow in grace and knowledge
- so we can build the character of God

That is a fantastic thing, brethren!

Verse 10: “**All**... [not some, not the ones I like, but *all*] ...the paths of the LORD are mercy and Truth to those who keep His covenant... [we’re in the New Covenant] ...and His testimonies.” That is fantastic—isn’t it? That’s why you have the Spirit of God!

Verse 11: “For Your name’s sake, O LORD, pardon my iniquity, for it is great.” When the Spirit of God leads you to repentance, you see how great the sin is, you see how evil the thoughts are. That’s why we are to ‘bring every thought into the captivity of the obedience of Christ.’

Verse 12: “What man is he who fears the LORD? He shall teach him in the way that He shall choose.” Isn’t that interesting? God isn’t going to force it. We must:

- see it
- find it
- choose it
- live by it
- walk in it
- embrace it

Verse 13: “His soul shall dwell at ease, and his seed shall inherit the earth.” We’re going to inherit the earth, so don’t worry about whatever little possessions we may have in this life.

- What does that amount to, to the eternal riches?
- What does that amount to, compared to ruling and reigning with Christ in the Millennium?
- What do those things amount to, compared to New Jerusalem, and everything made of spirit?
- What does that amount to, compared to being right there with God the Father and

Jesus Christ, Who are the light of New Jerusalem?

What a fantastic thing God has done in calling us and showing us these things! Teaching and forgiving us, and giving us the means and the tools—through His Sabbath and Holy Days—to change, grow and overcome! That is something!

Verse 14: “The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him, and He will show them His covenant.”

You read the rest of the Psa. I want to finish and close by going through what Paul has written that God has made known to us **His** secret, **His** will! That’s why we are to let the laws of God rule in our mind, and the Spirit of God, and the grace and peace of God.

I don’t think we can read the books of Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians too many times, three of the most spiritual books in the New Testament. Isn’t it interesting that they were all written when Paul was under distress in Rome as a prisoner. Yet, look at the inspiration that is here. It is absolutely fantastic, brethren. This is what we need to realize: *God has shown us His way!* The way that we begin the things with the Holy Days every year, first with the Passover then the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Every year we grow in grace and knowledge. Every year we overcome.

Ephesians 1:1: “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by *the* will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus...” Notice what else he wrote that is prophetic down to our time:

“...and to *the* faithful in Christ Jesus... [It’s for *us!*] ...Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ” (vs 1-2).

Col. 3 shows us how we have peace with God and peace of mind with God. Here’s how we change, overcome and have peace of mind, even in spite of the fact that the world looks like it’s going to blow itself up. It won’t; Christ is going to intervene!

Colossians 3:15: “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts...” That’s how we bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

“...to which you were called into one body, and be thankful. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly...” (vs 15-16). That is the government of God! Not some minister standing over you telling you what to do. But the ministers are to teach you how you should behave before God, and what God expects you to do for Him. Not because the minister says so, but because God says so. Everyone who is a minister or elder is to preach the sound words of

Christ, which then is everything in the Bible!

Ephesians 1:2: “Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ.” You cannot get any higher blessing coming from any other source but God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Verse 3: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ.” The projects forward to the resurrection, as well.

Verse 4: “According as He has personally chosen us for Himself before *the* foundation of *the* world in order that we might be Holy and blameless before Him in love; having predestinated us for sonship... [to be the children of God] ...to Himself through Jesus Christ, **according to the good pleasure of His own will**” (vs 4-5). Think of that! “...**the good pleasure of His own will...**” *to you personally as an individual with God’s Spirit!*

Verse 6: “To *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace, wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*; in Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace, which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence; **having made known to us...**” (vs 6-9). The world doesn’t know.

If you watch Fox News and O’Rielly there’s Water’s World {on the street interviews}. There are people in the world who don’t know anything about the world. But if you ask them what is God doing, they would be even at a greater loss.

But **God has made it know to us!** Not because we are anything of ourselves, but because of God’s love and mercy and grace.

“...the mystery of His own will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself” (v 9). That is the whole purpose of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

This week, since it has fallen in the way that it does, you have five days in a row of Unleavened Bread that you can use during that five days to pray, study, grow and overcome *personally!*

- using the **Word of God**
- using the **sermons**
- using **churchathome.com**
- using **afaithfulversion.org**

All the New Testament is there with text and audio.

Until the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, you have a wonderful Feast. **Grow and overcome and make this the most important Feast that you have ever had to date!**

Scriptural References:

- 1) Leviticus 23:4-8
- 2) Deuteronomy 16:16-17
- 3) Exodus 12:51
- 4) Exodus 13:1-5, 7, 9-10, 12-15
- 5) 1 Corinthians 5:7-8, 6
- 6) Galatians 5:14-16, 9, 16-18
- 7) Romans 7:6-23
- 8) Romans 8:1-3
- 9) Psalm 39:1-8
- 10) Romans 12:1
- 11) 1 John 3:18-24
- 12) Romans 12:2
- 13) 2 Corinthians 10:4-6
- 14) Ephesians 5:26
- 15) Ephesians 4:17-25, 24-32
- 16) Ephesians 5:1-14
- 17) John 6:45
- 18) Psalm 25:1-14
- 19) Ephesians 1:1-2
- 20) Colossians 3:15-16
- 21) Ephesians 1:2-9

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 15
- Revelation 11
- Hebrews 12:23; 10
- Genesis 1

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