

Overview of Passover

Fred R. Coulter—March 17, 2012

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services. It's interesting when you really begin examining the difference between Christianity in the world and what the Bible says, far from what most people believe: that the Old Testament has been done away or fulfilled, so therefore, we don't need to pay any attention to it. We're going to talk about the Passover in just a little bit, but it's interesting how much people believe is in the Bible that isn't there.

As we were discussing before services, if the pastor says something is so, it is so. That makes it very convenient. How are you going to know the difference between Truth and error? Just because someone is supposedly in a position of authority, does that mean that they know what they need to know? Let's do a little test concerning the Old Testament and New Testament.

Deuteronomy 8:1: "All the commandments which I command you this day shall you be diligent to observe *and to do* that you may live and multiply and go in and possess the land which the LORD swore to your fathers. And you shall remember all the way which the LORD your God led you these forty years in the wilderness... [A very sad experience because of disobedience.] ...in order to humble you, to prove you, to know what is in your heart..." (vs 1-2). That's what God wants to know of us today: what's in our heart; what's in our mind. Only now with the Spirit of God that's even multiplied that much more.

"...whether you would keep His commandments or not. And He humbled you and allowed you to hunger... [put in there: whatever your trials or tests that you go through] ...and then He fed you with manna which you did not know, neither did your fathers know *it*, so that He might make you know... [Everything we go through, God can use for a purpose to teach us something. We can know that God doesn't want us to be mystified. God doesn't want us to be without understanding.] ...so you know that man does not live by bread alone; but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD does man live" (vs 2-3).

Someone can say, 'Well, that's in the Old Testament.' All right, come to the New Testament. We're going to the New Testament, and everyone who believes they're a Christian believes in Jesus Christ—*supposedly*. We also need to understand that Jesus told us we are to live by what He said.

Let's read what Jesus said when He was being tempted by Satan the devil, Matthew 4:3: "And when the tempter came to Him, he said, 'If

You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.'" He could have easily have done that. That wouldn't have been a problem. But who would He be obeying, God the Father or Satan the devil? It's not that you have the potential to do it, it is what does God say.

Verse 4: "But He answered *and* said, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of *the* mouth of God.'" So God intended this to be in the New Testament, so here it is. What we find, the New Testament and Old Testament, that there is a unity between the two.

'Well, the Apostle Paul didn't say that!' Okay, let's come to 2-Timothy 4. Let's see what Paul told Timothy to preach. This becomes really important for us to understand. We've already covered this in what we did, *How Would You Preach Christ from the Old Testament? I & II*). But let's just review:

2-Timothy 3:16: "All Scriptures *is* **God-breathed**... [It says in the *King James* 'inspiration.' If it comes from God and God has breathed the words as it were, is that not something that we should do?] ...and *is* profitable for doctrine, for conviction, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; So that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work" (vs 16-17).

Let's see how this lines up with what God said in Deut. 8 and what Jesus said in Matt. 4, and what Paul is teaching here in 2-Tim. 4:1: "I charge you, therefore, in the sight of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is ready to judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the Word!..." (vs 1-2). Obviously that's the Word of God. This gives us a clue, since we're getting close to the Passover season. Isn't it interesting that every major holiday that Christianity has is something that God says *He hates*. Yet, everyone does it.

Paul says, v 2: "Preach the Word! Be urgent in season... [This means that they were keeping the Holy Days of God in season. Isn't that what we read there in Leviticus 23? *These are the feasts of the Lord which you shall proclaim in their seasons.* Yes!] ...and out of season... [that means, every other Sabbath] (you): ...convict, rebuke, encourage, with all patience and doctrine. For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine; but according to their own lusts they shall accumulate to themselves *a great number of* teachers, having ears itching *to hear what satisfies their cravings*; And

they shall turn away their own ears from the Truth; and they shall be turned aside unto myths” (vs 2-4).

What is Truth? *Jesus said, ‘Your Word is Truth.’* Based on that, we’re going to go back and we’re going to see concerning the Passover. We already saw concerning the Passover in Exo. 12 and in Lev. 23. Let’s come to Joshua 5 and let’s see that after they got right up to the ‘promised land,’ crossed the Jordan River, they were ready to start taking over the land, then *they kept the Passover.* They didn’t keep Easter.

We’re also going to cover the one place in the Bible where the word ‘Easter’ is used. I have an interesting book here that was given to me and I’m going to have to do some reading in it. But it’s called, *Not a Fan.* I don’t know what it means, but it’s written by Kyle Idleman [transcriber’s correction]. He talks about Easter, nothing about Passover. I’ll have to read it to find out. I hate to say anything about anything until I read it, but we’ll just have to wait and see if my anticipations are correct. So, we’ll see what happens. Always remember this: God is always 100% right; *we’re not.*

Joshua 5:10—they came to Gilgal after they crossed the Jordan River: “And the children of Israel camped in Gilgal and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at evening in the plains of Jericho.... [just as God said to do] ...And they ate of the old grain of the land on the next day after the Passover...” (vs 10-11).

The grain of the land, the old grain, was that which they captured when they conquered and took over from the inhabitants of the land. It was from the previous harvest. The new harvest had not yet begun. There was a special offering that was to be done, which we’ll cover a little later, that on the day after the Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread the priest was to wave a *wave sheaf offering.* That was the first of the firstfruits and it symbolizes Christ, which we’ll get into when we start talking about Pentecost. But they were told at that time that they were not to eat any bread or anything from any grain until they came into the land. So, for 40 years the only bread they had was manna. I suppose you can imagine that some of them were very anxious to eat some real, real bread.

Here’s what they did, v 11: “And they ate of the old grain of the land on the next day after the Passover, unleavened cakes and roasted *new* grain in the same day.... [they were able to get some new grain and also roast that] ...And the manna stopped on the next day after they had eaten the grain of the land. And there was no more manna for the children of Israel, but they ate the fruit of the land of Canaan that year” (vs 11-12).

The point is they kept the Passover and we know all the days of Joshua that they kept the laws and commandments of God, which meant that they kept the Passover.

The children of Israel always had a difficult time really obeying God. They always wanted to do things their way. We find part of the problem that they had was this: when God told them to drive out all the inhabitants of the land, they didn’t do it. So, God said, ‘All right, since you didn’t do it, I’m going to leave them here as a thorn in your flesh, because you didn’t obey My voice.’

Judges 2:7: “And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua... [he died at 110-years-old] ...and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD that He did for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being a hundred and ten years old. And they buried him... [v 10]: ...And also all that generation were gathered to their fathers” (vs 7-10).

There comes a time when there is a distinct generational shift. We had that after WWII. Now we’ve been having it here in the last, say, 8-9 years. There’s going to be a generational shift, especially going on into 2016. Because there are going to be a lot of people who this coming election are going to vote. I think it’s interesting that the greatest generation, being the WWII generation, that there are—I forget the exact number—fewer and fewer veterans of WWII.

And as you look, you go shopping, you just observe people, and you will see that they’re going to be a lot of people who are older, who are going to vote for what is more right and more correct than what is currently displayed by the federal government and many state governments. However, they won’t be around in 2016. That’s when the *generational shift* is going to take place. We’ll have to see what happens.

- Will the younger generation learn some values?
- Will they learn about true civilization and culture?
- Will they be willing to learn about God?
- Who will see what will happen?

With this *generational shift* they forgot God.

Verse 10: “And also all that generation were gathered to their fathers. And there arose **another generation after them who did not know the LORD...**”

We can see that within the Protestant churches, that *generational shift* has almost been completed, and so much so that Pat Robertson, who is of the last of the generational shift, is old; he’s not

going to last much longer. Neither is Billy Graham; he isn't going to be around. But Pat Robertson said, 'We need to legalize marijuana.' The carnal mind never makes any sense—does it? They know that smoking tobacco causes sickness and so they're trying to get people to quit smoking. Yet, at the same time raise the price of cigarettes and tobacco so that they can get more money to help teach children not to smoke. They're confronted with a problem with that now, because here in California only 11% of the people smoke and so they don't have enough tax money now to keep up the program to try and teach the children.

Every time men try and do something it never works out right. What's going to happen when Billy Graham dies, Pat Robertson dies, some of the other ones die and we already have a watered-down Protestantism, and all of the young rockers take over the churches—what is that going to be like?

Here's what they did back then, v 11: "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim." Baalim is the sun-god; 'im' means *gods*—Baals. There were many versions of it. Just like today, there are many versions of Christ.

Verse 12: "And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, Who brought them out of the land of Egypt. And they followed other gods, even the gods of the people who were around them, and bowed themselves to them, and provoked the LORD to anger. And they forsook the LORD and served Baal and Ashtaroth" (vs 12-13)—the female goddess. So, now we've got women's rights involved here. Here's what happens when there is a generational shift away from God. *It would be nice if there were a generational shift toward God.* We've also seen this within the Churches of God. The Churches of God are right on the precipice of a *generational shift*.

What is the Church of God going to be like? *Which means those of us who are the generation toward the finish line*, what are we going to provide for the coming generation? What are we going to be teaching them to do? *Lest they end up like it is here!* It's already happened with the apostasy within the Churches of God—has it not? *Yes!* When the leader of the Church died and the young generation took over, they forsook the Lord for Protestantism. The faithful ones were scattered, and we've had to rebuild our lives, being faithful to God. It is up to us to provide the kind of teaching and preaching for new people coming along that they will learn what they need to learn.

We can see what's happening to America, right here, v 14: "And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and He delivered them into the hand of spoilers who spoiled them.... [Sound like

what's happening in America today? The different nations of the descendants of Israel? *Yes, indeed!*] ...And He sold them into the hand of their enemies all around... [Are we about ready to be sold out of Afghanistan?] ...so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies."

Then God raised up judges and the judges brought them back to God. Let's see what happens here, that there was a time when faithfulness was restored. It was restored through David and then on into the time of Solomon; set up the temple; everything was set up. God appeared to Solomon twice. He built the temple from the plans that God personally gave to David. Israel was at peace. All their enemies were down and they were not involved in any wars at that time. The temple was finished. It was dedicated. They saw the cloud of God's presence being put into the temple there on the Feast of Trumpets (2-Kings 5). Everything was fine.

Here's what happens to human nature: ***Human nature always begins to corrupt itself when it reaches a plateau of everything being good!*** That's because of the evil in human nature. And it even happens within the Church. That's why we have to always stay close to God. We have to always follow the Word of God. We cannot take anything for granted. We cannot assume that we are in good standing with God just because we think so. Here's what happened to Solomon; he did the opposite of what God told him to do. When they set up the temple they kept the Passover, they kept the Holy Days, they kept everything that God had said to do.

Solomon wanted to expand and express himself, after God had given him wisdom, wealth and everything. What is the Achilles heel of every generation? *Sex problems*—right? Would you say that's what's going on today? *Yes, indeed!*

1-Kings 11:1: "And King Solomon loved many foreign women, even the daughter of Pharaoh, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, Hittites.... [WOW!] ...Of the nations which the LORD had said to the children of Israel, 'You shall not go in to them, and they shall not go in to you; surely they will turn away your heart after their gods.' *But* Solomon clung to these in love" (vs 1-2)—Instead of following God.

Remember, God gave the commandment that when you set a king over you, that he is to go to the Levites and he is make himself a copy of the Law, write it down for himself so that he could study and read it all the days of his life, so that his heart would not be lifted up above his brethren. Solomon didn't do that, even after he wrote Proverbs. Even after he wrote the book of Ecclesiastes.

Now notice, you talk about going hog-wild, v 3: "And he had seven hundred wives, princesses,

and three hundred concubines... [WOW! You talk about big-time polygamy.]...And his wives turned away his heart.”

He had to satisfy all of them with their demands. ‘Oh, Solomon, give me this, give me that. You built this big temple for your God. You’re discriminating against our gods.’ What did he do? *He had a good idea!* The temple is on this mount. And down across the valley toward the west there’s another hill. So, he said, ‘Okay, I’ll build you incense altars and little temples to your gods. You go over there and worship your gods and I’ll stay here and worship my God.’ But then after a while they got to him and said, ‘How come you only worship your God? Why are you discriminating against our gods? Why don’t you come over here and worship with me? You don’t love me anymore?’ You can hear the arguments—can’t you?

“...turned away his heart after other gods. And his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God as *was* the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites; And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD and did not *go* fully after the LORD like his father David.... [look what he did] ...Then Solomon built a high place... [a temple] ...for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill which *is* before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise he did for all his foreign wives, and burned incense and sacrificed to their gods” (vs 7-8). Is that going from grace to apostasy? *Totally!*

Verse 9: “And the LORD *was* angry with Solomon because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel Who had appeared to him twice.” And God said to Solomon, ‘Because you have done this, I’m going to take away ten tribes from you and I’m going to give it to one of your generals, but only for the sake of David I will let you have one tribe and the Levites.’ And it ended up being Judah, part of Benjamin, and a good number of the priests and the Levites.

Then we have the story of Jeroboam. He set up a complete pagan setup for all the children of Israel after God sent a prophet to him. If God would send a prophet to you and tell you like He did to Jeroboam—he went to Jeroboam and he took a piece of cloth and tore it up into twelve pieces. He gave ten of them to Jeroboam, and he said, ‘Thus says the Lord God, *because of the sin of Solomon I’m going to give you the ten tribes of Israel and I will bless you like I did David, if you will keep My commandments and follow Me.*’

What an opportunity. Did he do it? *No!* Let’s see what’ll happen here after it was separated. You

read in the book of Proverbs, ‘In the multitude of counsel there is wisdom.’ Remember this: *there is only wisdom in a multitude of counsel if your counselors are wise!* If they are not wise, you’re not going to get wisdom. That’s what happened here.

1-Kings 12:28: “Then the king took counsel, and made two calves...” That is, for the children of Israel. Let’s read the motivation of what was in it. He didn’t trust God. What we find with this is that *none of the kings of the northern ten tribes ever served God*, not a one of them. Two hundred thirty-two years later they were sent off into captivity with the invasions of the Assyrians. Now here’s that happened:

Verse 26: “And Jeroboam said in his heart, ‘Now the kingdom may well return to the house of David!.... [I don’t want to lose my power and authority. I’ve got to hold on to this.’ Didn’t trust God.] ...If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again to their lord, to Rehoboam king of Judah, and they shall kill me and return again to Rehoboam king of Judah” (vs 26-27).

- didn’t believe God
- didn’t trust God.

Verse 28: “Then the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold and said to them... [Remember the golden calf that Aaron made (Exo. 31)? *Yes, indeed!*] ...said to them, ‘It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem... [I’m looking out for you. We’re going to give you a benefit. We’re going to save you the trip. We’re going to make it easy for you.] ...Behold your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!’ And he set the one in Bethel, and he put the other in Dan” (vs 28-29). That’s north and south in the area of the ten tribes of Israel. ‘You don’t have to go to Jerusalem. You can go here.’

Verse 30: “And this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one, even to Dan. And he made houses *of worship* on the high places and made priests of the lowest of the people, who were not the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordered a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like the feast that *is* in Judah... [That’s the Feast of Tabernacles. Getting pretty close to Halloween here—huh? *Yes, indeed.*] ...And he offered upon the altar. So he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. And he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he had made. And he offered upon the altar which he had made in Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, in the month which he had devised out of his own heart. And he ordained a fast for the children of Israel. And he offered upon the altar and burned incense” (vs 30-33).

Then God sent a prophet to tell them to repent. But he didn't do it. The children of Judah did much the same way. Their kings were a little better. Some of the kings were 50% obedient to God, but not like David. Now let's see how then the children of Israel returned to God when they gave up all their pagan worship, very similar to what it is in the world today that we have to give up.

I remember when I first heard about the Sabbath and everything, and I wanted to be baptized. At that time I went down to Pasadena and I wanted to be baptized. The minister asked me and said, 'Are you keeping the Sabbath?' I said, *No, not yet.* 'Do you know which day is the Sabbath?' *Yes!* 'Well, are you still eating unclean meats? And I said, 'Yes, I have my bacon, lettuce, tomato sandwich before I go on my siff at the restaurant.' And, of course, if you cook it crisp it's really good and you know, that gets rid of everything. But now they know it doesn't even kill the trichinosis in it.

I came back and I was determined to keep the Sabbath and do what I needed to do. This was like on about a Tuesday. I told my boss, I said, 'I can't work Friday night.' Before that time, when I was going to college in the summertime, I'd work one shift in one restaurant of their chain, then I'd go work another shift up at the other restaurant. I was working 16 hours a day, seven days a week.

I come up to my boss and I said, 'I can't work Friday night anymore.' He looked at me and said—and, of course, that's a busy night—'well, why?' I said, 'Because of my religion.' And he said to me, 'When did you become religious?' I said, 'If you can't do it, I'll go get another job.' *Now, hold on, hold on,* because I was a good worker. He said, 'I'll go look at the schedule.' He ran back and looked at the schedule, came back in about ten minutes and said, 'Nope, can't do it, I can't figure out how it can be done.'

So I said, 'Would you mind if I looked at the schedule?' He said, 'No, go look at the schedule.' I figured from the schedule what to do, and it was this. The chef worked from 8-4 and Friday was a real busy preparation day for him for Friday night and Saturday and Sunday. I talked with the chef and said, 'Would you like to have Friday off?' He said, 'Yes!'

I went to the boss and said, 'Look, you give the chef Friday off and I'll come in and work. Because I can't come in on Saturday, why don't you give me the graveyard shift Saturday night.' Which was actually starting at 1 o'clock Sunday morning. So that's how I kept the Sabbath. Then I had Tuesday off.

So, if there's a will, there's a way. Just like with the way that God showed the children of Israel. 'If you're going to come to Me, then you have to come to Me on My terms. If you want to worship Me, you worship Me on *My* days, not on Baal's days, which I hate.' We will see how two or three of the righteous kings did in bringing the children of Israel and the children of Judah back to worshipping God.

(go to the next track)

The story of Israel and Judah is that Israel just stayed totally pagan. Judah had its ups and downs—good kings/bad kings, halfway in between good and bad.

Here is a lesson for us today in America. We're looking at the political thing. We're looking at who is going to be President and all of this sort of thing. But we know that God is in charge, so let's see what happens when they start following God.

This is about Jehoshaphat, 2-Chronicles 17:1: "And Jehoshaphat his son... [son of Asa] ...reigned in his place. And he made himself strong against Israel.... [Israel was fighting against Judah.] ...And *he* placed troops in all the fortified cities of Judah, and set troops in the land of Judah and in the cities of Ephraim which Asa his father had taken. And the LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in the first ways of his father David... [In other words, he following the Law. He followed the Word of God.] ...and did not seek to the Baalim" (vs 1-3)—or that is all the various gods of Baal.

Verse 4: "But he sought to the God of his father, and walked in His commandments, and not according to the practices of Israel. Therefore, the LORD established the kingdom in his hand...." (vs 4-5).

God rules over all the nations. If there is going to be any change in any nation—especially in America and Britain—if you do not have a leader who acknowledges God and who does the minimum amount of commandment-keeping and those things that are righteous in the sight of God, *there will be no change as to what's going on.* If Obama gets re-elected, *know that the generational shift has moved into high gear!* The generational shift will bring about much more paganism, much more violence, much more terrorism, more wars.

So, let's read what happened here: "...And all Judah brought presents to Jehoshaphat. And he had great riches and honor. And his heart **delighted in the ways of the LORD.** And he took away the high places and groves out of Judah. And in the third year of his reign he sent to his princes... [and it lists all of them] ...to teach in the cities of Judah. And with them he sent Levites... [it lists all the names of

the Levites] (v 9): ...And they taught in Judah and had the book of the Law of the LORD with them, and went around throughout all the cities of Judah and taught the people. **And the fear of the LORD fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands around Judah so that they did not make war against Jehoshaphat...** [look at what is happening with the wars we've been in] ...And some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents and silver for tribute.... [made peace] ...Also the Arabians brought him flocks, seven thousand and seven hundred rams, and seven thousand and seven hundred he-goats. And Jehoshaphat became exceedingly great. And he built fortresses in Judah and store cities" (vs 5-12).

We see that there were different kings who did not serve God; let's come to 2-Chronicles 29. I'll let you read all the rest of it because what I want to focus on is how God honored the kings when they sought Him. We also know that God intervened and fought battles for Jehoshaphat as He did for Hezekiah. This is King Hezekiah. He also helped canonize the Old Testament. Notice the difference here.

2-Chronicles 29:1: "Hezekiah began to reign *being* twenty-five years old, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name *was* Abijah the daughter of Zechariah. And he did *what was* right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done.... [Notice what he did, because Judah fell to worshiping all the pagan gods right there in the temple.] ...In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of the LORD and repaired them" (vs 1-3). They were closed. Notice, the first month. Very interesting because what day of the first month is the Passover? *The 14th day!*

Verse 4: "And *he* brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them into the east street. And he said to them, 'Hear me, Levites now sanctify yourselves and sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers and carry the filthiness out of the holy *place!* For our fathers have sinned and done evil in the eyes of the LORD our God, and have forsaken Him, and have turned away their faces from the dwelling place of the LORD, and have turned *their* backs. Also they have shut up the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burned incense nor offered burnt offerings in the sanctuary to the God of Israel. Therefore, the wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem, and He has delivered them to trouble, to astonishment, and to hissing as you see with your eyes.'" (vs 4-8). He's telling them, 'Look, we know what God has done.'

Verse 9: "For lo, our fathers have fallen by the sword, and our sons and our daughters and our wives *are* in captivity for this.... [because the enemy

comes] ...And *it is* in my heart... [if we got a President like this, maybe there would be a change] ...*it is* in my heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that His fierce wrath may turn away from us" (vs 9-10). So, he set about to restore the worship of God at the temple. He encouraged them in it, told them to do it. They kept making progress. They cleansed the temple the best that they could and they had some difficulties with it, because they couldn't get it done before Passover.

As a matter of fact, they didn't finish cleaning out the temple until the 16th day of the 1st month. What did he do? Let's see what he did, because there's provision in Num. 9. They decided that they were going to keep the Passover in the 2nd month on the 14th day of the month, which was according to the law in Num. 9.

2-Chronicles 30:1: "And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem to keep the Passover to the LORD God of Israel." One of the first things that is done to bring people back to God is:

1. there's repentance
2. they keep the Passover

Likewise with the people in the Church of God. Likewise with those who come to God and repent and are baptized. The first thing that they do if they're baptized in time before the Passover, is keep the Passover. So, that's what they did here.

Verse 3: "For they could not keep it at that time because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, nor had the people gathered to Jerusalem. And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation" (vs 3-4). They sent out the decree, sent the messengers out, 'Come and keep the Passover.' Let's see what they did. They went out, they told them to repent, to come.

Verse 12: "Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the command of the king and of the princes by the Word of the LORD. And many people gathered at Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Unleavened *Bread* in the second month, a very great congregation. And they arose... [this was cleaning out the land, not only the temple, now the city of Jerusalem] ...and took away the altars that *were* in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense *to other gods* and they took away, and cast *them* into the Brook Kidron" (vs 12-14). That's where you threw all the idols. You break them, threw them into the Brook Kidron.

Verse 15: "And they killed the Passover, on the fourteenth *day* of the second month. And the priests and the Levites were ashamed and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt offerings into

the house of the LORD. And they stood in their place after their manner, according to the Law of Moses the man of God. The priests sprinkled the blood from the hand of the Levites, for many in the congregation *were* not sanctified. And the Levites were over the killing of the Passover lambs for everyone *who* was not clean *in order* to sanctify them unto the LORD. For many in the congregation were not sanctified. And the Levites were over the killing of the Passover lambs for everyone who was not clean in order to sanctify them unto the LORD, For many of the people, many from Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, but ate the Passover otherwise than it was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them saying, ‘May the good LORD pardon everyone *Who* prepares his heart to seek God...’” (vs 15-19).

I mean, a mass repentance—right? *Yes!* That’s what needs to happen in America. Instead, we’re going the other way.

Verse 19: “‘*Who* prepares his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though not *cleansed* according to the purification of the sanctuary.’ And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah and healed the people” (vs 19-20). This was so great, and this brought people back to God on such a mass scale, then here they were zealous. Isn’t that interesting. That’s the way it always starts out—doesn’t it? *You’re zealous for it!* Well, they were here.

Verse 21: “And the children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with great gladness.... [God was there with them] ...And the Levites and the priests praised the LORD day-by-day with loud instruments to the LORD. And Hezekiah spoke encouragingly to all the Levites who taught the good knowledge of the LORD. And they ate the appointed things seven days, offering peace offerings and making confession to the LORD God of their fathers.... [What a thing this was!] ...And the whole assembly took counsel to keep another seven days...” (vs 21-23). They were so repentant toward God, and they wanted to make up for the fact that they hadn’t been keeping the Feast for so long that they said, ‘Let’s do another seven days.’

“...And they kept *another* seven days with gladness... [Hezekiah gave them all they needed for sacrifices] ...and all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and who lived in Judah, rejoiced. And there was great joy in Jerusalem... [remember what we read about Solomon] ...for since the days of Solomon the son of David, the king of Israel, *there was* nothing like this in Jerusalem” (vs

23-26). You talk about a revival! This is a tremendous revival!

Verse 27: “Then the priests, the Levites, arose and blessed the people. And their voice was heard, and their prayer came to His holy dwelling place, even unto heaven.” After that they set out with a vengeance to get rid of the idols. Could you imagine what would happen in America if something like this took place? The ACLU would be out there getting injunctions and all kinds of things.

So here’s what they did, 2-Chronicles 31:1: “And when all this was finished, all Israel who were present went out to the cities of Judah and broke the images in pieces, and cut down the groves, and threw down the high places and the altars out of all Judah and Benjamin, also in Ephraim and Manasseh, until they had utterly destroyed them all. Then all the children of Israel returned, each to his possession, into their own cities.”

Then Hezekiah went ahead and set up the operation of the priests’ order and everything in the temple. Then God delivered Hezekiah from the hand of the king of Assyria.

Isn’t it interesting, an evil king in Judah was followed by a righteous king, and a righteous king was followed by an evil king? So, you had this kind of thing going on, a *generational shift* within the family. The sons watched what the father did and then they decided, ‘We’re not going to do what the father did.’ They watched the father and all the leaders and the priests and the Levites and the people go out and get of the altars and idols and everything like that, so here is Manasseh, Hezekiah’s son. When Hezekiah died, Manasseh was 12-years-old. Notice what he did. He didn’t do like his father.

2-Chronicles 33:1: “Manasseh *was* twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem.” I’ve said, well, can you imagine Bill Clinton for 55-years? Let’s multiply that a little bit and say can you imagine Barack Hussein Obama for 55 years?

Notice what Manasseh did, he said, ‘I ain’t going to be like my father,’ v 2: “But he did *that which* was evil in the sight of the LORD, like the abominations of the heathen whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel. For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down, and he reared up altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshiped all the host of heaven, and served them” (vs 2-3).

Then he desecrated the temple area, v 4: “And he built altars in the house of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, ‘In Jerusalem shall My name be forever.’ And he built altars for all the host

of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. And he caused his sons to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom. He also observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD to provoke Him to anger” (vs 4-6). God sent the Assyrians, took them off to captivity into Babylon. And lo and behold, he repented there, came back, cleaned up the house of the Lord.

Amon was one of his sons, v 21: “Amon *was* twenty-two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. And he did evil in the eyes of the LORD as his father Manasseh did, and Amon sacrificed to all the graven images that his father Manasseh had made and served them. And *he* did not humble himself before the LORD, as Manasseh his father had humbled himself, but Amon trespassed more and more. And his servants conspired against him and killed him in his own house. But the people of the land killed all those who conspired against King Amon. And the people of the land made his son Josiah to reign in his place” (vs 21-25).

Josiah was even younger, chapter 34—eight-years-old. Isn’t that amazing? It was about this time, maybe just a little before, that Jeremiah the prophet was raised up by God. Let’s see about Josiah. Josiah turned out to be quite a king.

2-Chronicles 35:1: “...and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years.... [he died at 39] ...And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of David his father, and did not turn aside to the right nor to the left. For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young... [16-years-old] ...he began to seek after the God of David his father. And in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the carved images, and the molten images. And they broke down the altars of Baalim in his presence...” (vs 1-4).

So, he went around and said, ‘Tear this down, tear this down, tear this down.’ Notice the cycle that the people went through:

- there is a cycle to people’s lives
- there are cycles to nations
- there are cycles to families

And that’s what we’re seeing here. So now we’re seeing a cycle on the ‘uptick’ toward God. The temple was so desecrated that they had to clean it out.

Verse 14, as they were cleaning it: “And when they were bringing out the money that was brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiyah the priest found the Book of the Law of the LORD

written by the hand of Moses.... [It was buried way back there and no one knew what it was.] ...And Hilkiyah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, ‘I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD.’ And Hilkiyah delivered the book to Shaphan. And Shaphan carried the book to the king and brought the king word back again, saying, ‘All that was given into the hands of your servants, they are doing. And they have gathered together the money that was found in the house of the LORD, and delivered it into the hands of the overseers and to the hands of the workmen.’ And Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, ‘Hilkiyah the priest has given me a book.’ And Shaphan read it before the king” (vs 14-18). This is the book of the Law.

What is contained in there? You’ve got Deut. 28, the blessings and the cursings—right? And what did God say He would do if they forsook Him?

Verse 19: “And it came to pass when the king heard the words of the law, he tore his clothes.... [of great anguish and repentance] ...And the king commanded Hilkiyah, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Abdon the son of Micah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah a servant of the king, saying, ‘Go inquire of the LORD for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that has been found, for great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us because our fathers have not kept the word of the LORD... [Where did we begin? ‘*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word of God.*’] ...to do according to all that is written in this book” (vs 19-21).

Now, notice how low spiritually that they were. There was not even a priest to stand up and answer the question. It was Huldah the prophetess:

Verse 22: “And Hilkiyah, and those of the king, went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvath, the son of Hasrah, the keeper of the robes. (And she lived in Jerusalem in the second quarter.) And they spoke to her about this. And she answered them...” (vs 22-23).

Here is a thing to always remember: *If there is anyone out there who has been in a Church of God that has gone astray, you can repent and come back. God always honors repentance!* Never forget that. But you have to repent and confess your sins *to God*. He will brought them out. Notice what they had to do here when Josiah heard these words and notice how with zeal he acted. If you’ve read about the Laodiceans in Rev. 3, it says ‘repent and be zealous.’ Here’s a perfect example of that right here.

She said, v 24: “Thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘Tell the man who sent you to me, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I will bring evil upon this place and upon its people, *even* all the curses... [That’s

apparently what Shaphan was reading there when he read the book to King Josiah.] ...*even* all the curses that are written in the book which they have read before the king of Judah. Because they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods, so that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands. And My wrath shall be poured out upon this place and shall not be quenched.’ And as for the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, so shall you say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel concerning the words you have heard, “Because your heart was tender... [repentance] ...and you humbled yourself before your God when you heard His words against this place and against its people, and humbled yourself before Me, and tore your clothes and wept before Me, I have even heard you also,” says the LORD”’ (v 24-27).

Even the most difficult times, God will honor repentance and change the circumstances if we change and come to Him!

Verse 28: “Behold, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace, nor shall your eyes see all the evil that I will bring upon this place and upon its people.’ And they brought the king word again. And the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem” (vs 28-29).

This is really a mammoth thing. Can you imagine this happening in Washington, D.C., or in London, England? This is something! What about the cycle, why don’t we see it today? We are coming on the downside of evil. It also involves not just the President, but the Congress and the judges and the people. If there’s any revival, it’s got to involve all of them. The President can do so much. The Congress can do so much. The judges, perhaps 50% of them ought to resign and go sit in sackcloth and ashes and repent for all the things that they have done. And the people for all their lying, adultery, stealing, killing, murdering and abortions: they would have to likewise repent of it, too. We are in a dire place in America. It would take something like we’re going to read here that Josiah did.

Verse 29: “And the king sent and gathered together all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah, and the people of Jerusalem... [it was a great assembly here] ...and the priests, and the Levites, and all the people from the great to the small. And he read in their ears all the words of the Book of the Covenant that was found in the house of the LORD” (vs 29-30). Made known the Word of God. Notice what else he did. He took authority here and he made them do it:

Verse 31: “And the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the LORD to walk after the LORD and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book.” That would take an awful lot of courage here in America.

Verse 32: “And he caused all who were found in Jerusalem and in Benjamin, and the people of Jerusalem, to stand *to it* according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.... [then he took action]: ...And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the territories that *belonged* to the children of Israel. And he made all that were present in Israel to serve, *even* to serve the LORD their God. All his days they did not depart from following the LORD, the God of their fathers” (vs 32-33).

If there’s going to be any change in America, it’s going to have to be like this. Any change in Britain, it’s going to have to be like this. But I doubt that that will ever happen. Today it’s not like the king who has full authority. Here they’re voted in and they have limited time. Everything is different today. However, there are some people who are saying we need to get back to the Constitution. In the Constitution ***we invited God into the nation.*** We said we need God and He has given us rights and has given laws and we need to follow those. If they would truly get back to the Constitution once delivered, then there would be a respite from what we are going through. But it would never be lifted completely. That’s the best that could happen.

Notice what they did to get back to God, 2-Chronicles 35:1: “And Josiah kept a Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem. And they killed the Passover on the fourteenth *day* of the first month.” Then he gives all the details of it and this was so fantastic, so many people came and kept the Passover and worshiped and served God.

Verse 16: “So all the service of the LORD was prepared the same day, to keep the Passover and to offer burnt offerings upon the altar of the LORD, according to the command of King Josiah. And the children of Israel who were present kept the Passover at that time and the Feast of Unleavened *Bread* for seven days.... [pretty soon we’re going to keep the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread] ...And there was no Passover like that kept in Israel since the days of Samuel the prophet....” (vs 16-18). Remember where we read with Jehoshaphat, it was since Solomon. Now this goes back way before then to Samuel.

Verse 18: “Yea, none of the kings of Israel kept such a Passover as Josiah kept, and the priests and the Levites, and all Judah and Israel who were

present, and the people of Jerusalem. This Passover was kept in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah” (vs 18-19). Ten years after he took over as an 8-year-old king.

After that they went and apostatized again. I want to bring one more sermon on this to show in the New Testament. Obviously the father of John the Baptist was righteous; they kept the Passover, they kept the things. At the time that Jesus was born and growing up there was a certain level of righteousness that they had that was quite good at the time. Let’s see something very important. Everywhere in the New Testament it doesn’t talk about Easter. It doesn’t talk about Lent. It talks about the Passover and Unleavened Bread.

Where it’s talking about Jesus and what Joseph and Mary did, Luke 2:40 “And the little child grew and became strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom; and *the* grace of God was upon Him. Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. [every year they were keeping the Feast.] ...And when He was twelve years *old*, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast” (vs 40-42).

You know the rest of the story. The Feast was over, they left, Jesus stayed and was there talking with the scribes and the Pharisees and the priests and the elders. They were amazed at His learning and understanding. And He had lots of it because the truth is God the Father would wake Him up and teach Him everyday. He didn’t learn from a rabbi. He learned directly from the Father. So, they were amazed!

You come here to the Gospel of John. Let’s just do a little survey here. Let’s see how the Gospel of John is laid out. Again, we have concerning the Passover, John 2:13 “Now, the Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.” What did He do? *He fulfilled the prophecy that He suddenly came to His temple!*

Verse 14: “And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money exchangers sitting *there*; And after making a scourge of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with both the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money exchangers, and overturned the tables” (vs 14-15). There was mayhem. They were trying to get their money. You can almost see them there.

Verse 16: “And to those who were selling the doves, He said, ‘Take these things out of here! Do not make My Father’s house a house of merchandise.’” Those things were to be bought and sold *before* they came into the temple area, not in the temple area. The money exchangers were cheating the people.

John 5—it doesn’t tell us which Feast this was, but since the Passover was in John 2 and Pentecost would come next, then John 5 has to be one of the fall festival Feasts.

John 5:1: “After these things *there* was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.”

Let’s see that the ministry of Jesus is wrapped around the Holy Days of God, John 6:4: “Now the Passover, a Feast of the Jews, was near.” Then we have the lesson of the Passover—don’t we?—about the blood of Christ and His flesh, and, of course, no one understood that, because He had not yet given the New Covenant ceremony.

John 7:2: “Now the Jews’ Feast of Tabernacles was near.” And He went up in the middle of the Feast. If it’s a sin to keep the Holy Days of God, why did Jesus command His mother and brothers to go up to the Feast and keep it? He wanted to come up secretly because they were looking for Him.

John 7:37: “Now the last day, the great *day* of the Feast... [So there’s the Last Great Day.] ...Jesus stood and called out, saying... [He gave us part of the meaning of the Last Great Day.] ...‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. The one who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.’ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, which those who believed in Him would soon receive; for *the* Holy Spirit was not yet *given* because Jesus was not yet glorified” (vs 37-39).

Then we have that continued on John 8. Then we come over here to John 13. Again, we are talking about the Passover. This time it shows what Jesus did with the disciples at the Passover.

John 13:1: “Now before the Feast of the Passover, knowing that His time had come to depart from this world to the Father, Jesus, having loved His own who *were* in the world, loved them to *the* end. And during supper... [during the time they were observing the Passover] ...Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into *His* hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, Rose from supper...” (vs 1-4).

Then He did something that was astonishing; something that was only done by the lowest servant in the household—*wash the feet!* He washed the disciples’ feet. We won’t get into all of that because we’ll cover that on the Passover night. But here is the lesson of it:

Verse 12: “Therefore, when He had washed their feet, and had taken His garments, and had sat down again, He said to them, ‘Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me the Teacher and the Lord, and you speak rightly, because I am.

Therefore, if I, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also are duty-bound to wash one another's feet; For I have given you an example, *to show* that you also should do exactly as I have done to you” (vs 12-15). That's why with the Passover ceremony we do the foot-washing, because Jesus said we're duty-bound.

It gives the example. He says, 'Here's why you are to do it,' v 16: "Truly, truly I tell you, a servant is not greater than his lord, nor a messenger greater than he who sent him." He's saying that if you do not do this, then 'you're exalting yourself over Me, Christ. You preach the message that I send you to preach. You do the things I command you to do. And if you don't do those things, then you're setting yourself up as greater.'

But He said, v 17: "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them." There's a blessing for doing them. Let's see that after the foot-washing, there was the breaking and eating of the bread. Then there was the drinking of the wine. This is the New Covenant.

Matthew 26:26: "And as they were eating..." Here's what had to happen. They started out with the Old Testament Passover with the lamb. They finished that. Now came time to institute the New Covenant Passover. Here is how He did it. That's why we don't have the lamb today, because we do not have a meal with the Passover.

Verse 26: "And as they were eating, Jesus took the bread and blessed *it*; *then He* broke *it* and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body.'... [we find in 1-Cor. 11, 'which is broken for you'] ...And He took the cup; and after giving thanks, He gave *it* to them, saying, 'All of you drink of it; For this is My blood, the *blood* of the New Covenant, which is poured out for many for *the* remission of sins'" (vs 26-28).

With every covenant there has to be blood, and that blood is the blood of Christ. For us, our part of the New Covenant is the *baptismal covenant death* being conjoined to Christ's death, being co-crucified with Him. You go through the Bible and you ask:

- What did God command us to do?
- What days did He say we should observe?
- What calendar did He give us to follow?
The Calculated Hebrew Calendar

That follows all the way through.

What becomes even absolutely more astounding is this: ***The whole Bible is framed on the Passover and Holy Days!*** And it's like everything else that God has done. It is layered—many, many, many teachings and many, many meanings within any given Holy Day.

So, we're going to have the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Deuteronomy 8:1-3
- 2) Matthew 4:3-4
- 3) 2-Timothy 3:16-17
- 4) 2-Timothy 4:1-4
- 5) Joshua 5:10-12
- 6) Judges 2:7-14
- 7) 1-Kings 11:1-9
- 8) 1-Kings 12:28, 26-33
- 9) 2-Chronicles 17:1-12
- 10) 2-Chronicles 29:1-10
- 11) 2-Chronicles 30:1-4, 12-27
- 12) 2-Chronicles 31:1
- 13) 2-Chronicles 33:1-6, 21-25
- 14) 2-Chronicles 34:1-4, 14-33
- 15) 2-Chronicles 35:1, 16-19
- 16) Luke 2:40-42
- 17) John 2:13-16
- 18) John 5:1
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- 20) John 7:2, 37-39
- 21) John 13:1-4, 12-17
- 22) Matthew 26:26-28

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