

## Seventh Day Feast of Unleavened Bread—2010

Fred R. Coulter—April 5, 2010

Greetings, brethren, welcome to the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Every one of the Holy Days has meaning and purpose for us. These keep us, not only in contact with God—and we keep them through the grace of God, even though it's a law of God, because we keep it in spirit and in truth and understand the spiritual meaning. Though we start in the letter of the law and then we go beyond to the spirit of the law; then we see what God wants us to do.

Let's come to Leviticus 23—and I think it's really interesting and a test of faith for those who believe the law has been done away, to find all the Holy Days listed in one chapter in Lev. 23. People, by reasoning can come to every excuse as to why we shouldn't keep them, because it's in the Old Law. Well, remember, the law came through Moses; grace and truth came through Christ, so He's the One Who gives us the meaning and understanding of it, spiritually—though there are many, many lessons we can learn from the examples of the Old Testament, which Paul wrote that 'these are examples for us' that we don't do like they did. These are also examples for us to see what God will do for us, for His people.

So Leviticus 23:6—we've already had the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and now we're at the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. "And on the fifteenth day of the same month *is* the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD. You must eat unleavened bread seven days.... [Tonight, after sundown, you can have your hamburger.] ...On the first day you shall have a Holy convocation. You shall not *do any servile work therein*, but you shall offer a fire offering to the LORD seven days. In the seventh day *is* a Holy convocation. You shall do no servile work *therein*" (vs 6-7).

So, as we do, we always take up an offering on the Holy Days, and we know that it's based upon

- our hearts
- our attitude
- our love of God
- trusting in God in faith
- looking to Him to fulfill His promise to bless us

because if we do the things that please God—and it is pleasing God that we give back of some of the physical things that we have for all the physical things that we do receive—because after all we're still in the flesh and we have to operate with physical

things. However, salvation is spiritual, and the spiritual meaning of the Feast we'll get into today.

(at this time we'll take a pause and we will take up the offering)

Now, let's continue on and learn the lessons that we are to learn from the Old Testament, because remember this: the Old Testament is able to make us wise unto salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus. After they departed from Rameses, the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, they came to the Red Sea at Bel Zephon. At that particular point, Pharaoh and all of his armies realized 'what have we done, we let them go.' So this becomes the final hardening of Pharaoh's heart for God the execute His final judgment upon the Egyptians while He was bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt.

You know the story. Pharaoh and his armies and his chariots came after the children of Israel. They [Israel] had no armies, they had no spears, they had no weapons, they had no swords—they may have had some few swords, but not enough to fight against Pharaoh, his army and his chariots. So they [the Egyptians] decided, 'We're going after them'; got everything ready.

Exodus 14:8: "And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. And he pursued the children of Israel, and the children of Israel went out with a high hand. So the Egyptians pursued them, all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army. And they overtook them camping by the sea, beside Pi Hi Hahiroth, before Baal Zephon. And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes. And, behold, the Egyptians marched after them. And they were very afraid. And the children of Israel cried out to the LORD" (vs 8-10).

Notice, always blame someone else, that's human nature. They were ready to give up! "And they said to Moses, 'Have you taken us away to die in the wilderness because *there were* no graves in Egypt? Why have you dealt this way with us to carry us forth out of Egypt? Did we not tell you this word in Egypt, saying, "Let us alone so that we may serve the Egyptians?" for it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness'" (vs 11-12). They just started out. They saw all the plagues, all the miracles of God, and yet, they still didn't believe. They were willing, they were ready to give up on God!

Let's come to Mark, the fourth chapter, and let's see something interesting concerning how it is

with our calling with God, because there are some people who start, but give up on God. Let's see the *parable of the sower* and let's see what people do; very similar to what we're seeing right there in Exo. 14.

Here's the *parable of the sower* and here's the explanation of it. Mark 4:14: "The sower sows the Word. Now the ones by the way... [because some were scattered by the way] ...where the Word was sown, these are the ones who hear, but Satan comes at once and takes away the Word that was sown in their hearts.... [much like Pharaoh, the servant of Satan, was coming after the children of Israel. They were ready to give up! They were ready to go back into captivity! So that's what the children of Israel proposed to Moses.] ...And the ones which were in like manner sown upon the rocky places, these are the *ones* who when they hear the Word, immediately receive it with joy; but *because* they have no root in themselves, they do not endure; when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, they are quickly offended" (vs 14-17). And isn't that what happened to the children of Israel back there. They were quickly offended! Blaming God! Blaming Moses! Complaining!

Verse 18: "And those which were sown among the thorns, these are the ones who hear the Word, but the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things *that* come into *their lives* choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful" (vs 18-19). That's amazing! That's what they were ready to do, give up on it. Jesus said, 'Peace I give to you, in the world you shall have tribulation.' And who doesn't have troubles today? Who doesn't have difficulties? And how many people are there that have given up because of the troubles and difficulties that have come upon the Church, say, in the last 30-years. Quite amazing—isn't it?

I remember one person saying, 'In this city we had over 3,000 brethren attending church every Sabbath.' Well, when the trouble came—what happened? They blamed the men, they blamed other people, they were drawn back into the world because it was better for us to 'sit at our fleshpots and still serve the Egyptians.' So this is what they told Moses, exactly the same thing. There's a spiritual parallel for us in the New Testament.

Now, let's come back to Exodus 14:13—notice what Moses said, because Moses understood the power of God. "And Moses said to the people, '**Fear not!**.... [and this was the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread; so this is the lesson for us today: **Fear not!**] ...**Stand still!**... [don't run off someplace else and be deterred; go back to where you were.] ...and see the salvation of the LORD

which He will work for you today, for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you shall never see them again! **The LORD shall fight for you**, and you shall be still" (vs 13-14).

- *wait* on the Lord
- *trust* in the Lord
- *look* to Him for everything

—regardless of the circumstances, because when we understand it, **nothing is going to be against us because God has called us**, and He's going to see us to the first resurrection.

"And the LORD said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to Me?... [So, he started complaining to God.] ...Speak to the children of Israel that they **go forward!**.... [We're going to see what that means a little later on: to go forward, always go forward, never go backward.] ...And you [Moses]—lift up your rod....' (vs 15-16). And when he lifted up his rod the cloud and fire that was there over the children of Israel went behind them—because they were along the shore of the Red Sea and it was a long column. When they crossed the Red Sea it was a very quick movement because it wasn't in a string of a column but it was that the whole column went as a flank.

So, the opening of the Red Sea—after Moses lifted up his rod and God caused the cloud to separate between the children of Israel and the Egyptians—to the children of Israel it was light and to the Egyptians it was dark. Very interesting! God knows how to do things. We need to understand that and realize that. He knows how to do things.

And He said, "I will fight for you and the children of Israel shall go through the sea on dry ground" (v 16). After all the other miracles that they had seen, you would think that this would be the 'coup de grace' which would show them that, yes, God is powerful, God means what He says, God will accomplish what He wants to do. So, that's what happened.

Then early in the morning they all crossed the Red Sea. God parted the Red Sea as far as the eye could see, and the children of Israel got across to the other side and then God lifted the cloud back over the children of Israel and Pharaoh and his horsemen and armies could see the Red Sea was opened. They looked to the right and the water was way down there and they looked to the left and the water was way up there and they said, 'We're going to go get them.' And that's precisely the trap that God set for them, because He knew with a hard heart that they had, Pharaoh would come after the children of Israel. So they all started charging down into the Red Sea—and what did God do? He quickly began to turn it back to mud again, so the wheels of their chariots came off and they were crying, 'What's going on here?' And

then all of sudden when they were all in the Red Sea God rolled back the waters and BOOM! Destroyed them! and destroyed their chariots! Then the pieces that were left came up on the banks of the Red Sea and the children of Israel went down and gathered the souvenirs of the death of Pharaoh.

Then they had a great celebration! Thanking God! God is a Man of war! God is the One Who fights for us! God is the One Who overcomes for us! Exalted is He!

Exodus 15:1: “Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and spoke, saying, ‘I will sing to the LORD, for He has triumphed gloriously; *the* horse and his rider He has thrown into the sea. The LORD *is* my strength and song... [that’s what it needs to be with us, instead of complaining, instead of griping, instead of wondering why these trials are coming upon us, we lay it all before God. And we’re all going to come to our own Red Sea and have difficulties in crossing. So, we need to ask God to open the door, open the way, give us the victory, give us the triumph.] ...and He has become my salvation. This is my God, and I will glorify Him, my father’s God... [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob] ...and I will exalt Him. The LORD *is* a Man of war; Jehovah *is* His name.” (vs 1-3).

“Pharaoh’s chariots and his army He has thrown into the sea; his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them; they sank into the depths like a stone. Your right hand, O LORD, has become glorious in power. Your right hand, O LORD, has shattered the enemy in pieces. And in the greatness of Your excellency You have overthrown them that rose up against You. You sent forth Your wrath, consuming them like stubble” (vs 4-7). That’s something—isn’t it? Pharaoh said, ‘I’ll pursue, I’ll pursue, I’ll make it. Yes, I’m strong! I’m great! I have power! I am the Pharaoh!’ Well, God humbled them, swallowed them up and protected His people. Quite an amazing thing!

Brethren, let’s see the things that we can learn from this. God will fight for us! There was another occasion—let’s come to Deuteronomy, the first chapter—when they got to going into the ‘promised land.’ Remember, they spent two Passovers—one Passover in Egypt, the second Passover in the wilderness—and by time of the Feast of Tabernacles in the fall, God was ready to take them into the ‘promised land.’ They sent out 12 spies to spy out the land for 40 days and they came back and reported and some of them said, ‘Oh, this is something! We’ll never be able to fight them. These people are too strong. Their cities are too great. Their walls are high. How can we do it?’

And Joshua and Caleb said, ‘No! No! The Lord will fight for us! They’ll be like grasshoppers before us.’ But no they [the people] weren’t happy. They cried and complained and moaned all night. Well, after all the ten rebellions that the children of Israel had coming to Mt. Sinai and then coming up to the edge of going into the ‘promised land’—ready to go in there—God said, ‘All right, because you don’t believe Me. You don’t believe I will fight for you—after all that I have done, after all that you’ve seen in Egypt, after all that I have accomplished in overthrowing Pharaoh and his armies and watching over you in the wilderness—because of that one day equals one year. They were spying out the land for 40 days, so you are going to wander in the wilderness for 40 years.’

They cried all night! Some of them changed their minds. And here’s a great lesson: ***Don’t wait too long to change your mind, because you may be too late!*** Think about that! That’s what happened to the children of Israel. Let’s see what God said:

Deuteronomy 1:40: “‘But you turn and take your journey *back* into the wilderness in the direction of the Red Sea.’.... [‘You mean we’re really going back into the wilderness again?’ *Yeah, you’re going back! And it will be 38-1/2 more years!*] ...And you answered and said to me [Moses], ‘We have sinned against the LORD... [too late for the repentance] ...we will go up and fight according to all that the LORD our God commanded us.’.... [too late] ...And when each one of you had buckled on his weapons of war, you were ready to go up into the hill. But the LORD said to me, ‘Say to them, “Do not go up, nor fight, for I *am* not among you, you will be beaten by your enemies.”’ So I [Moses] spoke to you. And you would not hear, but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and went presumptuously up into the hill” (vs 40-43). And sure enough the enemy beat them.

Here is the lesson for us: ***You can’t do it yourself. And when you don’t trust God and don’t rely on Him to fight for you, and you try and do it your way, it’s not going to prosper.*** They went up. They were told *not* to go up.

Verse 44: “And the Amorites who lived in that mountain came out against you and chased you, even as bees do, and destroyed you in Seir, to Hormah. And you returned and wept before the LORD. But the LORD would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear to you. So you stayed in Kadesh many days, according to the days that you remained *there*” (vs 44-46).

What a lesson! On the one hand they were happy when God fought for them, but they didn’t remember the lesson. How many times has this

happened to people who have been in the Church a long time? And then they're confronted with another problem. They're confronted with another difficulty. And then they let the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches and everything deter them from it—and what happens? They don't succeed! So there's a great lesson for us.

Later we find—come to the book of Joshua—after the 40 years of wandering they were going to go into the land. Joshua was going to take them in. God told them He would be with Joshua as He was with Moses, and let's see what God told Joshua to do. So here's another lesson for us in understanding the meaning of the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. ***God will fight for us! God will be with us! God will change the circumstances, even dramatically, IF we love Him and trust Him.*** We have our part to do. Here's what God told Moses:

Joshua 1:5: “No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, *so* I will be with you. **I will not fail you nor forsake you.**” We have the same thing in Heb. 13. We have our part to do! Just like the children of Israel in crossing the Red Sea had to walk; just like the children of Israel—had they believed the report of Joshua and Caleb—could have gone into the ‘promised land’ 38-1/2 years sooner. But they didn't believe and they weren't willing to walk in faith.

So here's what God told Joshua that he had to do—and here's a good lesson for us. We'll see that this is the way that we need to face our troubles and difficulties and our battles—because we'll have spiritual battles, we'll have things to overcome, the enemy will be against us—and we need God's help.

Verse 6: “Be strong and of good courage, for you shall divide for an inheritance to this people the land which I swore to their fathers to give it to them. **Only be strong and very courageous so that you may observe to do according to all the law** which My servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, so that you may prosper wherever you go” (vs 6-7). Now, it's very interesting that the name *Joshua* actually means the same as Jesus. So, if we take this lesson and look at it from the New Covenant point of view:

- be strong in Christ
- be strong in His Word
- be strong in His faith

—because ***He's going to fight for us!*** Don't change the words of Christ to the right hand or left hand and don't depart from it.

Verse 8: “This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth... [and we can say that all

the words of the New Covenant and the New Testament shall not depart out of our mouth.] ...but you shall meditate therein day and night, so that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it, for then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall have good success. Have I not commanded you?... [Notice the command of God, and we will see we have exactly the same thing in the New Testament] ...Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid, neither be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you in all places where you go.” (vs 8-9).

All right we'll see those things when we get to the New Testament. Let's look at some other things that took place. A little later on they conquered Jericho when they obeyed God and did what He said. One of the commands that was given: when you go in and you take the silver and gold and all the spoil, you bring all to God, as the firstfruits of the conquest of the land of Canaan.

There was a man Achan, and after they had conquered Jericho and taken all the spoil and all the treasure, he decided to take a wedge of gold for himself—secretly keep it away. And what happened? When they went up to conquer the city of Ai, they were beaten back! And even Joshua was startled. Why? They all wept before God, and God said, ‘Don't weep before Me. You bring the priest and with the ‘urim and thummim’ you find out who did the deed.’ So they did and it was Achan of the tribe of Judah. He was executed because he was stealing from God! Disobeying the commandment of God! We can also apply that to the New Testament, and our lives and how we should live.

Then later on God fought for them. Let's look at some other circumstances here that are difficult. Let's come to 2-Chronicles 20:15—this was during the days of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat was a righteous king. The enemy had come up to fight against Jerusalem, and one of the prophets of God told them: ‘You don't have to fight. God will fight for you.’ Here's what he told them:

2-Chronicles 20:15: “And he said, ‘Listen, all Judah, and you people of Jerusalem, and King Jehoshaphat! Thus says the LORD to you, “Do not be afraid nor dismayed... [Doesn't this sound an awful lot like what we read back there in Jos. 1? *Yes!*] ...because of this great multitude, for the battle *is* not yours, but God's.... [That's what we need to understand; ***let God fight our battles for us.***] ...Tomorrow go down against them. Behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz. And you shall find them at the end of the valley before the wilderness of Jeruel. You shall not *need* to fight in this *battle*. Set yourselves and stand, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem.” Do not

fear nor be dismayed.... [Remember that! Whatever the circumstances that come up in your life, which are even greater than you think you can handle, do not fear, do not be dismayed. Put it in God's hands and let Him fight the battle for you. Yes, you have your work to do. And this case, let's see what the work was that they had to do.] ...Tomorrow go out against them, for the LORD *will be with you*" (vs 15-17)—so they had to go.

And Jehoshaphat bowed his face to the ground. And all Judah and the people of Jerusalem fell before the LORD, worshiping the LORD. And the Levites, of the children of the Kohathites and of the sons of the Korahites, stood up to praise the LORD God of Israel with a loud voice on high. And they rose early in the morning and went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. And as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, 'Hear me, O Judah, and you people of Jerusalem. Believe in the LORD your God... [they had to have faith in God—didn't they? Likewise, we have to have faith in God, and faith in the Word of God.] ...and **so you shall be established**. Believe His prophets, and **so you shall prosper**'" (vs 18-20).

Take that and apply it to the New Testament. Believe Jesus Christ—Who was *the Prophet* of Deut. 18:15—and all the apostles, and all of their writings.

Look at what they did in their time of trouble, v 21: "And when he consulted with the people, he appointed singers to the LORD and praisers to praise the beauty of Holiness as they went out before the army... [Here the Levites and the priests were going out ahead of the army, just like God had said.] ...and to say, 'Praise the LORD, for His steadfast love *endures* forever.'" What happened when they began to sing?

You can think of the time when Paul was in prison in Philippi. They were in stocks. What were they doing out there in the middle of the night? They were singing praises to God—and what happened? *An earthquake hit, broke the stocks, all the prisoners were let loose and the jailer was so astonished! He was ready to kill himself. He ran out there to see what happened to the prisoners, because he thought they had all run away. He went out there and here is Paul and Silas and all the prisoners, and he said, 'No, no! Don't kill yourself.' What happened? The jailer and all of his household repented and were baptized that very night!*

Remember the time when Peter was in prison and there were four sets of guards to keep him in prison. An angel of the Lord came in, let him loose and Peter thought he was dreaming, but he wasn't. He went out, the gates opened, the locks

dropped off and Peter got out and he ran back to the house of Mark. They were so astonished when he got there that as he was knocking on the door, the girl who came to answer the door, said, 'Peter's angel is at the door.' When they understood that it was Peter, they opened the door and there he was! God delivered him—*faith; believe the Lord*.

Notice what happened, v 22: "And when they began to sing and to praise, the LORD set ambushes against the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah. And they were beaten." They fought against each other. They killed themselves, and after the Moabites and Ammonites had killed the Esauites from Mt. Seir, then they turned and fought each other until every last one of them was dead. These were the armies returning back from previous battles and they had great hordes of spoil.

Let's notice what happened, this is really quite something! Verse 24: "And when Judah came to the watchtower in the wilderness, they looked at the multitude. And behold, they *were* dead bodies fallen to the earth, and none escaped! And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away their spoil, they found among them in abundance both riches and precious jewels in great number among the dead bodies which they stripped off for themselves, more than they could carry away. And they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much" (vs 24-25).

Now, let's understand, the final battle that God is going to fight for us is what? *The resurrection from the dead*—right? And the riches and glory of that is going to be so great—*isn't that true? Yes!*

"And on the fourth day they gathered themselves in the Valley of Blessing, for there they blessed the LORD. And the name of the same place was called the Valley of Blessing until this day" (v 26). They returned to Jerusalem, they rejoiced over their enemy and they prospered as long as they followed God. **Remember, the battle is God's!**

Now let's come to the Psalms and let's see some things concerning how we need to look to God to help us, and these are really tremendous Psalms, brethren, that we need to realize:

- how we can trust God
- trust Him in what He's going to do
- believe His word
- ask Christ to fight for us
- ask Christ to be there to help us

Let's come to Psalm 18—here's quite an example of how God intervened for King David. Notice his attitude. Notice how we need to approach

God when troubles and difficulties come. Not like the children of Israel who complained; not like them who say, ‘Oh, Lord, why are You doing this? Oh, I am in such trouble.’ And you get depressed and your mind gets focused on this and you don’t pray and you don’t study and you don’t come to God. That will put you in the same condition that the children of Israel were in that we read there in Deut. 1—trust God in all circumstances! Have faith in Him because He will fight for you!

Psalm 18:1: “I love You, O LORD, my Strength. The LORD is my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer; my God, my Rock in Whom I take refuge; He is my Shield, and the horn of my salvation, my High Tower.... [That’s why David was ‘a man after God’s own heart.’ This is how he trusted in God.] ...I will call on the LORD, Who is worthy to be praised, so shall I be saved from my enemies” (vs 1-3). And then the whole Psalm is a reiteration of what God did to intervene in this battle and save him.

Let’s see what God will do for us, and then we’ll look at some Psalms that really fit in with kind of how today’s world is, and some of the problems we’ll be faced with and what are the attitudes that we need to take.

Psalm 27:1: “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?... [Brethren, don’t be afraid of anything or anyone! There are times we need to be ‘wise as serpents and harmless as doves,’ and we need to just get out of the way and let the wicked go their way and destroy themselves. But when it comes time to fight our battles, we need to realize that it is the Lord.] ...The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” We’re going to face some difficult times. We need to have the strength and courage to face them. That needs to be in faith with God.

“When the wicked, my enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an army should encamp against me, my heart shall not be afraid... [don’t look at the circumstances alone, look to God!] ...though war should rise against me, even then I will be confident. One thing I have desired from the LORD, that I will seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in His temple” (vs 2-4). Keep your mind and your focus on the goal; on the Kingdom of God. That’s where we’re headed. Everything else falls below that.

Verse 5: “For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion, in the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me upon a rock.”

- God will hear!
- God will answer!
- God will help!

***Always keep that in mind, do not forget that!***

(go to the next track)

Let’s see some of the Psalms, which help us to get the perspective that we need. Then we’ll go to the New Testament and see the spiritual perspective that we need continually. This one here is also quite spiritual, even though it’s in the Psalms. And, of course, many of the Psalms are highly spiritual because they were written by David who was called to salvation.

Psalm 37:1—here’s a rule: “Do not fret yourself because of evildoers, and do not be envious against the workers of iniquity... [God is going to take care of them. They’re going to be cut down; God’s judgment is upon them] ...For they shall soon be cut down like the grass; and wither as the green herb. Trust in the LORD, and do good...” Never get yourself in a position that because other people are temporarily prospering in evil and it doesn’t seem that difficulties come upon them, or that they have trials and they have troubles. You’re having them, but they don’t have them! Remember what it says in 2-Cor. 10: ‘those who compare themselves among themselves are not wise.’ That’s why it is trust in the Lord and do good.

Verse 4: “Delight yourself in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart.” Let’s stop and think. What should be the #1 desire?

- knowing God
- praying to God
- trusting in God
- faith in God
- love to God
- love of the brethren
- attaining to the first resurrection

That’s doing good and trusting in God; delighting in His way and He shall give you the desires of your heart.

Verse 5: “Commit your way unto the LORD; trust also in Him, and He will bring it to pass.... [Remember, He’ll bring it to pass in His time schedule, in His way—not yours. Remember this: In the end run it will turn out better than what you could have done. So think of that!] ...And He shall bring forth your righteousness like the light, and your judgment like the noonday. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; do not fret yourself... [become frustrated and anxious] ...because of him who prospers in his way; because of him who carries out wicked schemes. Cease from anger... [we read that on the first day of Unleavened Bread—cease

from anger, cease from wrath] ...and forsake wrath; do not fret yourself, it leads only to evil” (vs 5-8).

We have something similar to that in Psa. 73. Ethan wrote this Psalm and he just couldn't understand how the wicked prospered until he went 'into the house of the Lord.' Lots of times you won't be able to understand these things until you really pray about it; until you trust in God; until you study His Word to see and know and understand what will happen.

Let's come back here to Hebrews 13 and let's see this promise. Now, remember this: All the promises of God are there

- so we can claim them
- so we can trust in them
- so we can believe them
- so we can live our lives according to God's way

—whether we are in prosperous times, whether we are in tenuous times, we are to trust God continually in everything that we do. Here is a promise. I know we have covered this before, many times before, but let's understand this. When we are facing the circumstances we are looking at today, and we look down in the near future and see all the problems that are apparently on the horizon and may come, we need to go back to these Scriptures again and again and again, so that we know what we're going to do and how we need to trust in God.

Hebrews 13:5—especially in this world: “Do not *allow* the love of money to influence your behavior, *but be* satisfied with what you have... [and think about what you will receive—the *true riches!* Eternal life! Eternal glory!] ...for He has said, ‘**In no way will I ever leave you; no—I will never forsake you in any way.**’” Notice how powerful that that statement is. It doesn't leave any room for doubt. It doesn't leave a wiggle room. God has committed Himself irrevocably. This is God's promise!

Remember what God told Abraham when he was ready to sacrifice his son Isaac as a burnt offering. He had him on the altar. He had him tied and all ready to go. He reached down to take the saber to cut his throat and the angel of the Lord cried out and said, ‘Abraham!’ *He said, ‘Here I am.’* ‘Do nothing to the lad.’ Then God provided a ram as a substitute sacrifice. Then what did God say? He said, ‘Now I know that you fear Me!’ That was at the end of 40 years from the time he was called. God said, ‘Now I know that you fear Me. I swear by Myself...’ Irrevocable statement by God, just like

this one: ‘...that in blessing I will bless, and in multiplying I will multiply.’ Take that same thing to this statement: “‘...**In no way will I ever leave you; no—I will never forsake you in any way.**’” (v 5). So here's the attitude that we need to take. Just like God told Joshua when they were going into the land: ‘Be strong and of good courage.’

Verse 6: “So then, let us boldly say, ‘*The Lord is* my Helper, and I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?’” And as Jesus said, ‘Don't fear what they can do to you, the most they can do is kill the body, but they can't take your life because that belongs to God.’ So understand that. Realize that. Set your mind—wrap your mind around that!—and that will give you strength and that will give you help and that will give you trust and faith in everything.

Now, let's see how the Apostle Paul did this. Hey, the Apostle Paul in the world, he had everything going for him. Let's go back to Philippians 3. He had absolutely everything going for him. He was one of the big mucky-mucks in Judaism, a favorite of the high priest, to where the high priest gave him orders to go out and persecute Christians, put them in jail; and he even consented to the martyrdom of some of them. He had everything, in the flesh he would be counted as the elite. Yes, indeed!

Let's read the introduction, because this is the attitude that we need to have. Notice how it combines together everything that we have studied up to this point. Philippians 3:1: “Finally, my brethren, rejoice in *the* Lord. Indeed, for me to write the same things to you *is* not troublesome, but for you *it is* safe. Beware of dogs... [Yes, we're not to be gullible and stupid.] ...beware of evil workers, beware of the concision” (vs 1-2). Those who are bringing in false doctrine. In that time, it was the workers of Judaism trying to come in and say you need to keep the laws of Judaism. We still have the same thing today, though—don't we? *Yes!*

Part of the courage and boldness and things that we need is this: We need to know

- who we are
- where we are
- Who God is
- Who Christ is
- what we are doing

Verse 3: “For we are the circumcision, who serve God in *the* spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and do not trust in *the* flesh... [That's the important thing, don't look to the physical circumstances. Now, there are times when you need to and be ‘wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.’ But don't put that as the priority thing.] (Notice what Paul says here though

he could trust in the flesh): ...though I might also have *reason to* trust in *the* flesh. If any other thinks he has *cause to* trust in *the* flesh, I *have* much more: Circumcised on *the* eighth day; of *the* race of Israel, from *the* tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; with respect to law, a Pharisee” (vs 3-5)—the strictest sect of the Jews. Now, today that’s equivalent to the ultra orthodox Jewish believers in Judaism. They command great respect; everyone looks to them!

Verse 6: “With respect to zeal... [he had drive; he had zeal; he had enthusiasm] ...persecuting the Church; with respect to righteousness that *is* in law [traditions], blameless.... [as perfect as you could get, yet, he was a murderer.] ...Yet the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted *as* loss for the sake of Christ” (vs 6-8). Here we can put a little more study. Remember Lot and his wife. They were told ‘don’t look back.’ But she couldn’t help it, she had to look back. She became a pillar of salt. Never look back!

“Yet the things that were gain to me, these things I have counted *as* loss for the sake of Christ. But then truly, I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count *them* as dung; that I may gain Christ... [just a big pile of manure out there; stinking and rotting and smelling and filled with maggots.] ...and may be found in Him... [that’s more important than anything else, brethren] ...not having my own righteousness, which *is derived* from law... [the laws of tradition] ...but that *righteousness* which *is* by *the* faith of Christ—the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith...” (vs 8-9). The faith of Christ in us; that’s why we have the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

- for the mind of Christ
- the faith of Christ
- the love God
- the love of Christ
- the love of the brethren

All of these spiritual characteristics that go in to making true Christians that stand for Truth, that stand for right, that love and believe God under all circumstances.

“...the righteousness of God *that is* based on faith that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection... [see where he was single-mindedly focused all the time] ...and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead” (vs 9-11). In other words, there is going to be nothing between me and God and Christ and the resurrection of the dead. That has to be our mindset,

like a flint-stone, yet, tenderhearted and merciful.

He goes on the show he hasn’t made it yet. There’s work to do. Verse 12: “Not as though I have already received, or have already been perfected; but I am striving... [that’s what we must do, that’s our part] ...so that I may also lay hold on that for which I also was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.... [and he became more humble the longer that he was an apostle. When he wrote in 1-Cor. 15, he said that he ‘was least of all the apostles.’ When he wrote Eph. 3, while he was in prison, he said that he was ‘the least’—that he was ‘less than the least than all the saints.’ He truly understood that he—to serve the people of God and teach them—is on the bottom, not on the top looking down. So the longer he served Christ and understood what was the plan and the goal and the scope of what he was doing, the smaller and smaller was his own estimation was of his own life, and of his own self. God’s not going to deal in vanity. Part of the thing concerning the Feast of Unleavened Bread is to get rid of the vanity.

It says in Psa. 39, ‘man at his very best state is altogether vanity.’ That’s what he’s talking about here. Set aside all the vanity and all the self and everything—‘attain to the resurrection of the dead.’ He hasn’t been perfected yet.

Verse 13: “Brethren, I do not count myself as having attained; but **this one thing I do**... [key important thing for spiritual, mental and emotional strength and stability—and you have to practice this every single day] ...—forgetting the things that are behind... [what your problem was yesterday, last week, last month, last year, ten years ago—and, brethren, there are some of you that still haven’t gotten over your church experience and how bad that was for you. You still rehash it and you still go over it, and some still are bitter and angry about it. Put it away! We can all remember the lesson, but quit dwelling on it.] (Do like Paul does here): .....—forgetting the things that are behind and reaching forth to the things that are ahead.” This is what we need to be doing. This is the whole purpose—the spiritual meaning—of the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

**To go forward! Stand still in the grace of God and go forward!** That’s not contradictory. Stand still means *don’t go back to your former way, but go forward!* God will fight for us!

Notice what he says. This has to be also our mindset, what we look to, v 14: “I press toward *the* goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” That’s something! We’ve got to press. We have to have all our effort only motivated by the Spirit of God, led by the Spirit of God, serving God with cheerfulness and

joyfulness even though we may, for the time being, be overburdened with problems. God will see us through it all, sooner or later. **Never, never give up on God**, because He's never never going to give up on you, if you don't give up on Him.

Part of the lesson of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is being perfected in Christ as pictured by the unleavened bread. Here's the attitude that perfection brings, v 15: "So then, let as many as *be* perfect be of this mind. And if *in* anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this to you." Isn't that something? When you have problems and difficulties and sins to overcome, Who is revealing it to you? *God is, by His Spirit in you.*

- so that you can repent and change
- so that you can set those things aside
- so that you can look to God
- so that you can receive of His Spirit
- so that you can receive of His power
- of His faith
- of His love

—and let Him fight the battle for you. He will.

Verse 16: "Nevertheless, *in regard* to that which we have attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. Brethren, be imitators together of me, and bear in mind those who walk in this way, as you have us *for* an example" (vs 16-17). That has to be for everyone who's been in the Church for a long time; for all the elders; for all the ministers. We are to be exemplary in our conduct. Not as an example to show off to the brethren, but because of our commitment to God and our personal life and our personal dedication to God and our personal study and our personal growth and our personal commitment to God in everything that we do. That is the example! Too many times we have: 'Well, you have to set the example for people.' And then it becomes all vanity in setting an example. God wants it from the heart, dedicated to Christ.

Verse 18: "(For many walk *contrary*; I have often told you *of* them, and I tell *you* now *with* weeping, *they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ... [there are some we have seen do that, too] ...whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is* their belly, and whose glory *is* in their shame; *for* they mind earthly things). But for us, the commonwealth *of* God exists in *the* heavens, from where also we are waiting for *the* Savior, *the* Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 18-19). And when He comes look what He's going to do. All of us are getting older, and some of us are getting very old and very weak. Don't worry. Some of us are going to die before Christ returns and enter into our place of safety in the grave. Don't worry! That's all a part of God's plan. What does He say?

*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints*, because you have completed the plan of God for your life. That's what it's all about.

Notice what is going to happen at the resurrection, v 21: "Who will transform our vile bodies, that they may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the inner working of His own power, *whereby He is able* to subdue all things to Himself."

Boy! That's something!—isn't it? Now, can we arm ourselves, our minds, with this attitude? *Yes, we can!* And if we do, what is that going to do for us? *It's going to do for us just what God did for the children of Israel when Pharaoh was pursuing them at the Red Sea.* The power behind Pharaoh was Satan the devil, and we still have to fight against Satan the devil. The Feast of Unleavened Bread is going to end at sundown tonight, and the world goes on and Satan is still there, and we have things that we need to do.

Notice, here's what we need to understand—Ephesians 6:10. We don't have to worry.

- God is going to help us.
- God is going to strengthen us.
- God is going to be with us.
- He will fight our battles for us!

But we have to get out there and do the spiritual things so we are prepared for that. So we have to come back to the reality, yes, the #1 enemy out there is Satan the devil and his angels and those who serve him. That's why we are to be 'wise as serpents and harmless as doves'—trusting in God!

Ephesians 6:10: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in *the* Lord, and in the might of His strength.... [not ours; not our abilities; not what we can do, but what God can do in us and through us.] ...Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil... [and does he have a lot of helpers out there today! A lot of technology on his side—isn't that true? *Yes, indeed!* A lot of workers working for him—feverishly, diligently! Yes, indeed!] ... because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities *and* against powers, against the world rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual *power* of wickedness in high *places*" (vs 10-12).

And that's what's wrong with religion and government—right there. That's why we have been called, because we are going to replace all the religions of this world. They are coming to an end! And all governments are coming to an end and will be replaced by the Kingdom of God! Those who will be the spiritual teachers and the rulers will be all of

those who are in the first resurrection and rule with Christ! So God has called us to save the world. God is not going to return and do His will until He has perfected the saints and until we are ready for the job—and that won't happen until the time of the resurrection. We don't know how much time we have left. Once in a while it looks like it's coming real fast, and then something happens and it doesn't work out that way. We look and see there's more time. Then we get into the attitude of saying, 'Well, prophecy's speeding up.' And then, 'Prophecy's slowing down.' No! Prophecy is always on time. It's only our perception of what is happening. Those things are going to be there. That's why we need to take on the whole armor of God. Then he describes it.

Verse 13: "Therefore, take up the whole armor of God so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having worked out all things, to stand.... [He tells us just like Moses was told, 'Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.' We are to stand!

- Stand in the grace of God!
- Stand in the love of God!
- Stand in the Truth of God!

Verse 14: "Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with Truth... [Don't fiddle with any of these stupid false doctrines] ...and wearing the breastplate of righteousness... [and that protects all of your innards] ...and having your feet shod with *the* preparation of the Gospel of peace.... [Yes, we are standing in the Gospel, we are preaching the Gospel, we are doing all the things that God wants us to do.] ...Besides all *these*, take up the shield of the faith..." (vs 14-16).

When they had the shield, especially the Greek shields, they were unique because they had the round shield and they had at the leading edge of the shield a grip for their hand and they would be able to have a strap on the inside of the shield where they would put their arm. And when they would use that shield, they were able to turn back all of the thrust of the Persian armies and the smaller Greek armies defeated the Persian armies because they had the right armor. They used it in a way that was never done before. Likewise, with us. We have to have the "...shield of faith with which you will have the power to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one" (v 16).

Just like lobbing the missiles. I think of this many times with the battle that the Palestinians do in sending in the rockets. They lob in the rockets. Well, Satan lobs in his missiles. A little temptation here, a little temptation there—you just stand firm in the faith of God and just spiritually, with the shield of

faith, just knock all of those down. They won't bother you, because you can "...quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one."

Verse 17: "And put on the helmet of salvation... [protect your mind; protect your thoughts. Like back there in Prov. 4: 'above all things diligently guard the door of your mind.' Do it with]: ...the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." You need to

- know the Word of God
- live by the Word of God
- understand the Word of God
- let your thinking be with the Word of God.
  - ✓ that gives you wisdom
  - ✓ that gives you understanding
  - ✓ that gives you strength
  - ✓ that gives you fortitude
  - ✓ that gives you the love of God
  - ✓ the faith of God
  - ✓ the Truth of God

all of it combined together.

Verse 18: "Praying at all times with all prayer and supplication in *the* Spirit, and in this very thing being watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints." [that's quite something!

I always end the sermon on the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread in Romans, the eighth chapter. Romans 8 shows us all the circumstances we are going to face in our lives—all the overcoming, all the obstacles and everything—and it also shows us what Paul brought to us in Philip. 3—what is the focus we need to have? How do we use it? How do we view everything here?

Listen, let me tell you something. Don't let any circumstances captivate your mind, captivate your emotions. Always clear the deck every day through repentance and prayer. Always keep this in mind, even in times of trouble, times of stress, in times of difficulty—we're going to face them. We're going to face things that we never thought we would have to face. We can talk about those later on. But regardless of what comes, remember this:

Romans 8:28: "And **we know that all things work together for good to those who love God...** [and to love Him with all your heart, with all your mind, with all your strength] ...to those who are called according to *His* purpose... [which you have been. God has a purpose for you, a plan for you, a place for you in His kingdom forever, in New Jerusalem—forever!] ...because those whom He did foreknow... [which He has with His Holy Spirit in us] ...He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His own Son... [be just like Him, just like

we read in Philip. 3, Who will transform our bodies to be fashioned after His glorious body] ...that He might be *the* firstborn among many brethren. Now whom He predestinated, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified” (vs 28-30). By giving them the Holy Spirit of God. You have some of the glory of God right now, and you will be filled with the glory of God at the resurrection. That’s the promise.

With these promises, Paul says: “What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us?” (v 31). What circumstances could possibly be against us? *Nothing!* Not even the worst circumstances that can be, because of Christ.

Verse 32: “He Who did not spare even His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how shall He not also grant us all things together with Him? Who shall bring an accusation against *the* elect of God? God *is the one* Who justifies. Who *is* the one that condemns? *It is* Christ Who died, but rather, Who is raised again, Who is even *now* at *the* right hand of God, *and* Who is also making intercession for us” (vs 32-34). Think of that! Right there interceding for us in truth, in love, in power, in understanding—think of that! Because of that, NOTHING is going to separate us from God. NOTHING is going to turn us back from the way and Truth of God. Who shall separate us from the love of God?

“What shall separate us from the love of Christ?... [notice all these circumstances. We can look those circumstance square in the face and say, as Jesus did and claim the promise, that He will not ever in anyway leave us, nor will He forsake us ever.] ...*Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? Accordingly, it is written, ‘For Your sake we are killed all the day long; we are reckoned as sheep for *the* slaughter.’” (vs 35-36). That doesn’t matter. That is going to happen. Remember, it really doesn’t matter how you die, *as long as you die in the faith.*

“But in all these things we are more than conquerors... [more than overcomers] ...through Him Who loved us. For I am persuaded... [and this is the persuasion that we need to have. Notice the spiritual maturity. Notice the power. Notice what Paul went through to suffer so that he could write these inspiring words for us to inspire us, that his teachings still goes down through time and produces fruit—fruit in our lives.] ...that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, **shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord**” (vs 37-39).

So, what we do today, brethren, is *we stand still, see the salvation of God and go forward. God is with us!* This is the meaning of the last day of the Feast Unleavened Bread.

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Leviticus 23:6-7
- 2) Exodus 14:8-12
- 3) Mark 4:14-17
- 4) Exodus 14:13-16
- 5) Exodus 15:1-7
- 6) Deuteronomy 1:40-46
- 7) Joshua 1:5-9
- 8) 2 Chronicles 20:15-22, 24-26
- 9) Psalm 18:1-3
- 10) Psalm 27:1-5
- 11) Psalm 37:1-8
- 12) Hebrews 13:5-6
- 13) Philippians 3:1-21
- 14) Ephesians 6:10-18
- 15) Romans 8:28-39

#### Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 13
- Deuteronomy 18:5
- 1 Corinthians 10
- Psalm 73
- 1 Corinthians 15
- Ephesians 3
- Psalm 39
- Proverbs 4

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Transcribed: 3-2-10