

## Seventh Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread

Fred R. Coulter—April 25, 2011

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, 2011. Time marches on; it goes quickly and we have seen a lot of things take place this year already, and we sure don't know what's in store for us down the road. There's a special meaning for this day, the seventh day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which is also a Holy Day.

Let's come to Leviticus 23:6—just in review: “And on the fifteenth day of the same month... [That's the first month according to the calculated Hebrews calendar] ...*is* the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD. You must eat unleavened bread seven days.” The question always comes up: Can I have a hamburger after sundown? *Yes!* You can have a hamburger after a sundown. Or a hot roll.

Only during the Feast of Unleavened Bread is leaven a type of sin, and that's a type of sin because it shows that *sin is everywhere, in everything!* So, when we have the Feast of Unleavened Bread, it teaches us to look for the sin, to look for the leaven, to get it out. But we also know that's only half the story or maybe a third of the story. The other third is to *put in*

- the righteousness of Christ
- the love of God
- the hope of God
- the Truth of God
- the Word of God
- the Holy Spirit of God
- loving God
- loving each other

These are all the things that make up the meaning of Unleavened Bread. All the spiritual meaning, though we start out with something physical, brings us to a greater and deeper understanding of the things in the Bible and the Word of God, and helps us with our relationship with God and with each other.

Another thing: Leaven puffs up! Leaven is vanity! It teaches us the humility of God! It teaches us not to exalt ourselves above other people and especially not to be lifted up in pride because of what God has done for us. We need to be thankful, grateful and humble. That's why we eat unleavened bread for seven days. We know the first day is a Holy convocation and we've already had that. We're to offer an offering to God, which we will take up on this seventh day.

Verse 8: “...In the seventh day *is* a Holy

convocation. You shall do no servile work *therein*.” We all know the Scriptures. As you know the Christian Biblical Church of God doesn't merchandise people. We don't send out letters asking for money—give this, give that, give the other. We don't check tithing records either.

The thing is this, and this is one of the whole stories of the Feast of Unleavened Bread: ***If you love God, you will do what God commands.*** You will want to! It's important that the motivation for everything that we do comes from within as we're led by the Holy Spirit of God, so that we're making the choices.

- We desire to do the will of God!
- We desire to love God!
- We desire to love each other!
- We desire to do the things that please God!

And, aren't those the things that God delights in? *Yes!* So, all of these different ones that come and beat the brethren over the head for money, turn them upside down and shake them for the last dime or penny that they can get reminds me of the sheriff of Nottingham! Or we could say the IRS!

Now, the thing that's important is this: Whatever you give in an offering—whatever you give in tithes and offerings—it's from the heart, because you want to. Not only does God say so, and command us to do so, but it's what God desires us to do. After all, what is the whole purpose of conversion? *To do the things of God automatically!* Because then that's how it becomes a part of our character.

I could read Haggai, the first chapter, and show whenever we get out and do our own business and do our own things and don't take care of what God wants us to do, then our money never goes anyplace. It's like the Proverb says, 'He has lots of money but he's poor.' Then there are those who are poor but use money wisely and are able to accomplish a lot of things. Likewise with the tithes and offerings of God.

I can also turn to Malachi 3 and I can tell you, yes, God brings a curse on those who do not pay their tithes and offerings. Well, that's between you and God. Myself, I don't want to be under the curse of God. I know that we all have to do those things that are pleasing to God. So, in taking up this offering, and taking the time for the offering, as we are told, it's what we do according to our heart. What we propose and determine in our hearts. We also need to look to the blessings of God. And all the

blessings of God, as we'll see a little later today, are not counted in monetary and physical terms.

- How much is it worth to understand the Truth?
- How much is it worth for the love of God?
- How much is it worth to have faith and confidence in God?

You can't measure it! ***Those are the true riches of God!*** That's what we need to be rich in, not in physical wealth!

(pause for taking up the offering)

Let's go back and have a little review here concerning the Feast of Unleavened Bread with the children of Israel after the Passover. We know—as we have seen and covered, but it's good to review so we get the story flow up to the meaning of the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—we know this:

Exodus 12:40—we know the days; we're to keep them: "Now the sojourning of the children of Israel in Egypt *was* four hundred and thirty years, and it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, it was even on that very same day, all the armies of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. It *is* a night to be much observed to the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt. This *is* that night of the LORD... [not the device of a human being, or the will of man, or the tradition of men] ...to be observed by all the children of Israel in their generations" (vs 40-42).

Then Moses told the children of Israel about the firstborn, and what they were to do in sanctifying the firstborn because *they all belong to God!* Of course, there's quite a story about that, which we will cover as we come down to the Feast of Pentecost. But they were all to be sanctified to the Lord, all the males of the animals and of the children of men; all the males would be redeemed with a lamb. Likewise, if it was a female, it was to be redeemed with a lamb to go into the festival savings that they would have. They would take it to the Feast, or they would sell it and turn it into money and go to the Feast, and that's what happened with the female that were firstborn. They were all to be sanctified by God.

As we saw, that was the whole meaning of the things that we find in Deut. 16 for the sacrifices that were prepared on the day portion of the Passover. Then we find here one of the meanings of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread. Let's just review that here:

Exodus 13:7: "Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days.... [now we're in the last day of that] ...And there shall be no leavened bread seen with you, nor shall there be leaven seen with you in

all your borders. And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, 'This is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out from Egypt.'" (vs 7-8).

For us, when we came out of Egypt—meaning coming out of the sin of this world, the religions of this world. After all they're all becoming like Egypt with this New Age thing that is sweeping all the 'religions' and the great decline of Protestantism and Catholicism in the world. That's why we have the book *Lord, What Should I Do?*; so we can have something to help these people recover themselves and come to God. The world is in vast confusion out there, brethren. Listen, as new people come,

- you're going to have to be strong
- you're going to have to know the Word of God
- you're going to have to help them and give them things of understanding that they need

God is going to add to us. He will to add to us in the way that we can handle it. Let's have it where they will recognize that we love each other as Christ said, and help them to recover themselves from the difficulties and problems that they have been through. There are a lot of difficulties and problems that those in the Church have been through, too. So, we all need help!

Verse 9: "And it shall be a sign to you upon your hand, and for a memorial between your eyes, that the LORD'S law may be in your mouth, for with a strong hand the LORD has brought you out of Egypt. You shall therefore keep this law in its season from year to year" (vs 9-10). We do that. We're told in the New Testament: 'Let us keep the Feast, not with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with 'the Unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth.' That's what it's all about.

So, here we are on the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. There's a special lesson for us, because the children of Israel left with a 'high hand.' They went out, they were following God wherever He went. He had the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night so they could see where they were going. It was a spectacular thing that took place. They were leaving the nation of Egypt in absolute destruction and turmoil! Yes, people lived through it. Yes, there were survivors of it. God also knew the hearts of the children of Israel.

Remember, they weren't converted. And remember, they were leaving under very difficult circumstances, and they didn't have a lot of things they could take with them. The only thing they had to eat was unleavened bread for seven days. It's good for us to understand. If you think you have it

hard, if you think you have it tough, just mentally put yourself in the sandals as it were of the children of Israel coming out of Egypt. God knew all of this. They all knew where the ‘promised land’ was going to be. If you have a big map of the Mediterranean, look at the Holy Land, the Delta of the Nile and where Rameses was and there was a highway or roadway going to the land of the Philistines. That was the *easy* way to go. Wouldn’t be any difficulty, no desert, no mountains, no rocks, no enemies.

But God didn’t take them that way! He wanted them to learn to trust in Him. He also wanted to *try* them to see what they would do. He told Moses, ‘I want you to go down by the Red Sea, by Baal Zephon and I want you to encamp along the Red Sea. So, they went down there. There were mountains behind them, the Red Sea in front of them. They were all camped in their camping positions, in the column that they were walking in—there wasn’t any room for them to spread out, the mountains were right there.

God said that the reason that He did it was this, Exodus 14:3<sub>[transcriber’s correction]</sub>: “‘For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, “They *are* trapped in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.” And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart that he will follow them. And I will be glorified through Pharaoh and all his army, so that the Egyptians may know that I *am* the LORD.’ And they did so.... [They turned and went there.] (Then): ...And the king of Egypt was told that the people fled. And the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people. And they said, ‘Why have we done this... [we’re all stupid, we let all of our servants go] ...that we have let Israel go from serving us?’” (vs 3-5).

- Who’s going to do our gardens?
- Who’s going to take care of our granaries?
- Who’s going to be baking for us?
- Who’s going to be cleaning our houses?
- Who’s going to wait on me [Pharaoh] hand and foot?

What Pharaoh did, he said, ‘All right, we’ve got enough army left, let’s get our chariots and the horsemen and the soldiers and we’re going to go get them. We can gallop down there, they’re trapped!’ Let’s understand something else: Many times God lets us get into situations to where our only deliverance is from God! As a matter of fact, that’s the truth in any case—is it not? You know what happened when the children of Israel saw that Pharaoh was coming. There are quite a few lessons that we can learn from this in Exo. 14; notice what happened:

They came after the children of Israel, pursued them, v 10: “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.... [Key #1: *If God is on your side*—or rather the other way, *if you’re on God’s side*—you don’t have to be afraid! **‘Be not afraid!’** Remember that phrase; don’t be fearful! They were very afraid!] ...And the children of Israel cried out to the LORD.” Then they began to accuse Moses.

Let’s understand something else: Yes, there are times when there are other people involved in the difficulties and problems that we are facing. But, let’s not blame them. What if they’re a hundred percent at fault? Well, that may be the case, but nevertheless, you still look to God. What did they do? *They came to Moses!*

Verse 11: “And they said to Moses, ‘Have you taken us away to die in the wilderness because *there were* no graves in Egypt?... [There is plenty of room for graves out there, but look around here. How are they going to have any graves, there’s nothing but stone.] ...Why have you dealt this way with us to carry us forth out of Egypt?... [They were crying and moaning and groaning and saying, ‘Oh, God, take us out.’] ...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).

Well now, let’s look at it this way, too: What IF we’re called upon to give our lives for Christ? Some people may say that may be better off for us because, after all, ‘if I hadn’t answered the call of God now, well, since I know about the second resurrection He can take care of me.’ Really? What do you think God thinks of that kind of attitude? *Not very good*—is it? No! Don’t blame other people. They may have their faults, but whatever fault you have take care of it. What it is, is this: It’s to show we’re to *trust in God!*—not just look at the circumstances.

Verse 13. And Moses said to the people, **‘Fear not!...’** *Don’t be afraid!* That’s what it has to be with us. Brethren, we are going to face some horrible, difficult and challenging times just around the corner. We better understand that we are to not fear. *It may be difficult!* We are going to see that **God will deliver us.** But we’re also going to see that there are going to be perhaps many narrow escapes! But nevertheless, **God will deliver us!**

**‘Fear not! Stand still...’** [In other words, don’t run around ‘like chickens with their heads cut off’ trying to figure out what to do.] ...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...** [I want you to underline that; memorize that; realize that in everything that you go through] ...and you shall be still” (vs 13-14). You don’t have to complain.

- Trust God!
- Look to Him!
- He’ll work it out!

Verse 15: “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Why do you cry to Me? Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward...’” How can we go forward if Pharaoh is behind us and the sea is in front of us and we can’t go right and we can’t go left?

- By faith!
- By seeing how God is going to fight for us!

So, He told Moses, v 16: “‘And you—lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it.... [Oh yes! He lifted it up; that was Moses’ part. God’s part was to spread the sea wide apart with a strong wind that night and dry out the seabed so the children of Israel in this long column along the Red Sea could just do a flanking movement, and early in the morning, after the wind had blown all night and held back the water, the land would be dry and] ...And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea’”—in just a short time.

Then the division that God put so that the cloud came between them and the Egyptians—it was darkness to the Egyptians, but light to the children of Israel. Then when they got across, God lifted that so the Egyptians could see and it was daylight and they could look and see, ‘Oh, dry land; let’s go get them!’ But God said, ‘Yes, let them go into the sea, but ‘I’m going to get honor on them; I’m going to destroy them,’ and everything is going to be smashed to pieces. You know what happened. The Egyptians went into the sea and when they got down into the sea, God took the wheels off the chariots. How’s that for convenient traveling.

Sidebar: There is a Joel Wyatt who says that they crossed the Red Sea in another place because there are chariots there, and you can see them under the water. That’s down by the Gulf of Aqaba, too far away for this. But you know something, those chariots have their wheels on. What does that tell us? *That tells us those chariots were not the chariots of Pharaoh!* And the children of Israel didn’t cross there, because God took the wheels off the chariots. When the waters came back, it probably smashed everything to smithereens!

The children of Israel were happy. They were joyous! They sang songs! They danced! They said, 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, and He has become my salvation. This is my God, and I will glorify Him, my father’s God, and I will exalt Him. The LORD *is* a Man of war; Jehovah *is* His name. 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” (vs 1-5). Everyone was joyous and happy because **God delivered them!**

Well, just three days later they got to complaining because there wasn’t any water, and so again, they complained! Another thing we are to learn is this: **Remember how God has delivered you!** Thank Him for it. Don’t forget! Then look at all of the temptations that God had to endure with the children of Israel. Remember what happened when it came time to go into the ‘promised land.’ Even after all those temptations, they sent the spies in, they came back and told them ‘it’s a glorious land, a great land. Yes, the walls are high and the people are tall, but don’t worry, God is going to fight for us,’ said Joshua and Caleb. The others said, ‘Oh, no! It’s going to be too much, we’re not going to make it.’ The children of Israel wept and cried all night. So after all the temptations and all the difficulties that had gone on—and God was ready to take them into the ‘promised land’ only a year and a half after they had left Egypt—God had to punish them. The spies were searching out the land forty days and He said, ‘All right, a day for a year you’re going to wander and all those 20-years and older are going to die! Their bodies are going to be strewn in the desert.’ That’s what happened!

Now, let’s come to Deuteronomy 31. Let’s see when we come to the end of the 40 years of wandering. Remember, Moses himself did not go into the ‘promised land.’ Why? Well, stop and think about that Moses had a relationship with God, he talked directly to Him face-to-face! Isn’t that true? He went up on the mountain and God gave him the tablets of stone and everything like that. God told him the statutes and the judgments. There was a time when God said, when the people needed water—whatever that stone was, maybe the stone of destiny, or whatever—‘strike the stone and water would come out.’ It was like a huge, great fountain of water coming out, to bring water to a million-and-a-half or more people out there in the wilderness.

So, then again they got very thirsty, and the children of Israel were chiding Moses and Aaron and complaining and coming after them—nothing but complaints! So, God said, ‘**Speak** to the rock.’ But Moses was so upset with the rebellion of the children

of Israel that he took his rod and went up to the rock and beat it with his rod. And God said, ‘because you didn’t believe Me when I said to *speak* to the rock and it will bring out water, and you *struck* it, you’re not going into the ‘promised land.’ So, Moses was able to go on one of the mountains there and look in to see the ‘promised land’ and see what it was like and so forth. Then everything was turned over to Joshua.

Deuteronomy 31:1 is part of the story that we have: “And Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel. And he said to them, ‘I *am* a hundred twenty years old today. I can no more go out and come in. Also the LORD has said to me, “You shall not go over this Jordan.” The LORD your God will cross over before you. He will destroy these nations from before you, and you shall possess them, and Joshua will cross over before you as the LORD has said” (vs 1-3). And then destroy those kings and so forth.

Verse 5: ““And the LORD shall give them up before your face, so that you may do to them according to all the commandments which I have commanded you.... [Notice God’s command; this is what it is for us; this is the theme for today; the theme of the last day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread]: ...**Be strong and of a good courage. Do not fear nor be afraid of them, for the LORD your God is He Who goes with you. He will not fail you nor forsake you.**” (vs 5-6).

Don’t we have the same promise in Hebrews 13? *Yes, we do!* Taken exactly right from there. Jesus Christ

- is for us!
- loves us!
- saved us!
- called us!
- given of the Holy Spirit!
- wants us to be in His Kingdom

And He doesn’t want us to be complaining and griping and moaning and groaning and everything like that—regardless of the circumstances. Some people have circumstances more difficult than others. Some people have circumstances which are really hard to understand. ***God knows that! God is with you in it!*** And another thing to always remember is this—because we’ll talk about troubles that God needs to deliver us out of—***If you have the Spirit of God in you and Christ in you, He is in trouble with you! To help you!***

Here’s what He said here. This is quite a verse; this tells us an awful lot, Hebrews 13:5: “Do not *allow the* love of money to influence your behavior... [Isn’t that something? The lust of money, the covetousness of money! Isn’t that what

people are after today? Not let it influence our behavior.] ...*but be* satisfied with what you have, for He has said...”

- Does God lie? *No!*
- Does He give His promises? *Yes!*
- Can we claim those promises? *Yes!*
- Does He expect us to claim those promises? *Yes!*
- Will He fulfill His promises? *Yes!*

“...for He has said, **‘In no way will I ever leave you; no—I will never forsake you in any way!’**” (v 5). That’s what we can claim of God. He’s promised that! You get in trouble, you get on your knees and you read this verse and you claim this promise, and say, ‘Oh, God, You’ve given these promises, You’ve given this Word, I’m coming to You on my knees and praying to You, supplicating You, asking You for Your intervention and for Your help and for Your goodness. Please, Father, intervene!’ ***He will!***

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?*’” We need to think about that! We need to understand how we need to have

- courage
- strength
- our hearts fixed before God
  - ✓ believing in His Word
  - ✓ trusting in His Word
  - ✓ trusting in His Spirit

—*and go forward!* That’s what God wants us to do with our lives. When this Feast of Unleavened Bread is over, we go forward, and we go forward

- with confidence
- with strength
- with assurance

*Yes, indeed!*

Now, let’s come back here to 1-Chronicles 28; this is quite a thing here. This is when David is charging his son Solomon to build the temple. He was just a young man. David is rehearsing to Solomon—this is the official charge to Solomon. Notice how David encouraged him in the work and the attitude that he needed to have, likewise with us.

1-Chronicles 28:6: “And He [God] said to me [David], ‘Solomon your son shall build My house and My courts, for I have chosen him *to be* My son, and I will be his Father. And I will establish his kingdom forever **if**... [there’s that word again] ...he continues resolute in keeping My commandments and My ordinances, as he is today” (vs 6-7). Think about that! There’s a lot for us to learn here—*isn’t* there? If we continue resolute in doing the will of God and keeping the commandments of God, serving God, and loving God—*isn’t* that true? *Yes!*

Verse 8: “And now in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, keep and seek for all the commandments of the LORD your God, so that you may possess this good land and leave *it* for an inheritance for your children after you forever.” Likewise we’re to inherit the Kingdom of God. *A spiritual kingdom*

- with spiritual life
- with spiritual riches
- with spiritual honor

The stakes are so much higher—aren’t they? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 9: “And you, Solomon my son, acknowledge the God of your father and **serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind**... [That’s the key—isn’t it? That’s the whole result of Unleavened Bread—isn’t it? *Yes!* We put out the leaven; put out the sin; we draw close to God. ***He purifies our heart! He cleanses our mind!***] ...**serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind**...”

Do you do that? *or* Do you do like the children of Israel at the Red Sea when they saw Pharaoh coming? And you complain and say, ‘Oh, what’ve I gotten myself into? Why did I say yes?’ Think about it!

Know this for sure, v 9: “...for the LORD searches **all** hearts... [We’ve done *If Statements of the Bible* (sermon series) maybe we ought to do the ‘all’ clauses. *Yes!*] ...and understands **all** the imaginations of the thoughts...” How much more with the Spirit of God in us! Think of that! We’ve been begotten by the Holy Spirit of God the Father and the Holy Spirit of God has two parts to it:

1. the Spirit of Christ for the mind of Christ
2. the begetting of the Father for being a son or daughter of God

Notice a promise: “...**If** [conditional] you seek Him, He will be found by you. But **if** you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever.... [And that’s true to any life—isn’t it?

- we’re to be strong
- we’re to have courage
- we’re to do what God wants us to do in the way that he wants us to do; with a heart and mind and attitude that we need to have

Let’s come to Matthew, the eighth chapter, and let’s learn another lesson here. Let’s see how the Bible is consistent—Old Testament and New Testament. Only we have it in Old Testament in the *letter of the law*. in the New Testament we have it in the *spirit of the heart, of the mind* and how God deals with us.

We have the greatest grace of all, that God has given us of His Spirit to be in our hearts and minds.

Here in Matthew 8:19 we have something really very interesting. There are a lot of people who are ‘good-timers’ and ‘glad-handlers’ and that’s what some of them were here. “And a certain scribe came to *Him* and said, ‘Master, I will follow You wherever You may go.’.... [What did Jesus say? ‘Oh that’s wonderful! You’re such a nice man, just step right in line here. NO! Because he was fawning to Him, he wasn’t sincere.] ...Then Jesus said to him, ‘Foxes have holes, and birds of heaven *have* nests; but the Son of man has no place to lay His head’” (vs 19-20). What an answer, you might say. That’s very insulting.

Well, look at v 21: “And another of His disciples said to Him... [Those who were following and learning—right?] ...‘Lord, allow me first to go and bury my father.’.... [‘Oh yes, that’s such a wonderful thing; you had such a wonderful father and you care for him and you love him. Yes, my son, go bury your father.’ NO! That’s not what Jesus said.] ...But Jesus said to him, ‘Follow Me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.’” (vs 21-22). Those are hard words, but they’re true—aren’t they?

Notice, concerning His disciples, v 23: “And when He entered into the ship, His disciples followed Him. Now a great tempest suddenly arose in the sea, so great that the ship was being covered by the waves; but He was sleeping. And His disciples came to *Him* and awoke Him, saying, ‘Lord, save us! We are perishing.’.... [Sounds a little bit like being at the Red Sea. ‘Oh, look at what’s happening! We’re drowning! Lord, You’re sleeping! You don’t care anything for us.’] ...And He said to them, ‘Why are you afraid, O *you* of little faith?’.... [I want you to think about that! The more faith that we grow into, the less fear we’re going to have, because we’re trusting in God and not looking to the circumstances. These were very bad circumstances indeed! But they trusted in God.] ...Then He arose *and* rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. But the men were amazed, saying, ‘What kind of *man* is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?’” (vs 23-27).

What are we dealing with here? Their minds weren’t open to the complete truth about Jesus Christ, yet. That was going to come at a later time.

Let’s come over to Matthew 14 and let’s see another time when they were in the boat when there was a huge wave that was coming and storm that was there, and how also faith was involved—or the lack thereof.

(go to the next track)

Let’s continue on in Matthew 14—and this is

one I like, I think it's really, really good. Jesus told the disciples to get in the boat, go to the other side and He left the multitude and went up the mountain and was praying 'til it was night when the boat was out to sea.

Verse 24: "But the ship was now in *the* middle of the sea, being tossed by the waves, because the wind was contrary. Now in *the* fourth watch of the night... [just before it starts to get light] ...Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled and said, 'It is an apparition!' And they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, **'Be of good courage; it is I. Do not be afraid'**" (vs 24-27).

That's what we need in the days we are facing and the troubles we are looking at, brethren. *Don't be afraid!* We don't have to be afraid of anyone! Remember what Jesus said, 'Don't be afraid of the one who can kill the body.' After what they have done, there is nothing else they can do. *We're to fear God!*

Verse 28: "Then Peter answered Him *and* said, 'Lord, if it is You, bid me to come to You upon the waters.' And He said, 'Come.' And after climbing down from the ship, Peter walked upon the waters to go to Jesus.... [So there he was walking on the water. I've often thought about that; I wonder what it felt like walking on the water. I mean, literally doing so.] ...But **when he saw how strong the wind was, he became afraid**... [Fear takes away from faith! We don't have to be bullheaded and stupid on the other hand, but fear takes away from faith.] ...and *as he* was beginning to sink, he cried out, saying, 'Lord, save me!' And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him... [looking at Peter right in the eye] **... 'O you of little faith, why did you doubt?'**" (vs 28-31). Same way with us! Good lesson for us!

"Now when they went into the ship, the wind ceased. And those in the ship came and worshiped Him, saying, 'You are truly the Son of God'" (vs 32-33). Quite a thing, isn't it? *Yes!*

Let's look at another one that's very important for us to understand *how God will fight our battles* for us. Remember how He fought against Pharaoh and his armies at the Red Sea? We're going to spend some time in the book of Psalms. The book of Psalms is a good place to begin when you have troubles, when you have difficulties, when you want to draw close to God. When you think, 'Oh, I've got to pray, but what am I going to pray about?' Well, you're going to realize there are a lot of things you have to pray about, and there are a lot of things you have to continue praying about all the time.

Remember this: as long as there is a need, you need to pray. And praying that prayer again and again is not a 'vain repetition' but it is persistence and it is faith waiting for God to respond, waiting for God to lead you in what is the right answer.

Sometimes you feel like this. Have you ever felt like the world is 'against me'? I have! Have you ever been so alone after trouble, you think there's nobody that likes me or loves me. Well, that's how David felt with this one here:

Psalms 3:1: "O LORD, how my foes have increased! Many are the ones who rise up against me. Many are saying of my soul, 'There is no deliverance for him in God.' Selah" (vs 1-2). 'No, there's no deliverance in God, won't happen.' ***Yes, there is, even in death, because the resurrection is the greatest deliverance of anything that there is!*** Do you understand that? Do you realize that!

- That's our *hope!*
- That's our *confidence!*
- That's one thing that is *consistent!*
- That's why we are to be of good *courage!*
- That's why we are not to be cowards and be afraid!

We're going to face a lot of difficult, *difficult, difficult* problems. How are we going face them?

- Straight on?
- Ask for courage from God?
- Look to Him to lead us?

Notice, v 3: "But You, O LORD, are a **shield** about me, my glory, and the One Who lifts up my head.... [Don't go around hangdog and depressed. No!] ...I cried to the LORD with my voice, and He answered me out of His Holy mountain. Selah." [Selah means *think on this, meditate on this, let that sink deep into your mind!*] ...I lay down and sleep. I awake, for the LORD has sustained me. **I am not afraid**... [notice the attitude here] ...of ten thousands of people who have set *themselves* against me all around" (vs 3-6). Just think of yourself in the middle of ten thousand people against you, all around. You can't go forward, you can't go back, you can't go sideways. ***God is for you***, so you don't have to worry!

- Don't look to the odds!
- Don't look to the circumstances!

So he cries out, v 7: "Arise, O LORD! Save me, O my God, for You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone. You have broken the teeth of the wicked. Salvation belongs to the LORD. Your blessing be upon Your people. Selah" (vs 7-8). It carries right on with Psalm 4.

Look, when you're confronted with a problem take the Psalms, open them up to different ones like this. Use this as part of your prayer. Use this a laying out the promises from God to help you.

- He will help you.
- He will guide you.
- God loves you.
- God is for you.

That's what we need to understand, brethren. Notice Psalm 4:1—you might want to pray this one, too: "Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness. You gave me relief *when I was* in distress..." Isn't that good. Sometimes all you want is release! *Yes!* God will give it to you. Is not the Holy Spirit called *the Comforter*? *Yes!* Is not the Word of God the *living* Word of God—which is spirit and life—which is able then to convey to our hearts and our minds the thoughts and attitudes of God and those who serve Him? *Yes!*

"...be gracious to me, and hear my prayer. O sons of men, how long will my glory be put to shame? How long will you love delusions and seek after lies? Selah.... [Don't worry about anybody being against you. We'll talk about that a little bit later, because that's all a part of this day; how we look to God to fight our battles; how we stand still and watch the salvation of the Lord.] ...But know that the LORD has set apart the Godly for Himself. The LORD will hear when I call to Him." (vs 1-3).

There are quite a few Psalms here we can deal with and how God is for us. Let's come to Psalm 27—this is quite a Psalm. Notice the attitude. God has promised; He has put it in His Word. God cannot lie and it will come to pass. We need to trust in God! We need not be afraid of anything or anyone! And on the other hand we do not need to be lifted up in pride and vanity and be cocky and arrogant and stupid either. It's rooted in faith and humility and love, not in pride, arrogance and vanity.

Psalm 27:1: "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?... [No one!] ...The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" God gives us strength! God gives us help! God intervenes! Yes, there's going to come a time when we're going to die, that's true. But that's all a part of God's way! In His time and in His way so let it be! In the mean time:

- we seek God
- we serve God
- we love God
- we take care of ourselves

*He blesses us and we're not afraid!* We don't go around with a cowardice, fearful attitude!

Verse 2: "When the wicked, my enemies and

my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell." Think of that! Just all crashed in a heap right in front of him. This reminds me of the fight of the British and Dutch in So. Africa against the Zulus. Ever seen the movie *Zulu*?

They came in wave after wave and here's a handful of British and Dutch shooting the enemy and the bodies stacked up and stacked up and it reached a fever pitch and they were ready to break through and all of a sudden there was a great silence! They looked out and the enemy had gone. They were exhausted, wounded, some had died, but God delivered them. Right when they were gathering themselves and looking at their circumstance, they very narrowly escaped and it looked like they were totally doomed. Less than a hundred men against 5,000 Zulu and they looked out there were the bodies of the Zulu stacked high as far as the eye could see. Then all of a sudden, they heard the sound ZULU! ZULU! They looked up on the ridge of the hill and here were the Zulus, saluting the victory against them and admiring their courage and their strength in the face of battle.

Likewise here, v 3: "Though an army should encamp against me, **my heart shall not be afraid**; though war should rise against me, even then **I will be confident**." Always our heart fixed!

- steadfast *in love!*
- steadfast *in Truth!*
- steadfast *in faith!*

Verse 4: "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... [That's our goal, brethren. Keep that always in the forefront of your mind.] ...**For in the time of trouble**... [We are in the days of sorrows. The times of trouble!] ...**He shall hide me in His pavilion, in the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me...**" (vs 4-5). That's God's supernatural protection

- with His angels
- with His Spirit
- with God's blessing
- with changing the circumstances
- with intervening for you
- with the angels to watch over you and protect you

—that's true! "...**He shall set me upon a rock**. And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies round about me; therefore I will offer sacrifices with shouts of joy in His tabernacle. I will sing; yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD. Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice; and be gracious unto me and answer me. When You said, 'Seek My face,' my

heart said to You, ‘Your face, O LORD, will I seek.’” (vs 5-8). Is that what you’re doing? Seeking the Lord is what this day is all about!

- Seeking the Lord!
- Seeking His way!
- Seeking His Truth!
- Trusting in His power!
- Looking to Him to fight for us!

Verse 9: “Hide not Your face from me. Turn not Your servant away in anger; You have been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation.” Just exactly what we read in Heb. 13—is it not?

Listen, brethren, the Bible is full of things like this! We’ve got the whole Bible *to know, to learn, to study, to help us, to encourage us, to lead us*. That’s a wonderful thing and we need to take advantage of it in the times we’re living in.

- Are we going to have enough of God’s Word in our hearts and minds that it will be there permanently?
- What if we’re led off someplace where we don’t have a Bible? Will be there enough of God’s Word in our minds that we’ll remember it?
- That we’ll pray to God?
- That we’ll trust in Him?
- How about when we’re hauled up for a witness?

Those days are coming!

- What are we going to say?
- Are we prepared enough so that the Holy Spirit can use us to speak what God wants us to say?

All of those things come into play with this.

Let’s come over here to Psalm 31:19: “Oh, how great is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You, which You have prepared for those who take refuge in You before the sons of men!... [Always looking and trusting in God.] ...You shall hide them in the secret place of Your presence... [protection of God’s Spirit; protection of God’s angels] ...from the plottings of man; You shall hide them in a shelter away from the strife of tongues. Blessed is the LORD, for He has shown His wondrous lovingkindness in a besieged city” (vs 19-21). So, regardless of the circumstances! This is really tremendous!

Psalm 60:11—here’s a prayer you can pray, a promise you can claim: “O give us help against our foe, for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do great things, for it is He who shall tread down our enemies” (vs 11-12).

We’re going to see *if God be for us, nothing can be against us!* Remember that!

- I want you to hold on to that!
- I want you to embrace it!
- I want you to claim that promise from God!

He will answer! I tell you, some of these Psalms are just absolutely fantastic! Many of them refer directly to Jesus Christ and the battles that He had; especially Psa. 69. We’ll read some of the things, but I tell you what, Jesus had everyone against Him. Even His disciples were hardhearted and didn’t believe. Satan was against Him. The demons were against Him. The scribes, the Pharisees, the priests, the Romans, the governor and even the disciples didn’t have enough faith. He was truly alone! And some of these Psalms reflect it.

But here’s what we need to look to, Psalm 46:1: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.... [Yes, He will help us out of our troubles.] ...Therefore, we will not fear, though the earth should change and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains shake with the swelling of it. Selah” (vs 1-3). Isn’t that something? These are the things, these are the words that we need to have written in our hearts and in our minds

- to give us *strength*
- to give us *confidence*
- to give us *faith*
- to give us *boldness*

to do what God wants us to do!

Remember, it’s not the numbers that count. How many times have I said, *remember Gideon? Yes, indeed!*

Psalm 40:1—here’s what we need to do. You’ve got deep troubles, *wait on God!* “I waited patiently for the LORD, and He inclined unto me and heard my cry.” He hears us! He knows us! He tries our thoughts and our minds and everything—doesn’t He? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 2: “He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay... [Got your feet unstuck out of the clay. Have you ever had your feet stuck in the clay that you just can’t move. Well, God will take you out of that.] ...and set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps.... [Notice the attitude of what this does]: ...And He has put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise to our God; many shall see and fear, and shall trust in the LORD” (vs 2-3). That’s why God wants us to understand these things.

Verse 4—claim this promise: “Blessed is the man who makes the LORD his trust and does not respect the proud, nor those who turn aside to lies.” Remember this: *You can never be saved from*

**trouble with lies!** Never work! But you can be saved from trouble by God, by trusting in Him.

Psalms 69—this is quite a Psalm. There are quite a few verses here which apply directly to Jesus Christ. In the Psalm and these things, as we have seen, here's a verse that will apply to Christ and then one that will apply to David. One that will apply to the past and then another one which will apply to the future. It's 'line upon line; here a little, there a little; precept upon precept.' We're to 'rightly divide the Word of God' and put it together. Now, think of this:

Psalms 69:1: "Save me, O God, for the waters have come in upon my soul!...[near drowning] ...I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing... [No way to put your feet down and find out where you're going.] ...I have come into deep waters, where the floods overwhelm me. I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched; my eyes fail while I wait for my God" (vs 1-3). Isn't that something? Ever felt like that? This is total aloneness—right?

Verse 13: "But as for me, my prayer is to You, O LORD, in an acceptable time; O God, in the abundance of Your mercy answer me, in the Truth of Your salvation. Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink; let me be delivered from those who hate me and out of the deep waters. Do not let the flood of waters overflow me, nor let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut its mouth upon me. Answer me, O LORD, for Your steadfast love is good; turn unto me according to the multitude of Your tender mercies. And hide not Your face from Your servant, for I am in trouble; answer me speedily" (vs 13-17).

There are prayers for every circumstance! Prayers for every difficulty that there is that we face! God will deliver us! God will save us! God will be with us and spare us from those things! Yes, there are going to be things that are going to be difficult to be able to comprehend. I tell you what, of the things that we've seen with all the upheaval in the Middle East, and especially in the situation in Libya, it's quite a thing. How would you pray under those circumstances? What if you're like some of the Americans over there who are serving their country, working for the government or working for an oil company and all of a sudden you're surrounded by all these people shooting, killing, screaming, rapes...?

Psalms 91:1—this is the prayer of safety and protection, but we've got to have faith in God: "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

What is the *secret place of the Most High*? *His Spirit in you! God's protection about you!* What

is the *shadow of the Almighty*? *That's God's strength given to you, just like a shadow.* You can see the shadow on the ground, but if you stood and looked straight ahead at something, you couldn't see the shadow itself. So, it's the invisible protection. It's invisible things that God does with His Spirit and with His angels.

Verse 2: "I will say of the LORD, 'He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in Whom I will trust.'.... [This is the prayer we pray when things really get difficult. This is what I'd be praying if I were over in Libya.] ...Surely He will deliver you from the fowler's trap and from the destroying pestilence.... [Whatever the circumstances are around you] ...He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge. His Truth shall be your shield and buckler" (vs 2-4). That's why we need the Truth as a breastplate and as a helmet, and faith as a shield.

Verse 5: "You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flies by day... [We have to be smart, we have to get out of the way, but we don't have to be afraid.] ...nor for the plague that walks in darkness, nor for the destruction laying waste at noonday. A thousand may fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand; **it shall not come near you**" (vs 5-7). That's a promise! We can claim this promise, and the day is coming when we're going to have claim this promise big time!

Verse 8: "Only with your eyes you shall behold and see the recompense of the wicked. Because you have made the LORD, Who is my [David] refuge, even the Most High, your habitation, no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling... [A promise! We can't use it recklessly like Satan tried to tempt Jesus in that.] ...for He shall give His angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways. They shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone" (vs 8-12). Isn't that something? God will protect us! This is how it will happen.

Verse 13: "You shall tread upon the lion and asp; the young lion and the jackal you shall trample underfoot." That's a type of when we come down with Christ from the Sea of Glass to take over the earth. We're going to get rid of all the enemy. There aren't going to be any that are going to be fighting against us. At that time God is going to have the special secret weapon. He's just going to give the word. As it says in Zech. 14, the flesh is going to 'fall right off their bones.' How is that for a secret weapon? That's pretty effective, wouldn't you say? *Yes!*

Verse 14: "Because he [us] has set his love upon Me [God], therefore I will deliver him; I will

set him on high because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation” (vs 14-16). Is eternal life long enough? Think about that! That’s quite a thing— isn’t it? *Yes, indeed!*

Now, let’s come to Romans, the eighth chapter, a fantastic chapter and tells us an awful lot about God and tells us an awful lot about the circumstances that we may find ourselves in and why God has called us, where we’re going and what we are doing and how God loves us, cares for us. Jesus watches over us. The angels watch over us. How that we

- We can set our course!
- We can set our minds!
- We cannot be afraid!
- We can have courage!
- We can have confidence!
- We can look to God!
- We can know with full assurance!

That’s why, brethren, it’s so important that we love God and love each other. If we bite and devour each other, as Paul said in Gal. 5, we’re going to destroy each other.

Here’s a key; remember this verse, Rom. 8:28, especially; memorize it. Look at all the circumstances. Sometimes you’ll be going through circumstances which are really terrible and you’ll think, ‘Oh, God, why am I going through these things?’ Look, I know what that’s like. My wife knows what that’s like. My children know what that’s like. We have been there! But God has seen us through it. Here is the marvelous point that is true. Once you get through on the other side—and you look back—then you will know that this verse is correct; always is! God’s Word is always true.

Romans 8:28: “And we know... [This is something we have to know, understand, realize and everything to the depth of our being!] ...that **all things** work together for good...” Even the death of the saints God delights in, because they have been faithful to the end; they have run the course; they have finished the race, and now there’s a crown of life laid up for them. Is that not good? Eternal life and glory from then on! Is that not fantastic? *Yes, indeed!*

“...work together for good to those who love God... [That’s why it’s so important, brethren, that we love God. God loves us! Christ loves us! We need to love God and love each other!] ...to those who are called according to *His* purpose... [We have! We’ve covered the purpose of God.] ...because those whom He did foreknow... [that’s us

now with the Holy Spirit] ...He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His own Son... [to be like Christ in glory and honor and splendor] ...that He might be *the* firstborn among many brethren” (vs 28-29). Yes, the glorious plan of God is going to be fulfilled!

Notice this promise, v 30: “Now whom He predestinated... [those that answered the call] ...these He also called... [that is answered the call, He brought them forward because they answered] ...and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”

- by giving us the Holy Spirit
- by giving us the understanding of the Word of God
- by giving us the Truth of God

Isn’t that something? Brethren, that is tremendous!

Verse 31: “What then shall we say to these things?... [You can’t find this in the world anywhere. You can’t find this in politics anywhere. You can’t find this in the churches of the world anywhere. NO!] (In your personal relationship with God): ...What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who can be against us?**” Nothing! No one! Any place! Any time! We can have full faith, full courage, full understanding—right? *Yes!*

Verse 32: “He Who did not spare even His own Son, but gave Him up for us all...” We’ve covered how great that was—right?

- How great the death of Christ was!
- How marvelous it is to be able to take the Passover!
- How great it is to have the Spirit of God!
- How great it is to have that relationship with God!

And God gave His Son for us! “...how shall He not also grant us all things together with Him?... [Grant us all things with Him! That’s awesome to contemplate, brethren.] ...Who shall bring an accusation against *the* elect of God?... [No one can; Satan tries everyday, but we overcome him by our testimony and ‘not loving our lives unto death’ and by the blood of the Lamb.] ...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). Christ is there *for you* interceding for the Father. That you

- grow in love
- grow in Truth
- grow in understanding
- grow in character
- grow in belief
- grow in faith

—all of these things!

This is how our hearts and minds need to be fixed. This is why we need not be afraid. This is why we can have full faith and trust in God and what He says, and His Word—v 35: “What shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?”

Outside of some trials, have you ever experienced any of these trials and persecution? *No!* Has God delivered you from it? *Yes!* That’s what it needs to be! “...or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?” So, what is the lesson of that here? While we live in relatively good times we need to take full advantage of it. We need to really strengthen our relationship with God, strengthen our relationship with each other, be prepared for the things that are ahead. God will be with us!

Notice, the time is going to come, we’ve been promised that this will be so, but we need the strength to do it. Verse 36: “Accordingly, it is written, ‘For Your sake we are killed all the day long; we are reckoned as sheep for *the* slaughter.’ But in all these things ... [In all of these things, all of these problems, all of these difficulties and in overcoming them, remember this]: ...**we are more than conquerors**... [overcomers—‘to the one who overcomes,’ as Jesus said] ...through Him Who loved us. For I am persuaded... [and this is the persuasion that we need; this is what we need in our heart, our mind, our lives, every soul of our being, every cell of our mind, every particle of the Spirit of God within us] ...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 36-39).

***Stand still! Feat not! Don’t be afraid! See the salvation of God!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Leviticus 23:6, 8
- 2) Exodus 12:40-42
- 3) Exodus 13:7-10
- 4) Exodus 14:3-5, 10-16
- 5) Exodus 15:1-5
- 6) Deuteronomy 31:1-3, 5-6
- 7) Hebrews 13:5-6
- 8) 1 Chronicles 28:6-9
- 9) Matthew 8:19-27
- 10) Matthew 14:24-33
- 11) Psalm 3:1-8
- 12) Psalm 4:1-3
- 13) Psalm 27:1-9

- 14) Psalm 31:19-21
- 15) Psalm 60:11-12
- 16) Psalm 46:1-3
- 17) Psalm 40:1-4
- 18) Psalm 69:1-3, 13-17
- 19) Psalm 91:1-16
- 20) Romans 8:28-39

Scriptures reference, not quoted:

- Haggai
- Malachi 3
- Deuteronomy 16
- Zechariah 14
- Galatians 5

Also referenced:

- Book: *Lord, What Should I Do?* by Fred R. Coulter
- Sermon Series: *IF Statements of the Bible*

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