

Unleavened Bread And The Holy Spirit (2019)

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I wrestled with the beginning of this sermon for a couple of weeks actually, trying to come up with a title that might be appropriate to it, wondering where I was going to start it. I knew pretty much where I was going to end it. But there were some things that I was wrestling with the whole time. But it is interesting that only this morning did I decide to begin the sermon in John the 15th chapter, and verse 5. We are only going to pick out one verse there and you are already familiar with this scripture. But it fits somewhat into what David [in the sermonette] was just speaking about, fits into that period of time in which Jesus was going through some things of very great concern later on by the apostles when they began to understand more fully what He was talking about. But He says,

John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."

Well, somewhere along the way I learned that that word "without" helped me to understand what He was saying a bit better because it is also a synonym for the English word "separate." Without, away from, a part of but not quite with. "For without Me you can do nothing separate from Me." In other words, we are tied together spiritually with God, with Jesus Christ, and we need Him absolutely to do our part in this work.

I have titled this sermon, and this is one of the things that I was wrestling with, "Unleavened Bread and the Holy Spirit." Those two are tied together because the Holy Spirit is given on the Day of Pentecost and also Unleavened Bread precedes and leads to that particular time. What I decided to speak on touches on some of the same themes that I was going to give during the Days of Unleavened Bread and I decided since I missed giving this, that I would give what I prepared for that particular day. And you will see that it blends right together really with major aspects of our life in Jesus

Christ. Both festivals are inextricably tied into the same theme because one leads right into the other and this one leads into the next one and the next one leads in the next until we get through all seven because they are giving high points along the way through our salvation.

Now, the subject of this sermon is beginning, chronologically, during the Days of Unleavened Bread and a great deal is going to be drawn into this sermon from the Days of Unleavened Bread. But it is what makes it possible for these things to lead into the giving of God's Holy Spirit. And I am giving this partly because I want to make sure that there is not a lack of understanding in some of us that I have been able to see in other aspects of other works, not necessarily church of God works, but the works of many, and also I see it in the way we speak about our part in the work of God. And I want to expose this to you, if you may have a lack in this area, and help you to understand that we produce nothing separate from Jesus Christ.

We are going to see as we go along here, how involved He and the Father are in what They are doing. I hope that when you are done listening to this sermon, that you understand clearly that *God is the Creator*, not us. We feel like we have a lot to do. We feel that we are carrying a heavy load from time to time, but God is the one, and the Creator is the one who is creating, and I would say that it is very likely that God got us into this mess in the first place, so that we would have to face some of these things.

Now, I want to clarify this because all of our time in the church, we have firmly held the belief that the Days of Unleavened Bread represent our coming out of sin and that is why we eat unleavened bread. Well, this is only partly true. There is much, much more to the story of why we eat unleavened bread during that period of time and I am convinced that there is an awful lot about the Day of Pentecost that we do not understand now as well.

This subject directly involved something that God says regarding Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread. And this one misunderstanding actually first came to Evelyn's mind, and she mentioned it to me, not recently, this was a number of years ago. But she mentioned it to me when we were studying into the Wavesheaf issue and we were studying into that aspect of it because much of the Worldwide Church of God argument for that is based on the symbolism of coming out of sin. But the eating of unleavened bread

only indirectly relates to coming out of sin. We do it because God says we are to do it. Rather it relates directly to something quite different.

The eating of unleavened bread is intended by God to directly serve as a reminder of something so often overlooked and also very important to salvation. And that last statement of mine has much to do with why I am giving this sermon and why I began on John 15:5, "Without Me [separate from Me] you can do nothing." That is an astounding statement. And if you will hang on as much as you can to some of the complications that David was relating to you in his sermonette, you will begin to understand that a lot more clearly about without Him, separate from Him, we can do nothing.

We are going to go to Exodus the 13th chapter and you are going to see right off what God says regarding some of these things.

Exodus 13:1-3 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Consecrate to Me [remember, they came out of Egypt in chapter 12] all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both man and beast; it is Mine." [God puts a claim on the firstborn.] And Moses said to the people, "Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out of this place. [And then right after that, right after that statement] No leavened bread shall be eaten."

I will tell you right at the beginning so that you can kind of keep your mind on this. What I am heading toward is this: God's involvement in our salvation. He is directly involved in everything. You can do nothing separate from Me. If He lives in us, in the person of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, He is with us all the time—leading, guiding, warning, causing us to fear, whatever. He is creating all the time, actively working in our behalf. He is not just sitting there waiting for us to do something. He is involved with us and urging us to do what needs to be done in our lives in order to create what He wants when we enter into the Family of God after His return.

Exodus 13:7-10 "Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters. And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, 'This is done [the eating of unleavened bread]

because of what the Lord did for me when I came up from Egypt.' [not what I did, what the Lord did] It shall be as a sign to you [the eating of unleavened bread] on your hand and as 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 ordinance [that is, eating unleavened bread, because of what the Lord did] in its season from year to year."

God makes this claim, that is, Jesus Christ does, very clearly and dogmatically. It is because of what the *Lord* did. We so often want to pull ourselves into what *we* have done and take credit for what God actually did—He did it. So the keeping of the first day of Unleavened Bread, along with the eating of unleavened bread for seven days, is directly intended by God to serve as a reminder to us of what *He* has done to bring us out. The eating of unleavened bread and what God has done are directly tied together in these seven verses. This is especially true of the first day of Unleavened Bread because by that time in our conversion we have not overcome anything to speak of, if you understand the analogy here that is going on.

The Days of Unleavened Bread are indeed about overcoming. However, they are primarily about *God* overcoming Satan, this world, and sin, not about *us* doing it. This is what I want to get straight in our minds so that we understand that He is our leader, He is our guide, He is the Captain of our salvation. He is the one who is doing what is necessary to break us free from what we are and what we are a part of. We do not get free. That is what He said there in John 15:5. No fruit is produced that is separate from Jesus Christ toward the purpose that He has called us into. So the Days of Unleavened Bread and the eating of unleavened bread must be understood in this context or we are missing much of the point.

Brethren, Passover is primarily about peace being established between God and mankind in order that God's purposes for us might continue. Here is my tagline here. *We must understand that God is the Creator*, not us. We are not putting things together. We are learning a little bit here and there, but God is the one who is working in our lives, creating what He wants to be produced for use whenever we are in His Kingdom.

Maybe if you had more of a mechanical background like I have, this might come easier for you to understand. He is literally working in us all the time. Do we understand that? He is a full-time Creator God, and things regarding salvation must be put into their proper place of importance or it will move us to exaggerate our own importance to the process and we will unwittingly create a works religion.

I want us to think about the analogy of Israel coming out of Egypt. How much did the Israelites actually overcome to become free? They did almost nothing, brethren, as we are going to see. Now, I want you to see in the analogy, when it comes to our conversion, we do almost nothing between the time that God calls us and the time that we are actually baptized and really become a very definite part of His laboring works. I do not mean that we do not overcome anything. I am just saying that compared to what He is doing, we do almost nothing. It is a comparative thing. That is why Jesus said, "Without Me you can't do anything in the way of the production of the fruit." That is the subject of His analogy there.

The extent of Israel's participation to leave was to believe firmly enough that God was indeed working through Moses sufficiently to (this is what they did) prepare the lamb and keep Passover, stay in their homes overnight, gather together in Rameses the next day, and then walk out when the signal was given to march. How much overcoming did that take now? It took some, but it was just a matter of following some simple directions. Kill the lamb, stay in your homes, tomorrow morning we are going to walk out of here. Not much overcoming there.

When they left Egypt, did they leave sin? No, they did not. They left a *type* of the world, but they did not leave sin behind. As we heard in Mike's sermonette they sinned greatly right after they were free. They did not leave sin behind and neither do we, whenever we are converted, we are baptized, we receive God's Holy Spirit, and brethren, we are just beginning. So, they did not leave sin. What they left was the place of their bondage. That is much more direct and correct. Symbolic of the world, not of sin.

Now, we have long understood that the exodus is an analogy of a person's conversion, especially the early stages of conversion, so let us review the analogy and then lead into Pentecost. Psalm 19, let us go back there. I chose

this because of the wording and the sense of it. We are eventually going to get back into Exodus again, though.

Psalm 19:1-4 The heavens declare the glory of God; the firmament [that is, the expanse up there] shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

I chose that because very briefly it shows us that even before conversion, almost everybody has some concept of God. An awful lot of it comes from the creations that are we are surrounded with. It gives us some little insight into the knowledge of God and that is about it. For some though, what they believe is believed fervently, and for the most part maybe in their lives, it is practiced. But for most, the concept regarding God is vague, agnostic, and even atheistic, but however vague and wrong the concept was, there is something for God to establish a beachhead for a relationship.

Now, most of the time one's concept is derived from the beauty, from the vastness, the eloquence of creation so that one begins almost intuitively to know that there is more to life than meets the eye. One is led to think of himself in terms of life that he had not thought of in this way before. As was mentioned in the sermonette, as Nicodemus did there in Christ's presence in John the 3rd chapter. Nicodemus had some ideas that he gathered from his life, but when Jesus hit him with something that was beyond him, he just flipped, as we might say. He did not get it.

From here, I want us to go to Ecclesiastes 3, verse 11, describing God, or the actions, the work of God.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. [And there are people who are very appreciative of what they see that God has done and they comprehend it correctly in terms of at least applying it to a Creator God.] Also He has put eternity in their hearts. . .

This is something that God has done. The idea in many human being's minds that there is more to life than meets their eyes. And there are an awful a lot of people who think that they are going to live on forever, that they are going to go off into heaven, or they are going to go to hell. But they believe that life does not end at death. So they have ideas, but they are their own ideas and they are not necessarily true ideas.

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has also put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from the beginning to the end.

What is God doing? He is reproducing Himself. That is beyond a human mind. He is creating sons and daughters in His image and brethren, He is working at it! If there is anybody in this creation who does not want to see it fail, it is Him and He loves every one of us and He even loves those people who hate Him in that way—He wants to turn their minds around, turn their thinking around, turn the way they act, turn them from their murderous ways, and make them like Him, where everybody lives in peace and builds things, creates things.

So He has a goal, an ideal that is before Him, but He is withholding it from mankind until He chooses to call these people into what He is doing and they begin to allow Him to work in them, to produce in them what He wants us to be.

There is one thing that we have to understand in this, and that is, that creation alone (this is partly what this verse explains), gives no one sure direction in which way to go, so that we all just get swept along in the tide of events until God mercifully and miraculously begins to stir our minds to begin to think more concretely about Him, life, and eternity. It takes Him taking action for this to occur.

I said we are going to go through this thing about Israel coming out of Egypt, and I want you to shift your mind back to that once again because this is what was happening to Israel and Egypt. Moses was there, Moses was preaching, he was saying things that were stirring their minds. But overall they were hopelessly drifting along in slavery, even crying out to God in

circumstances beyond their control. And they were, as the scripture said, groaning under the burden of their everyday life without even knowing that God was already taking steps for their salvation in the sending of Moses to them to begin to preach to them about the God that they did not know, but was soon going to begin impacting on their lives to a very great extent.

So let us go back to Exodus again but this time in chapter 2.

Exodus 2:23 Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. And the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage.

I hope that you are thinking about the times that we are living in and how things are moving in a direction that in a sense we kind of suspect. But what kind of suspects do we have in our mind right now? And that is, it is going to get worse, and that is what they were thinking of. They were crying out because of the bondage. We can see that we are being drawn into a bondage that is pretty bad, judging by the immorality and lack of proper spirituality that we see this nation sinking into.

Exodus 2:24-25 So God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them.

Remember this is an analogy of our calling as well. So, a pattern is put here in the book of Exodus so that we will understand that our lives are in the hands of God and that He is the one doing the work. Here it is, I am giving you the first step right now. God has to acknowledge us. God has to be the one that opens up our mind. That is the beginning of the process. And His work never stops. He is the one that is working within us, creating what He wants and He wants us, of course, to get our minds attuned to the fact that He is the one that is working and that He is designing us for something to do in His Kingdom.

Let us go back to Genesis 15, and of course, if you are well aware of your chapters, you know this has something to do with Abraham.

Genesis 15:13-14 And then He said to Abram: "Know certainly [Are you already thinking with me? God was already planning what He was doing.] that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs [How did He know that? He is shaping history. That is what He is telling us.], and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. [He already has it paced out that they are going to be afflicted for that long.] And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions." [And He is already telling Abram that they are going to be ushered out of the land that they are held in bondage to.]

Already planned. Do you understand? God has a purpose that He is working.

Back to Exodus again in chapter 3. This brings us up to the time of Moses once again.

Exodus 3:7-10 And the Lord said, "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from the land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to a place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come now, therefore, and I will send you [Moses] to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

I want you to notice something there. He is already calling the Israelites My people. You see how far ahead He is thinking. If we would read everything, we would find that, in fact, God, at the time of these scriptures here in chapter 3, had already prepared Moses to be the one to lead them from their bondage. And the Israelites did not have the foggiest notion what was going on.

I know that I can relate to something like this myself. Evelyn and I were wandering around in the Methodist church back in 1959. Two of our girls got chicken pox so we did not go to church on Sunday morning. On that Sunday morning we heard Herbert Armstrong for the very first time. We did not know that then. Now, here I am preaching. I had no idea we were being called to go into God's true church at that time in January of 1959. But I will tell you, that radio program changed our lives so dramatically. We virtually became excommunicated from my family, not Evelyn's. But we went into an entirely different direction. My family was pretty religious, my mother, grandfather, grandmother, all my aunts and uncles, and so forth. Very fine family, but they were not of the Worldwide Church of God.

We did not find that out for about another seven or eight months. That was January and in September we were baptized and that was virtually the last time we ever had much contact with my family. Just almost that quick, we were called out and I have not regretted it at all. I regretted the fact that we really did not have much relationship with my parents anymore, but they were going their own way and that is the way it was. We went our way. I went to Ambassador College, I became a minister. I had no idea that that was beginning on January 7, 1959.

What I want you to get out of this part of the sermon is this: Who is taking the initiative? It is God. Make sure that you get that right. Who is doing the leading, who is providing? The salvation of Israel, this is only Exodus the third chapter, is underway. Who is in charge? It was not Moses. It was God. Do you understand this applies to you and me too? God is leading the whole way through Jesus Christ. Who has the answer to the problems of our bondage to this world? Who has the answer for Israel to the bondage to Egypt? It would be weeks even from the time that this took place before Israel would have any kind of an inkling involved in what was going on. And when they finally did, all they would have to do is agree to do the simple things that He commanded.

When they did begin to hear, what did they hear? Turn to Exodus 6.

Exodus 6:2-7 And God spoke to Moses and said to him: "I am the Lord. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name Lord I was not known to them. I have

also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan [They are still in Egypt, and He is already telling the people through Moses what He is going to do with them. We know a great deal already about what God is going to do with us.], the land of their pilgrimage, in which they were strangers. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant. Therefore say to the children of Israel, 'I am the Lord; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.'"

What did they hear? They heard the gospel. And that is what they began slowly but surely to act upon, the things that were being preached to them, and that is what you have done. Do you see a pattern here, brethren? Again, I have to get back to this: who is guiding, who is leading, who is the one who is telling us what is going to happen, and then He does it? Maybe not right away, but away.

When the Israelites finally did all they could do to agree to the simple things He commanded, then what they heard was the gospel of the Kingdom of God. Fantastic good news to them until Pharaoh turned up the heat and their joy was blasted by persecution and affliction. Some of that Richard was talking about this morning—waves of good, waves of bad nonetheless. But God was beginning to put a difference between Israel and Egypt, and brethren, the time is not too far in the future when God is going to put a difference between us and the rest of the world and the pressure is going to come. Right now we are overlooked. We are too small. We are a flea in a great big garbage patch. But there it is, pretty soon the fleas will be noticed.

So God was beginning to put a difference between Israel and Egypt. A sanctification was taking place and it was difficult for those God was working with to bear. This difference continued. In fact, it intensified during the plagues. Now let us continue in Exodus 6.

Exodus 6:9 So Moses spoke thus to the children of Israel; but they did not heed Moses, because of anguish of spirit and of cruel bondage.

The Israelites did not at first agree to this wonderful news. Why? Because they did not believe it. It does not mean they all did not believe at the same time. Like most of us, some believed with a fair amount of intensity and others with just a mild, but they did not all agree at once. Now thankfully God was both merciful and determined and nobody was going to stop Him.

Exodus 8:22 "And in that day I will set apart the land of Goshen, in which My people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there, in order that you may know that I am the Lord in the midst of the land."

The sanctification that I mentioned just a couple minutes earlier of Israel became at that time very pronounced, helping them to understand that God was indeed working for them and very soon from this particular time, they were going to need that faith that God indeed was working. So far, they had been required to make very few decisions concerning their salvation and yet everything was actually proceeding overall very nicely. And mostly though they were doing little except watching what was happening, almost as if they were observers to a stage play.

I put this last sentence or two in on purpose for us, because that is what is happening to us right now. We are observers watching what is going on. We have received the good news, we are watching what is going on, but we are not involved yet! But do you understand—it is coming. And God, as director of this work, is the one who is going to set the time and He will do it when He feels that we are to the place, like the Israelites eventually came to be. And if we are not careful, we can be observers to the point where it almost looks like we are watching a stage play. People who believe that they are Christians, and maybe some of them are, are being persecuted, but someday it is going to hit us as well.

So even though the Israelites lives had been dramatically affected, they had done very little to affect their freedom. This is another thing that we need to consider. What are we doing to affect our freedom? This has to do with overcoming and growing. This has to do with the strength of the faith that we have in the gospel of the Kingdom of God. This has to do with the Holy Spirit that dwells in us and what we are being helped with by Jesus Christ as we go along.

Remember where we began In John 15:5, apart from Me, separate from Me, you can do nothing. Do you understand what He is saying there? He is saying that everything regarding what God has promised us in the gospel of the Kingdom of God depends on the quality of the relationship that we have with Him. It is there. What are we doing with it? Are we taking the right kind of advantage of it?

So even though the Israelites had been dramatically affected, they had done little to affect their freedom. God, up to this point that we have gotten in the analogy, had done virtually everything and that is what is happening to us. God has done virtually everything. I want you to have this burned into your mind: That just because He seems quiet, just because we do not visibly see it, what He did for them, He kept apart from it, but He was there the whole time.

Exodus 12:2 Now the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be to you the first month of the year to you.

Exodus 12:5-7 [He is talking now about the Passover and the lamb] "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it." [That is, where they eat the lamb.]

Do you realize, if you have not looked at the story in this manner, that when they finally did this, it marked their first real participation other than mentally assenting to the good news that Moses was preaching? What they did here is tantamount to accepting the blood of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. The blood symbolizes protection from death through a forgiveness supplied by God Himself. Now repentance is not symbolized in this analogy until Israel left Egypt. We will get to that much later.

But does Egypt represent sin? We have got to get this first straightened out. Only indirectly. Remember I said earlier that Egypt was the place of bondage. It is a place or a state in which we commit our sins. Now, sin is acts, in this analogy, we leave behind when we accept the blood of Jesus Christ. What did Israel leave behind in Egypt that symbolizes sin?

Remember that each Israelite who came out represented over 400 years of Israel being in Egypt, and though they were slaves, they lived in Goshen (Genesis 47:6), and Goshen was considered the very best land in Egypt. In one sense, they were in bondage, but in another sense they lived in the best place they could possibly be.

Now we know from the Passover instructions (this next thing might come as a surprise to some, but it is really not), they had houses. They were not living in tents, they had houses, and that is the way the directions are given. They had houses with doors on them and so forth. Israel was in bondage in Egypt, but they were living life pretty good in one sense. The best of the land in Egypt. That is kind of weird, is it not? Here they were, they were the ones that were slaves and yet they lived in the best land of the nation that they were slaves in. That is the way God is. So in one sense, they had it fairly good. They probably had it better than most of the Egyptians who lived there, except that they were slaves.

Start thinking. We are getting close to the time that they are getting ready to actually leave Egypt and that they represented 400 years that they were separated away from Abram. But all these Israelites, they had generations of time to build up houses, family heirlooms, and all the trappings of a home. They are getting ready to walk out because you remember what God told

them. They had to be at a certain place within a certain length of time when they would begin walking. They were going to have to walk away only with the things that they could carry on their back.

Now, if God did this before, the chances are very great something very close to that is going to happen to us. We live right now in the richest nation on the face of the earth—that this earth has ever been graced with. The blessings that God has poured out on this nation. Are you ready to walk away from what might happen? I do not know yet, but if He did it once before, there is a chance that because it is in His Word, it may happen again. Are we prepared to do that? We have to, in many cases, face something similar to this when we get baptized.

By the time Evelyn and I got baptized, we knew about tithing. Until then we did not know about tithing. We already had four children and I had the kind of a job where I went through, I am not kidding you, an apprenticeship to become a top-rated welder, and in order to do that, I had to go four years at reduced wages. I was making less money in the steel mill than laborers were. And while that was unwinding, I had just gotten to the place where I was now a top-rated journeyman welder and I was beginning to make money. To me, it was like money hand-over-fist compared to what we were making while I was an apprentice. But God called us and we learned about tithing—not just the first tithe, but the second tithe, and the third tithe as well.

And you know, you can have some of those thoughts go through you. "Hey, I just started making money. Now God, You're going to take it away from me!" Those things go through your mind. But we decided to cast our lot with Him and we got baptized and I have not been sorry since.

I am only mentioning this because if He did it before and He gave us the pattern, there is a possibility we may have to go through something like that in order to sustain our lives and we lose everything that we thought we had built up in this wonderfully wealthy land that we live in.

This is partly why I gave that sermonette this morning. Fear is a two-edged sword and the second tithe, which we were talking about there, is one that He charges us that we are to have to pay and it cuts into your daily amount of money that you have. And God forces us to choose what is spiritual excess

baggage so these things do not become a burden to us along the way to our salvation. Sometimes the sacrifice is not easy to take, but it is there.

Now, how much do we believe? How much do we appreciate? How much faith do we have in the Word of God that we will push that aside and choose His way that seems as though it is not offering very much at this particular time? Some of us do not make the progress we should because we are carrying too much of the world with us along the way. That is the answer.

Let us go back to Exodus 3 again. Here is what God proposed to the people. Remember that He told them they had to kill a lamb. They had put the blood on the door and so forth. Now, this is another part of what they had to do.

Exodus 3:8 "So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites."

When I went through this verse before I purposely eliminated some things because this tells us what God told the Israelites, what He proposed to do with them.

Number one, He proposed to free His people from the *hand* of the Egyptians.

Number two, He told him He was going to bring them out of the *land* of Egypt.

Number three, He was going to bring them *into* the Land of Promise.

That was His proposal. Well, they had not seen much in the way of proof but turn to Exodus 12. Now we have come to the time when they are actually getting ready to move out.

Exodus 12:31-33 And then he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and he said, "Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the Lord as you have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be

gone; and bless me also." And the Egyptians urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, "We shall all be dead."

I read these verses because I want you to see that the Egyptians effected this. It was the Pharaoh who gave this but proposal number one, that He was going to free His people from the word of their captors. Proposal number one is already underway in our analogy.

Exodus 12:40-42 Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years—on that very same day—it came to pass that all the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. It is a night of solemn observance to the Lord for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is the night of the Lord, a solemn observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations.

Proposal number two that God said He would do is underway. So they literally came out. They came out of the literal state of Egypt in one day, not seven. But they were still within the territory, whenever they were in Ramses, of greater Egypt in much the same way as we refer to the metropolitan area of a city. So they were out of Egypt at the very beginning and it was entirely the work of God.

Now, Egypt is not the symbol of sin, but of the world, the place and culture in which their sins were committed. Once they began their journey out of Egypt, they were no longer *of* the world even though they were literally *in* the world. It was not when they accepted Christ. When they accepted Christ with the killing of the lamb, where were they? They were still in their houses. They came out of this world when they actually began moving away from the place of their bondage. Now, why is this so? Or rather, how is this shown?

Exodus 13:17-18 Then it came to pass, when the Pharaoh had let the people go, that God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, "Lest perhaps the people change their minds when they see war, and return to

Egypt." So God led the people around by the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up in orderly ranks out of the land of Egypt.

I do not know whether you have ever seen it there in the movie "The Ten Commandments." It was like gangbusters. School's out and they went charging in one general direction, but it was nothing but a mass of people just moving. They did not consult the Scripture on this where they went out in an orderly progression.

Exodus 13:19-22 And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had placed the children of Israel under solemn oath, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here with you." So they took their journey from Succoth and camped at Etham at the edge of the wilderness. And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people.

Let us put the main points in order here as they moved away. First, they sacrificed the lamb. We do that when we accept the blood of Jesus Christ. We accept that sacrifice for our sins. Second, they forsook the vast majority of their belongings. Third, they started their journey with their eyes fastened upon a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day. This pictured them no longer following the world, but now following God, obedient to Him. And God, let me remind you again, had done virtually everything. But our part is still obedience to the very little that we *must* do. This combination brings us out of the world.

Exodus 19:4 "You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself."

God very clearly says He brought us out. You can tell by the exodus story, Israel would never have left had not God *forcibly* thrust them out. Do you understand that? Apply it to the analogy here of your calling. God is involved from beginning to end and He may be even directing things where He virtually forces you out.

Again, I can go back to Evelyn and my baptism. I can remember, even when I knew these things that were occurring, where we were going to lose a pretty good bit of our income as a result of the tithing, I felt forced to do it. I did not do it *against* that force. I just had to put the force behind me and said that God is God, He is on His throne, and we are going to go in this direction. And Evelyn believed it too. We got baptized at the same time with five other people who were baptized in Wayne Cole's basement. So we did it of our own free will. We did not feel as though we were being put under the gun in any way, shape, or form. We knew that the path might be hard for us. But on the other hand, we felt we had to do it because it was God who was telling us to do it. It was that simple.

I am hoping that we get the point about conversion.

Now, what about unleavened bread? During our lives in the church, we have been taught that Egypt is a type of sin and that eating unleavened bread pictures coming out of sin. I have been guilty of this as anybody in this teaching, but at the same time, this is not totally wrong, but neither is it entirely accurate either.

First, Egypt is a type of the world, not sin. And God does not picture coming out of sin, but already out as soon as they began following Him. Do you understand that? That is a tremendous thing that He does. We have not completely overcome, but He is still willing to claim us as His children. And when we begin following Him is when we begin to give Him evidence that we indeed are His children. So, in one day, in one moment of time, when they killed the lamb and they dashed the blood on the doorpost of their house, God already considered them out. Think about that. He was not negligent at all about forgiving.

Leavened bread would have been too bulky and of course it would have taken too long to bake within the time constraints while they were still in their homes. Therefore, it was something that had to be left behind, and this is where we have been accurate in the past. Leaven indeed is a type of sin. Now, let us notice unleavened bread in its context in the story.

Exodus 13:3 And Moses said to the people, "Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out of this place. No leaven bread shall be eaten."

Notice the command to not eat leavened bread follows right on the heels of that statement regarding God Himself.

Exodus 13:6-10 "Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the Lord. Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters. [That is, during this period of time.] And you shall tell your son in that day, saying, 'This is done because of what the Lord did for me when I came up from Egypt.' It shall be as a sign to you on your hand and as 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 ordinance in its season from year to year."

Brethren, why do we eat unleavened bread? The answer is right there. Because of what God did. Nothing we did. It was what God did. It is a memorial of what God did.

That is the context in which eating unleavened bread is introduced. Unleavened bread does not picture coming out of sin. Israel came out of Egypt eating unleavened bread. This pictures us doing our part in obeying what God did in following Him. If they had not followed Him, they would have stayed in their homes and they would have allowed the bread to rise. But instead they obeyed. The simple thing was no leavening, no leavened bread.

Let me make this even plainer. Doing what the Israelites did is an act of righteousness. Eating unleavened bread during this period of time is an act of righteousness, not of coming out of sin. It is *doing* what is right. If one does righteousness, they will not sin because they are following God! It is that

simple. Eating unleavened bread is an act of righteousness of following God. And that is how we build up a a reputation of doing righteousness.

Eating unleavened bread pictures us doing our part in obeying God in following Him. So doing this is an act of righteousness, not coming out of sin. And if one does righteousness, they will not sin because they are following God. I mean, it is a simple equation. The emphasis on eating unleavened bread is not coming out of sin. The emphasis in eating unleavened bread is on doing what is right. It is that simple.