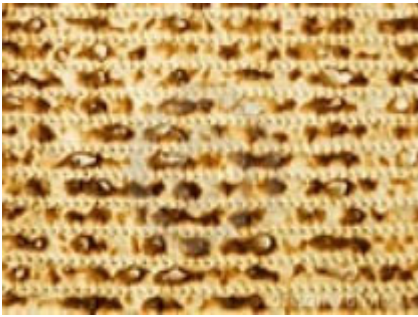


# **The Seven Days of Unleavened Bread**



*“So Let Us  
Celebrate  
the Festival”*

**1 Corinthians 5:7-8**

*by Robert Curry*

# **Deliverance From Slavery to Sin Through Jesus Christ, The Unleavened Bread of Life**

**T**he holy days and festivals of God are so important because they teach God's plan of salvation. To understand this amazing plan, we have to be keeping these glorious days (Psalm 111:10). No wonder they are commanded sacred assemblies! (verse 2). God expects us to show up! Understanding and appreciation grow!

The bread broken during the Passover service has to be unleavened because it represents the sinless Jesus Christ's body. An unexpected surprise is that Passover day is not a Holy Day and leaven can still be eaten during it.

Following Passover day's sunset come the seven Days of Unleavened Bread which picture the next step in the fulfillment of God's plan. As in the Passover service, for these seven days, leaven represents sin. Of course, there is actually nothing evil about leaven, even though we might rave about a cinnamon roll being so good it's sinful! Jesus gave a parable in Luke 13:21 casting leaven in a good light that results in the Kingdom of God arising.

## **A key message of the Days of Unleavened Bread**

After being forgiven of our sins by Christ's sacrifice, how are we going to continue avoiding sin and slavery to it so we can become a new man or woman in Christ? That was a big hint:

it's all through Christ!

## **.Through Jesus Christ, the unleavened bread of eternal life!**

When God freed Israel from slavery in Egypt, which also pictures sin, He directed: “seven days you shall eat unleavened bread” (Exodus 12:15). There might be extenuating circumstances, but most of us should eat some every day of the festival because we need Jesus Christ in our lives every day from here to eternity.

Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, along with all of God's Holy Days, are listed in Leviticus 23, but most of Bible instruction about the Passover season's events are given in Exodus when they were first kept.

“This is a day you are to commemorate; for the generations to come you shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD—a lasting ordinance. For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast . . . for *whoever eats anything with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh must be cut off from Israel*. On the first day hold a sacred assembly, and another one on the seventh day. Do not work at all on these days, except to prepare food for everyone to eat—that is all you may do” (Exodus 12:14-16, New International Version, emphasis mine throughout).

Talk about a serious warning. Anybody in the 12 tribes of physical Israel today, but especially in spiritual Israel today (the Church of God, Galatians 6:16) should do everything possible to not be cut off.

# I'm Not Spring Cleaning— I'm Unleavening

**W**e all know about spring cleaning, and hope we can figure out some way to ignore it until summer. Wait, we did that last spring and haven't done it yet!

Some theorize spring cleaning dates back to the Iranian Norouz, the Persian new year, which falls on the first day of spring. Iranians practice “khooneh tekouni” which literally means “shaking the house.”

Most sources trace spring cleaning back to the “Jews removing leaven from their homes for the Passover.”

## **Labeling it Jewish: a crummy idea**

Now we're on to something but we've been hoodwinked! The people who fled Egypt in such haste that they didn't have time to let bread rise ... the people who were commanded to remove all leaven from their homes during the Seven Days of Unleavened Bread immediately following the Passover (Exodus 12:15, 19) ... they weren't “Jewish.”

The first time the word “Jews” appears in the Bible is 2 Kings 16:6 and they are at war with “Israel”! The people in Exodus 12 were all 12 tribes of Israel and they removed the leaven for a “feast by an everlasting ordinance.” That ordinance still lasts today for the people of God!

Today everybody knows where Judah—the “Jews” are. The real breakthrough is finding out about the other “lost” tribes of Israel. This is especially relevant for us now with Charles being crowned King May 6, 2023 on the throne that was promised to

continue unconditionally since David and will be claimed by the returning Jesus Christ!

Now for the Iranian connection: Historians know many Israelites dispersed through Parthia. When you read about Parthia, you are reading about some lost tribes of Israel. That's why you seldom hear anything about Parthia because the general rule is that truth gets suppressed and somebody wants the lost to stay that way.

The Parthian Empire (247 BC – 224 AD) was a major Iranian political and cultural power in ancient Iran. Israelites knew God said His new year starts in the spring (Exodus 12:2). Some astute historians have tracked where the Parthians and other tribes migrated and ended up.

So it's spring and I'm cleaning off desks, vacuuming out the Jeep, and on the lookout for offending substances. But I'm not spring cleaning; I'm unleavening.

### **Why unleavening your life should matter to you:**

God says His people (spiritual Israel—Galatians 6:16) will have no leavened bread in their life for the seven days ending April 12 and “unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days” (Exodus 13:7). Leaven represents sin for the seven days, and Jesus Christ is the unleavened Bread of Life whom we symbolically eat the night before during the Passover service. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, our old man or woman is swept away so we can become a new man or woman in Christ (Ephesians 4:22-24). Of course, we don't live by bread alone but by every word which proceeds from the mouth of God. Christ is the living and written Word.

Perhaps I'm also khooneh tekouni. There's a good chance since it rhymes with looney! But it fits with a way of life that is

described by Jesus as narrow, difficult and few find (Matthew 7:14). It fits with the abundant life Jesus provides (John 10:10).

I'll leave it to you to wonder why you live in a culture that knows it should be spring cleaning.

## **Sinless car? The real miracle: sinless driver!**

So I joyfully went outside to unleaven our Jeep Renegade.

Talk about “a peculiar people”! (1 Peter 2:9 King James Version). “Removing sin” from your car would seem to qualify! One year after I joked that “there, now our car is sinless!”, one of my young daughters remarked “Not while you’re driving it!”

Funny! It’s not about the car; it’s about what God wants His children to learn from this very meaningful annual exercise preceding the seven Days of Unleavened Bread. God wants us to unleaven our cars and homes for a far more important reason than “cleanliness is next to godliness.” Unleavening our homes and cars teaches amazing spiritual lessons about purging our lives of sin.

- One overall surprise evaluation was that the Jeep was noticeably easier to clean this year. I remember last year it seemed like the dry vac crevice tool just couldn’t dislodge much without me first digging and gouging away with a big screw driver. This time I rarely had to brandish it. It was a little encouragement that after years of seeking God’s Way, we should be growing in grace and knowledge. By now hopefully God isn’t finding spiritual loaves but fewer and smaller crumbs to cover with His amazing imputed grace.

- In years past I would meticulously clean away, aiming to get the car flawlessly clean, since I likely wouldn’t clean it again with such effort until the next DOUB. The passenger front and

back would look amazing, but by the time I got to the driver side, I'd be thinking, "I'm not spring cleaning; I'm unleavening. That's not bread crumbs so let it go!" But this year, with the whole job going faster anyway, I kept reminding myself that *he who endures to the end will be saved* so I shouldn't let down the driver's side, if only because that's where I sit!

- Another obvious lesson I notice each year is how, especially because of blowing things around with a dry vac, it looks like you rid a seat of all its debris, and then seconds later debris would resettle on it. How like sins that just keep showing up again after we think we've conquered them!

We should do to sin like David aimed to do with his enemies: "I chased my enemies and caught them. I did not stop until they were conquered. I struck them down so they could not get up; they fell beneath my feet" (Psalm 18:37-38, New Living Translation).

- If only we could open the car doors and God would provide a supernatural blast of wind to blow it all out! Sorry, Israel had to walk out of Israel following the Rock who accompanied them. Sorry, Israel had to go out each day and gather the amount of manna God miraculously provided them just as instructed. Christianity is rarely flashy and splashy but rather a steady child-like obedient dailiness in traveling steadily along God's path (Psalm 37:34).

- We need the right tools and must use them correctly and at the right time. Anybody unleavening their possessions will make sure they have a powerful dry vac and will do what is necessary to maintain a strong suction. The air must be flowing powerfully like the Holy Spirit in us!

It's critical to have a crevice tool. Potential leaven throughout the year has crept into all the most difficult-to-reach nooks and

crannies of our car like it has into our life. We can't just look at how dirty it is under the front seat, mutter "crummy! ... but we all sin, so what's the use! Christ did it all for me."

You'll be sitting there all day if you wait for somebody to come dig out that morsel of Wonder Bread (you wonder if it's bread!) or Oreo cookie. God the Father and Jesus Christ want to see how zealous you are at wanting sin sucked out of your life.



I found I couldn't do the job without a long heavy-duty screwdriver—to reach down into nooks where the crevice tool wouldn't squeeze. And to scratch carpet surfaces to dislodge tenacious crumbs just like sometimes our lives require prayer and fasting (Matthew 17:21), or extra concentrated Bible study and meditation—tools in our Christian toolbox.

- The task made me think about the coming World Tomorrow of Jesus Christ's millennial kingdom on earth where, if we will have automobiles there, surely somebody will design them without the intricate metal frames under the seats blocking you from reaching all the debris you see there! Designed for easy leavening will undoubtedly be one of the top selling features!
- What a relief when you have washed and cleaned off the dashboard of all the sandwiches and cookies you set up there for convenient reach while driving. What a relief when you remembered to clean the high parts before doing the seats and floors instead of realizing you had to reclean them from the falling debris! God tells us to "redeem the time" (Ephesians 5:16-17), and Proverbs instruct to do tasks in wise order.
- What a relief when you've meticulously and steadily worked your way around the front seats, back seats and trunk, and it looks like you've gotten all the sin out of your car for the



Days of Unleavened Bread 2023! Go rest up, confident you've done your best, but meditate on how you want God to "cleanse me from secret faults ... [and] presumptuous sins" (Psalm 19:12-13).

Hopefully you won't be changing a tire this year and find that a mechanic left a half-eaten sandwich in the hubcap like I did one year!

OK, you probably wouldn't choose to unleaven your car just for fun. But there truly is a deep-down joy from participating in the "peculiar" way of life given us by God!

### **So what about my daughter's indictment about the driver being sinful?**

Yes, we all sin until the day we are resurrected (1 John 1:8). But even as I was unleavening the car and laughing about my daughter's remark, I asked God to forgive me of all my sins. And I know He did. As far away as the east is from the west for that nice warm sun glowing down on me!

God gives us complete forgiveness and cleanness in His sight. We walk blameless with no imputed sin (Psalm 32:1) or condemnation (Romans 8:1)--in newness of life as Jesus Christ the Unleavened Bread of Life lives in us through the Holy Spirit.

We recommit to our New Covenant marriage totally and completely—every nook and cranny of our life—to our loving Father and Elder Brother because of the selfless sacrifice they made for us. What a plan! Fullness of joy forevermore!(Psalm 16:11).

# The Night To Be Much Observed

**I**n the spring of 1970, I was a freshman at Otero Jr. College in La Junta, CO. I thought I knew God's Way, but I was a babe in Christ and always toddling into surprises!

When I learned about the Days of Unleavened Bread (DOUB), I was asked if I could ride a bus up to Englewood, so I could keep the First Holy Day. The only bus would get me in at 11 the night before. I was driven to a home and figured we'd be going to bed.

But the place was hoppin' with about 20 people! One group strummin' and singin' hymns. The host asked me if I was hungry. Of course I was! When was I ever not back then! But I didn't want anybody to make me food at that hour. That's when my eyes spied a whole banquet table of food! I had stumbled into

**My first "Night To Be Much Remembered/Observed" and I didn't know it existed to observe it!**

Aside from Churches of God, who has ever heard of it?

This special night begins at sunset this Wednesday night [April 5, 2023]! It is holy time that also begins the first DOUB Holy Day! As I tell you about this amazing evening, I hope you will set your mind into observing it for yourself even if this first time you have to keep it only seemingly alone—God the Father and Jesus Christ will be with you, rejoicing that you are stepping out in faith! That's how I had to keep my first Feast of Tabernacles, and God has since blessed me with 53 more.

In Exodus 12 Israel killed the Passover lamb, smeared its blood on their doorposts, so that at midnight when the death angel passed over, only the firstborn sons and firstborn male animals of Egypt were slain, probably not slimed. Note that most of the time people don't specify that it was only males; all the females got a pass on Passover because Pharaoh had slain only boys.

God warned Israel not to go out of their homes until morning (verse 22). Since Pharaoh represents satan, who wouldn't expect him to urge the opposite. So during the night Pharaoh [thought to be Amenhotep II, who was not a firstborn and whose firstborn son died] urged them to get out in haste! Today satan urges us to wallow deeper into his world (Egypt = sin). During daylight of the Passover day, they continued stripping the Egyptians of their wealth, which was fitting back wages (verse 36) and assembled at Ramses.

They gathered in haste and had no time to leaven bread. They were probably thrilled to be laden down with so much wealth rather than with puffy bread!

We read right over this, but about 3 million Israelites spent the day traveling up to 20 miles just to get from (Goshen/ archaeological site called Avaris in the "Patterns of Evidence" movie by Tim Mahoney) to the departure point! Who are these super people!

I remember the time my daughter Katherine and I had to park one mile from the Pikes Peak trailhead, so we ended up having to walk and gasp uphill and then find out that the Pikes Peak trail was 13 miles up instead of only about six like we thought! We went anyway! Seems like we have Israelite blood!

Psalm 105:37 hints that God gave Israel special favor to make this miraculous departure. "And there was none feeble among His people." The New Living Translation says "not one among the tribes of Israel even stumbled." Nehemiah 9:21 adds "For forty years you sustained them in the wilderness, and they lacked nothing. Their clothes did not wear out, and their feet did not swell!"

### **Exodus 12:40-42 establishes The Night To Be Much Observed**

"And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years—on that very same day [God is the Master Timer! Never

early, never late, though we usually think He's late]—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 that night of the Lord, a *solemn* observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations.”

## **When did the Exodus occur?**

For all my time in God's Church over 53 years, I have been rewriting the date of the Exodus in my “inspired” margin because it seems no two scholars agree. Well then, you're in luck because I am no scholar!

The favorite date for Churches of God has been 1446 B.C. One reason is that the spring Holy Day events line up the same as for A.D. 31 when Jesus was crucified.

There are three clues in the Bible to pinpoint the year of the Exodus—with the help of a Hebrew-to-Roman Calendar Converter that you can access for FREE off the Internet at [Cgsf.org/dbeattie/calendar/](http://Cgsf.org/dbeattie/calendar/). This program recognizes the intercalations, postponements and adjustments necessary for the Hebrew calendar to work properly. To use it, in the blank box to the left of “Fetch Roman Year” just type in the Roman year [for example, 1446 B.C.; for an A.D. date, just the year] you are interested in to see the corresponding Hebrew dates. The voice of experience says to be very careful to stipulate 1446 B.C. if you don't want 1446 [A.D.]. I had to recheck a lot of dates and ended up with dramatically different results!

## **Let's note the three clues:**

1) The United Church of God's Bible Commentary on 1 Kings 6:1 says, “Solomon's first year ... was 970/969 B.C., and his fourth

year (in which he began the construction of the temple) was 967/966 B.C. Based on these dates, we may conclude that the Exodus occurred in or very close to the year 1447/1446 B.C. [arrived at by adding 480 years to 967/966 B.C.] ... As regards chronology, this chapter also provides us with a way to determine whether Judah was counting the years of a king's reign using a Nisan-to-Nisan (spring-to-spring) or a Tishri-to-Tishri (autumn-to-autumn) reckoning on the Hebrew calendar. If Judah had been using a Nisan-to-Nisan reckoning of regnal years, the temple would have been described as eight years in building. However, using a Tishri-to-Tishri reckoning yields the seven years of 1 Kings 6:38."

$$967 + 480 = 1447 \text{ B.C.}$$

2) Joshua 6 shows that as the Israelites were about to invade Jericho 40 years after the Exodus, *the Passover [Nisan 14] had to have been on a Sabbath* because the next day the Israelites were able to eat food from the land and the manna had ceased. This shows that this next day had to have been a Sunday during the Days of Unleavened Bread and the Wave Sheaf Offering had been given.

Within a 20-year likely period, the only three possible years for the Exodus when Passover was on a Sabbath are 1443 B.C., 1447 B.C. and 1450 B.C. Sorry, *1446 B.C. does not satisfy the Joshua 6 requirement.*

Coming closest to the traditional date of 1446 B.C. would be 1447 B.C.. That certainly elevates the odds for 1447 B.C.

3) Exodus 12:40-42 says a significant event, apparently the Abrahamic Covenant of Genesis 15, occurred 430 years earlier "on that very same day" as the Night To Be Much Observed. This would date the Abrahamic Covenant of Genesis 15 occurring on Nisan 15, 1877 B.C.

Dating back to Abraham's time definitely doesn't seem to be exactly agreed upon! One popular Internet Bible timeline dated the Abrahamic Covenant as 1879 B.C. The three possible dates for the Exodus come within six years of this—one within a year and one within two years.

For this non-scholar, the best date seems to be 1447 B.C.

## **How do we observe the NTBMO today?**

The New Living Translation says: "This night ... must be commemorated every year by all the Israelites, from generation to generation." Stepping out in faith to keep this NTBMO with short notice would certainly demonstrate to God your seriousness in wanting to keep His Way!

Sometimes a church will hold it in a hall, but more often we keep it in homes and small groups, sometimes restaurants. Many of us prefer in homes for the intimacy. For the NTBMO this year, my wife and I welcomed 17 brethren to our home for a nice meal with all contributing. It must not be turned into a party because it is called a "solemn observance" with spiritual lessons we should learn.

But the balance is we must come out of sin "with boldness" (Numbers 33:3) and with "a high hand" (Exodus 14:8). This is an evening of heartfelt triumphant joy! The preincarnate Jesus was the Rock who led the Israelites out as a fire by night and a cloud by day, and we can do all things through Christ (Philippians 4:13). Thank God we will be dining at a fine meal instead of having to walk out of Egypt all night!

Notice the New International Version: "Because the Lord kept vigil [*shimmur*=keep night watch] that night to bring them out of Egypt, on this night all the Israelites are to keep vigil to honor the Lord for the generations to come." God watches over us, and

we must remain watchful for the rest of our lives to not return to sin.

It's obvious that the world has crossed the border into the End Time, and we should memorize and meditate every day on Luke 21:36: "*Watch* therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

### **"How did God bring you to the truth?"**

At this special dinner, brethren like to hear how God brought each person out of our spiritual Egypt and into His Church and Way. Hopefully, those reluctant to share their story will realize they should "do unto others as they would like others to do to them!" But no pressure!

We should be careful not to forget our children on this special night (Exodus 13:8). How can we make it special for them?

Forget is a key word involving this special night. "Remember this day in which you went out of Egypt" (Exodus 13:3). So this night is often called "The Night To Be Much Remembered." After 9-11 Americans promised to "never forget" but look how we pretty much have. This should not be surprising since Manassah means "forgetful."

God is not only our Creator but also our Deliverer and Redeemer! The Passover provided redemption in Egypt. The NTBMO provided deliverance from Egyptian slavery—now slavery to sin. Now we walk in God's Way.

It prefigured a much greater redemption by a much greater sacrifice. Jesus Christ our Passover Lamb died for our redemption and deliverance from sin about 3 p.m. on Passover day and then was buried just before the sunset starting the NTBMO. He was dead in His grave for the NTBMO.

My first NTBMO, I think brethren stayed up a little too late. The next day is the First Holy Day of the Seven DOUB. We should all be wisely balanced and not too much observed!

You will be forming your story of how God is delivering you from Egypt to share at your next NTBMO!



# Experiencing and Enjoying the Days of Unleavened Bread

I hope you didn't miss the huge golden moon beginning the DOUB. In Gen. 1:14 God set the sun and moon in the sky for "seasons" [mo'edim=appointed times, festivals, holy days] before the creation of Adam and Eve. God provided this celestial flashlight to guide the Israelites out of Egypt in 1447 B.C. And each year we get to marvel at the full moon that starts the Days of Unleavened Bread.



Jesus has always been the focus of His festival and He was the Rock (1 Corinthians 10:4) who led Moses and the Israelites out of Egypt (representing sin) away from Pharaoh (satan), and they had to leave in too big a hurry to take their customary leavened bread. Good thing because they were keeping the seven Days of Unleavened Bread!

We note that this Holy Day time is not called the Days of Leavened Bread. Yes, we have we have put leaven out of our homes, cars and work and we are avoiding leaven for the seven days. You can count on co-workers or neighbors to offer doughnuts at this time—the only time of year it happens! Chili's Restaurant just offered me a free dessert, and I caught myself thinking about that big warm molten lava cake smothered with ice cream until the alarm bells went off in my head!

But we cannot save ourselves from sin and death, no matter how diligent or obedient we strive to be. The Days of Unleavened Bread, like all of God's festivals, are

## **All about what Jesus Christ does**

He is the focal point of God's Holy Days.

With Jesus Christ the Unleavened Bread of Life living in us through the Holy Spirit, we can put off the old man with its human nature and put on the very nature of God to become like the Father and our Older Brother! Why would God want children who think He did away with His spiritual law that shows us what sin is? Who think God did it all for them so they get to stay wallowing in sin and evil human nature? No, God is reproducing Himself and creating sons and daughters who will be godly like the Father and Son are! Slaves of righteousness, as Paul puts it!

As Paul urged the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 5, we should not only be unleavened physically but through Christ our Passover (5:8), put on the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth!

So God commands us to eat some unleavened bread each day during these seven days to picture all this wonderful truth. What a joy to eat my egg and onion matzos with melted butter and peach jam, while noting how I want to be humble and not puffed up with vanity and pride! I want to become like my Father and Brother---think and act exactly like Them!

From keeping the Days of Unleavened Bread for 53 years, I know that these seven days will be over in a blur. I think it's because this spring festival lasts only seven days rather than eight days like the fall festival.

## **God's Victory Day**

The seventh day coming this Wednesday, April 12 is a Holy Day and a most special one! I call it God's Victory Day because five big events of deliverance apparently occurred on this day.

I could use a special day of VICTORY, as I'm sure you could also.

# Victory Day!

## *Five epic victories in the Bible that apparently came during the Days of Unleavened Bread and likely on the 7<sup>th</sup> day*

**T**hat seems to be God's favorite day for miraculous deliverance! What a way to end the seven Days of Unleavened Bread on a victorious roll assuring more to come!

### **1) Crossing of the Red Sea**

This would probably be the first miracle people would name. It certainly is the splashiest one! Thanks to Cecil B. DeMille, we all feel like we were right there passing through the intimidating walls of churning water. We no doubt have some misconceptions because a mathematician has calculated that for 3 million Israelites to have walked through they would have had to be at least 1,000 abreast! Tim Mahoney and others have identified the apparent site, and the beach looks like it would have accommodated this spread-out exit.

What we want to focus on is what part the people played in this miraculous deliverance from sin (Egypt) and Pharaoh (satan)? "Moses said to the people, Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today.... The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace" (Exodus 14:13-14).

"And the Lord said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward'" (verse 15). God told Moses

that before the waters had actually parted! We have to go forward spiritually even if standing still waiting in anticipation. During the night Israel walked through the sea ... and kept on walking for 40 years!

## **2) Walls of Jericho came a-tumblin' down**

For six days, armed men and seven priests blowing shofars walked about one mile over to Jericho and one mile around. On the seventh day—no doubt the Seventh Day of Unleavened Bread—they walked seven times around. Seven times on the seventh day! Perfect! On Joshua's command: "Shout, for the Lord has given you the city!" (Joshua 6:16), the obstacle to entering the Promised Land was flat-out removed!

## **3) Destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah**

Lot "made them a feast, and baked unleavened bread" (Gen. 19:3). You'd have to expect the fire and brimstone fell on God's favorite day for epic deliverance.

Peter calling Lot "righteous" can give us the heebie-jeebies because "how can he be!" when we see his progressive backsliding: "Lot chose for himself the plain of Jordan" (Gen. 13:11)—seeking his own path without God's guidance. Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom—and soon was in it! Then sitting in the gate, participating in its government (19:1). When it was time to flee, he lingered and had to be gently but forcibly persuaded out by the angels.

So why, Peter? Why did you call Lot righteous? "[Lot] was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)—then the

Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations” (2 Peter 2:7-8).

#### **4) Gideon’s victory over the Midianites**

When “the Lord” visited Gideon, the man appointed the sixth judge of Israel prepared “a young goat, and unleavened bread” (Judges 6:19).

God told Gideon that he would defeat the Midianites “as one man” (Judges 6:16), but actually allowed 300 who lapped water by putting their hand to their mouth—a more alert position for a soldier. Strategy and planning are crucial, and they divided into three companies and attacked just as the Midianite watch had changed. Each man carried a trumpet and a pitcher with a torch inside. Normally only a commander would have this, so the Midianites would assume a huge army is swarming down upon them. Breaking the pitchers in unison would echo down the canyon like the clanging of military equipment amplified by the walls.

It probably looks like a sarcastic joke when the Lord first greeted Gideon as “You mighty man of valor!” Do you mean the one threshing wheat hiding in a winepress? The one sneaking by night to pull down Baal’s altar? The one asking for more signs than at a Jeff Foxworthy performance? The one from the obscure town of Ophrah, which I’m pretty sure had no tornados because we’ve all heard of Ophrah Wind Free.

We should notice the five words preceding “You mighty man of valor” in Judges 6:12: “The Lord is with you.” That’s the recipe for God making mighty men and women of valor out of us! It’s the same encouragement God gave to Moses and Joshua.

## **5) Hey Man, Hanging of Haman and promotion of Mordecai**

Haman's decree to "destroy, kill and annihilate" Jews was enacted on Nisan 13, the day before Passover (Esther 3:12). Somebody didn't like Jews! Esther asked the Jews to fast for her three days and three nights (the same time Jesus was in the tomb during the DOUB in A.D. 31). She would go to the king even though it was against the law and she would perish if the king didn't hold out his golden scepter. I'm thinking, c'mon, he'd have to be crazy not to want to see the woman he judged to be the fairest in the land! But he hadn't asked for Esther for 30 days. Yep, crazy!

These five events in our history were miraculous victories over sin that cannot be canceled. They were written in God's Bible for us (1 Corinthians 10:13). Back then as today, Jesus Christ is the source of victory! All glory goes to Him and the Father! "O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Romans 7:24-25).

## **We have our part to participate in the miraculous victories**

- Go forward and "walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7). "He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as he walked" (1 John 2:6).

- "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6). The Laodicean era is upon us; satan's anger is mounting and deceiving too many to think we are spiritually in need of nothing (Revelation 3:17). Immersing ourselves in today's corrupt environment will gradually seduce us into the world we must come out of

(Revelation 18:4).

- Fast regularly. Church of God leaders through the years often recommended once per month.

The big surprise for me about these five epic miraculous deliverances was that Israel had to follow God and His leaders in unity. None of this “you and me, Lord” business. A sheep wandering away from the flock often results in death.

God’s Church must move “as one man” and lift up our voice like a trumpet in a clear and powerful end-time warning (Isaiah 58:1, 1 Corinthians 4:8).

## **Victory awaits us!**

God is still the author & finisher of our faith—and gives us victories in the middle!

On the first and last Days of Unleavened Bread, God’s people assemble as He commands for Holy Day services to worship our victorious Father and Elder Brother. And we walk by faith out of spiritual Egypt and Babylon—becoming increasingly Sodom & Gomorrah with each day—toward the Promised Land and eternity: *through Jesus Christ our Unleavened Bread!* He rose from the grave exactly as He promised, and though we are justified by His death, we are saved by His life (Romans 5:10)—through the power of the Holy Spirit which will be featured on the next Holy Day of Pentecost.

- If you’d like a good piece of advice, Moses’ “stand still and hold your peace” still goes rather than complaining and opining. “Stand still. Now forward. Esther, why wait another day? That doesn’t make sense!”

It does when the Master Timer is leading and we are heeding!

## **“Are You Really Guiding Me, God?”**

**D**oes our life seem like one detour after another? Usually a detour appears sometime during a journey. But ancient Israel’s exodus from Egypt started with one!

“When Pharaoh finally let the people go, *God did not lead them along the main road ... even though that was the shortest route* to the Promised Land. God said, ‘If the people are faced with a battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.’ So God led them in a roundabout way through the wilderness toward the Red Sea” (Exodus 13:17-18, New Living Translation throughout, emphasis mine throughout).

Do we feel like we are going in circles? Stuck in spin cycle? God favors the straight, narrow, difficult route that few find (Matthew 7:13-14).

### **“The Lord went ahead of them”**

He guided them during the day with a pillar of cloud, and he provided light at night with a pillar of fire” (Exodus 13:21, emphasis mine throughout). God takes care of our comfort and practical needs. When the cloud or fire moved, the Israelites moved. When it stopped, they camped. “At the Lord’s command ... Israel ... moved from place to place” (17:1).

“The Lord” was the God who became Jesus Christ. “They drank from the spiritual rock that traveled with them, and that rock was Christ” (1 Corinthians 10:4). Nobody has seen God the Father or heard His voice except Jesus (John 5:37, 6:46). Still, Moses said, “You saw how the Lord your God cared for you all along the way as you traveled through the wilderness, *just as a father cares for his child*” (Deuteronomy 1:33).



On December 15, 2022 I had to go to the hospital for emergency belly button hernia surgery. Before that day I didn't have a belly button hernia! The surgeon on duty in the early morning hours, when I mentioned about having a stomach hernia, said I was in luck, he's the only one in Canon City who can operate on one. When he scheduled an upper scope for me to determine measurements for operating on the stomach hernia, it was discovered that I had esophagus and stomach damage I didn't know I had! I'm so thankful God went before! Discovered too late, I might not be here writing now!

In verse 32 Moses said "God goes before you looking for the best places to camp." That didn't seem to be the case when God camped them boxed in at the Red Sea! That didn't exactly seem to be the "still waters" God promises His flock of sheep! (Psalm 23:2). What do you think about where you are camped? Do sheep argue with the shepherd!

"Then the Lord said to Moses, 'Why are you crying out to me? Tell the people to get moving!'" (Exodus 14:15). The water wasn't parted yet! We should be moving forward spiritually even when standing still, waiting for the salvation of the Lord! Probably Moses didn't actually tell the people to move forward until he held up his rod and the water parted.

In verse 19, the pillars of cloud and fire moved behind the Israelites—between them and the attacking Egyptians. God goes before us but *He also has our back!*

## **God is the Master Timer**

At Mt. Sinai He told the people "You have stayed at this mountain long enough. It is time to break camp and move on" (Deuteronomy 1:6). At major junctions in our life, God is ready to guide us with the timing and outcome.

Did I ever gratefully experience this in 1979 when God intervened dramatically in my life over a period of two months to move me from living in the Washington, D.C. area for five years to settling back in Pasadena, California for 11 years. Then He again dramatically intervened in 1989 to bring my wife Mary and me together and enable us to settle in Colorado to raise our family in a better environment than big city chaos.

### **Why we should happily see, appreciate and cooperate with God's guidance:**

“Remember how the Lord your God led you through the wilderness for these forty years, humbling you and testing you to prove your character, and to find out whether or not you would obey his commands ... He did it to teach you that people do not live by bread alone; rather, we live by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord ... Think about it: Just as a parent disciplines a child, the Lord your God disciplines you for your own good” (Deuteronomy 8:2-6).

Psalm 37 is my favorite psalm. Verse 23 is a wonderful promise: “The Lord directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.” He knows what we’ll say before we think it! (Psalm 139:4). But He still wants to hear from us and share our relationship.

With God’s guidance, we can overcome being stiff-necked, rebellious, complaining gripers! Instead, let’s see, appreciate and cooperate with God’s guidance and we can be “certain that God, who began the good work within [us], will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns” (Philippians 1:6).

# **Are There Leeks in our Thinking?**

*Do golden calves just appear  
around us?*

*Is our Complaint Department  
such a busy place  
that we need some full-time help?*

Paul said we need to learn from Israel's experiences (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Passing through the Red Sea pictured baptism. God heaped the waters up on both sides higher than their heads, and they didn't know how blessed they were that total immersion wasn't required of them! To picture baptism, perhaps God didn't even allow sprinkles on them.

So with plagues and parting, God freed Israel from Egypt, but the real challenge was removing Egypt from Israel. Egypt symbolizes sin, and wouldn't you know it that though God forgives us our past sin when we repent of it and sincerely desire to exit from it, the real challenge is changing our minds to not only choose to reject sin in the future but, harder yet, not even desire it.

**“We want to go back to Egypt”**

On the other shore all Israel could do was keep moaning "We want to go back to Egypt"---where they had been whipped and beaten as slave laborers!

What about us if we fantasize about going back to our old life? It really wasn't all leeks, onions and garlic---except that it probably smelled to high heaven! May God help us plug any leeks in our thinking. Overcome old habits that hold us back.

"Everything you've ever wanted is on the other side of fear"  
(George Addair).

"For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles---when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries ... they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation" (1 Pet. 4:3-4).

### **Meekest man got careless**

Even Moses, called the meekest man on earth (Num. 12:3), had to die before arriving in the Promised Land because he became so overwhelmed and discouraged by the complaining crowd that he got careless in following God's instruction to speak to the rock. "Last time I struck it, so let's do it twice for good measure!"

Yet the reason God said Moses struck out was because he did not hallow him in the eyes of the people when he cried "Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" (Num. 20:10). Moses called the people "rebels" when it was especially true of him and Aaron! Most of the time someone who accuses others of something is guilty of the same.

The Rock who led them (1 Cor. 10:4) showed His unmatched mercy---Despite Moses' rebellion He still made water flow out for the thirsty murmuring mob. He backed up His leader. Paul cautioned Christians not to tempt Christ as they did (1 Cor. 10:9).

Maybe Moses and Aaron lapsed into thinking they could be a little careless because they were God's exalted leaders. God holds His leaders and teachers more accountable (James 3:1).

Israel became our examples so that "we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted" (verse 6). Paul called their orgy with the golden calf, which Aaron said just suddenly appeared, an example of not just sexual immorality but also idolatry. An idol

is anything we put before God in thought, time, priority or money. With God's help we have a lot to smash in our life!

Paul decries their complaining. They thought they were

## **Just criticizing Moses**



but God said it was against Him! (Numbers 12:2).

Jude warns "dreamers" who "reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries." Michael the archangel knew better than to bring a "reviling accusation" against even Satan. "But these speak evil of whatever they do not know" (Jude 8-10). What would paying attention to Jude's instruction do to social media and our news!

Several times they didn't start complaining until after three days with no food or water (Ex. 15:22, Num. 10:33). Their breaking point was three days. Maybe we can't be so quick to judge if we have never gone without food or water for over a day and that was because we chose to fast. We aren't trudging in a hot, dry wilderness. After hiking just one mile in our beautiful spring weather, I'm famished and thirsty!

You'd think the book of Numbers is about counting how many times Israel was complaining. Their minds were too much on onions to appreciate all the orchids God was offering.

God said Israel tested Him one too many times when they did it the 10<sup>th</sup> time (Num. 14:22). Ten is the number of judgment (10 Commandments, 10 wise and foolish virgins). It's easy to google for the scriptures of the 10 incidents of accusing, murmuring, complaining, committing idolatry, not believing and not obeying. Would our total shoot right past that into being worthy of God needing to forgive 70 times seven?

May God help us---spiritual Israel (Gal. 6:16)---to learn these same lessons on our way to the Promised Land. "We must give

the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away ... how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" (Heb. 2:1,3).

## **Fresh Start!**

When the Days of Unleavened Bread ended for the Israelites, they didn't have a King Soopers to go immediately buy some leavened bread to eat. It **would** take about 10 days for them to make a starter batter for baking sourdough bread. We shouldn't delay even one day to get busy seeking alignment to and passion for God's plan of salvation for us.

Spring is a fresh start for the earth, everything turning green and popping to life! So the Days of Unleavened Bread in the northern hemisphere signify a fresh start.

# **The Wave Sheaf Ceremony Ties Together the Days of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost**

A hugely significant ceremony involving the wave sheaf offering occurred on the Sunday (“the day after the Sabbath”) that falls during the DOUB. The wave sheaf was cut from the ground about a half hour after sundown beginning that Sunday.

The next morning—at the time of the morning sacrifice, 9 a.m., the wave sheaf was waved before God. This waving was up and down, not left to right.

This pictured the resurrected Christ being offered to God His Father at the heavenly throne and accepted by the Father as our High Priest.

The fulfillment of this ceremony was when Jesus told Mary not to touch Him because He had not yet ascended up to His Father (John 20:17). Later that Sunday He appeared to His disciples and let them touch Him (verses 19-20).

## **It should be noted that the only sign Jesus gave of His messiahship**

was that He would be three days and three nights in the grave (Matthew 12:40). He was dead from crucifixion at 3 p.m. on Wednesday afternoon—not on a Friday—and entombed by Joseph of Arimathea just before sunset beginning the First Day of Unleavened Bread in A.D. 31 (Matthew 27:57). His three days and three nights had to end on a day just before sunset, not in a morning bound up in paganism—and that occurred on the Sabbath evening just before sunset. Mary came to the tomb early on Sunday morning before dawn to the empty tomb and then Jesus appeared to her.

The Days of Unleavened Bread picture the resurrected Jesus Christ, and that He then serves to make new men and women out of us by saving us through His life (Romans 5:10).

From the Wave Sheaf ceremony—from the Sunday during the DOUB, we can then count 50 days (seven weeks of Sabbaths inclusively to God’s next Holy Day—Pentecost. Pentecost means “50<sup>th</sup>” and God commands it to be counted. A further proof that God’s Holy Days are not “Jewish” is that the Jews have a fixed day and therefore do not count it.

This Holy Day teaches many lessons. Two big ones are that Jesus Christ began His Church and gave the Holy Spirit to power us to accomplish the Great Commission (Matthew 24:14, 28:18-20).

“May [God] give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith [of Christ] prompts you to do” (2 Thessalonians 1:11).



Copyright © 2023 by Robert Curry  
All Rights Reserved  
Printed in the USA

Scriptures in this publication are quoted from the  
*New King James Version* (© 2002, Oxford University Press,  
Inc.) unless otherwise noted

[robertcurry6@hotmail.com](mailto:robertcurry6@hotmail.com)

***This eBook & other Bible analysis are available free at***  
**<http://www.theunexpectedbtm.wordpress.com/>**