

The title of today's sermon is *Time to Leave*, and this will be *Part 1*.

Mankind does not know or understand the spiritual purpose of God's Passover sacrifice. They have polluted the very ways of God and have no idea of the beauty (the true beauty) of the New Testament Passover.

Christ was sent to fulfill a role of service for all mankind. We were called by God to fulfill a role of service on a different level, but with the same spirit.

God called physical Israel His "servants." They were physically taken out of Egypt for the purpose of serving God. We as members of the Body of Christ have also been called out of "spiritual Egypt" for the purpose of serving God on a spiritual level.

The purpose of this sermon series is to examine the physical exodus, but on a spiritual level (in other words, what it has to do with us). So the title of the sermon *Time to Leave* is about the time to leave sin is always – it is always time to "leave Egypt." It is always time to leave sin. And of course, we understand that we need to be called first to enable us (through the power of God's holy spirit) to be able to actually leave sin, "leave Egypt."

By nature we desire to be served and not to serve others. That's our nature. We desire to be served. But to be a servant requires humility. To be a servant means we are willing to sacrifice the selfishness that dwells in us.

Moses was called by God to serve God's will. Israel was created to serve God and were called "servants of God" also. The physical exodus was about the children of Israel being called out of Egypt to serve God.

Our calling out of this world is for the very same purpose. We are called out of "spiritual Egypt" to serve God. As a spiritual "type" we are being taken out of "spiritual Egypt," out of spiritual bondage, to learn to serve God in spirit and truth. Our calling *is* about serving God. Once called we have to fight against the self and strive to continue to leave "spiritual Egypt" behind us. "Spiritual Egypt" has occupied our thinking, and that's what happens to our mind. Our minds are held in bondage; the natural carnal mind is held in bondage. So when we are called out of this world, we are called "out of Egypt." We are called out of that bondage (the things that hold us captive – *our thinking*), and therefore, the title of this sermon is relevant because it is *always* time to be leaving or time to leave Egypt, to leave sin, to leave that bondage behind us.

So we'll start this sermon series in **Exodus 1:5 – All those who were descendants of Jacob were seventy persons (for Joseph was in Egypt already). And Joseph died, all his brothers, and all that generation.** So everybody from that generation, of those that came into Egypt, all have now died. **But the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, multiplied and grew exceedingly mighty.** Now, that is "mighty in numbers," **and the land was filled with them.** It's believed that there was possibly over four million or more (thereabouts). That's counting the men, the women, and the children. So at this point, of course, they were multiplying exceedingly as far as numbers were concerned.

Verse 8 – Now there rose a new king over Egypt who did not know Joseph. So this king, this Pharaoh, has no knowledge of Joseph, and he obviously doesn't have any knowledge of the background of how Joseph was second in charge of Egypt.

Verse 9 – And he said to his people, Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier (in number) than we. So they're basically saying, "We've been out bred!" Now, these things happen in today's society as well where people have settled in particular areas – whether it's cultural, whether it's race, or whether it's family names or tribes – this same type of thing happens where one tribe may look across and see another tribe and say, "Wow! We're being out bred! We're going to be outnumbered!" And therefore, it creates a *fear* in the natural carnal mind.

Now, this can also happen on a national level where people look and see that other nationalities are moving into their area or are in that country and it appears that they're being "out bred," and therefore, the people start to think or *fear* the people that are in that land. Now, this can happen at a family level, it can happen at a tribe level, it can happen within a nation.

Verse 10 – Come, let us deal shrewdly (wisely) with them – why? – lest they multiply, and it happen in the event of war that they also join our enemies and fight against us, and so go up out of the land. So now the *fear* that they have is that they fear that the Israelites would join with another nation and fight against Egypt, where they currently were, then they would actually *leave* Egypt and Egypt would not have the workforce to help them build their cities. So here is their thinking.

Now, within nationalities today it's the same type of thinking. People think, well, here is a culture or a nationality within a country and *if* a war breaks out, what will we do with this nationality? Will they join up with this other country? What will they do? Now, I remember back in Australia when one of the wars broke out here – I believe it might have been the first world war, and it may have even happened in the second world war – I do know it actually did happen during the second world war – was when Australia went to war that Australia did actually go around and round up various nationalities. One of them was the Italian nation, where those people were taken captive and they were actually put into what was called, like, "a concentration camp," or camps that *held* them captive, because the people *feared* what the Italians in Australia may do. Since Australia was at war with Italy, and therefore, they worried about the people that had that nationality or that background here. And whether they were innocent or not, nobody really cared. They just simply rounded them all up and put them in what was called "camps," and they held them captive while the war was on because they had this fear.

Now, that is a natural thinking from a natural carnal mind that people *do* fear. Now, here is Egypt that *fear* that Israel has grown so strong in number that if they turn on them and they fight, well, of course, Israel would then leave their captivity that they were currently in, that they would leave the land and that would expose Egypt on a national level – not only militarily, but also financially – because the workforce would leave and Egypt would then be plunged into a different environment. So this *fear* is a natural fear that would grow in anybody's mind.

Verse 11 – Therefore, they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with their burdens. And they (the Israelites) built for Pharaoh supply cities, which are "storehouses," Pithom and Raamses. They were forced to serve. They became slaves *to* Egypt. So here they are. They are actually now slaves because they're being forced labor. So they're slaves of Egypt.

Verse 12 – But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew, so the more they bred, **and they were in dread of the children of Israel.** Now, this word "dread" is interesting because it is "to be grieved, to loathe, to abhor, to feel a loathing or abhorrence, or feeling a sickening dread." They feared what might happen if the Israelites continued to multiply. So they set out to try to oppress them so they wouldn't breed, and here they are, they're continuing to breed, so they said, "Well, we're going to have to do more and more," and they put more and more burdens on them to stop them to multiply.

Now, we can look at this on a spiritual level. We can see this, and the very same thing can happen when Satan sees spiritual growth within a member of the Body of Christ. We grow *spiritually* (we multiply), and Satan loathes us because the more we grow the more he sees and has the desire to oppress us, *to stop our growth*, to stop us *multiplying*. And we're talking here on a spiritual level. So we have tests and trials, and therefore, we grow more in faith and in spiritual character. So the more we're oppressed by Satan and Satan's system, the more potential we have to grow in faith and spiritual character. And it's an exciting time because it's only through those trials that we grow spiritually, that we have the opportunity to put on the very mind of Christ and to use God's spirit where God supplies us the power to think differently. Well, it's through those tests and trials, it's through that oppression of Satan's system – which is symbolic, of course, with Egypt's system of oppression – well, the more that we're oppressed the more opportunity we have to use God's spirit, to choose to use God's spirit, and to grow in spiritual character, to grow in faith.

Verse 13 – So the Egyptians made the children of Israel serve with rigor, and that is "harshness, severity, cruelty." Israel were now slaves to Egypt.

Well, when we look at this, brethren, we're the same. Before our calling, *we were slaves to sin*. We served sin. "Sin" is, of course, "the transgression of God's law." Well, by nature, man serves sin. That's his thinking. He serves himself; he doesn't serve God. And any effort that he may make to serve God, it's all done from the natural carnal mind and it is based on selfishness, which is motivated by pride, because the way he serves God is a vanity (in reality) because he's doing it from himself, from his selfishness. He's getting something back in it.

So now we have here the Egyptians are now oppressing the children of Israel and they're treating them severely and cruelly because they're trying to hold them into captivity, hold them in bondage, to be their slaves. Well, we, brethren, are the same. We are held in that bondage in a cruel system, in a harsh system, which is the world's system, Satan's system – because the motivation of *everything* in that system is selfishness. So we were slaves to that system (often not even realizing). We were slaves and held in bondage to our own selfishness because Satan's system *supports* our selfishness. It makes us *more* selfish because there are rewards that are given because of selfishness. And it's when we leave Egypt, when we come out of it, is when we start to suffer from that system that will treat us even more cruelly, because they see us exiting or having the desire to leave. As we choose to leave Egypt, as we flee sin, and as we leave Egypt behind (leave sin), there is going to be problems, and we see that within our families, within work places, and many other areas because we're trying to "leave Egypt."

Now, the children of Israel at this point didn't have a desire to leave, in the sense of having a way out. They knew what was happening to them and they knew their suffering, and they will come to the point where they will turn to God.

If you'd like to hold your place there we'll look at **Romans 6:12 – Therefore, do not let sin reign in...** and this "reign in" is "have control over or rule"... **your mortal bodies.** So here we're being instructed by Paul to not allow sin to reign or to have control or to *rule our thinking* – not to rule us because it does rule us. Sin controls us, because we're held captive by the sin, because we're actually *slaves* to sin when we have our natural carnal mind. But once called we're called out of that slavery, out of that bondage, and therefore, *now* we are not to let sin *reign* (have control) over us or rule us ...**that you should obey it in its lusts.** So we shouldn't listen to or submit to the selfish desires that go on in our minds that lead to sin. Because these desires are natural, the natural carnal mind *has* these desires and it thinks these desires. Well, here it's saying we shouldn't obey it, we shouldn't obey that *thinking*, that desire that comes in us. We shouldn't obey it (the sin) that reigns in our body "in its lusts" because it does *desire*. It does *lust for* things. And of course, we've heard sermons of late with regards to "the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, and the lust of the eyes." All of these things that come from the natural carnal mind, we are to fight against them.

Verse 13 – And do not present your members (parts of the body), and what we're referring to here, of course, is the mind, because the mind is what drives all things in our thinking. It drives our body as **instruments of unrighteousness to sin; but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead –** and how do we do that? By repentance! ...**and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.** So we're to stand in obedience to God's law. We're to follow *His* instructions. And we shouldn't be *yielding* to the natural carnal mind. We should be yielding to God's spirit. And how do we do that? Through repentance. So we, then, are sacrificing ourselves. We're getting rid of sin by the power of God's spirit, by the choices we make. We choose to repent. We do not *want to be* the way we are, this natural carnal mind, and obey it (it's lusts), which lead to, of course, sin.

Verse 14 – For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law... and that is, under the death penalty (which is being "under the law" because the law has a penalty). So if we break the law there is a penalty to be paid, and that, we know, is "the wages of sin is death." So we're not under that death penalty because we're not allowing sin to have dominion (not to *rule* us, not to control us), **but under grace.** So we're under the gift of God, which is mercy. We are under the mercy of God by the forgiveness of sin. Grace is the forgiveness of sin by our acceptance of the Passover sacrifice of Jesus Christ. And that's how we become "under grace" because we can be forgiven. And it is important to stay in a "state of repentance" because if we're in a "state of repentance" (genuine spiritual repentance before God) God is merciful and all forgiving and He will forgive us. So we are "under grace." We are not under the death penalty.

Verse 15 – What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law, we're not under the penalty which is death, **but grace? Certainly not!** So the principle here is that we wouldn't just go out and sin because we know we can be forgiven. That's not what it's about! We are to fight sin, we are to come out of Egypt, we're to come out of that bondage, and the way we do it is through grace, because we fight ourselves on a spiritual level. We fight our selfishness on a spiritual level.

Now there is a spiritual principle outlined in **verse 16 – Do you not know** (do you not understand), **that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey,** and this word "present" is "yield." So, "Do you not know (do you not understand) that to whom you yield yourselves slaves to obey," servants that obey, because that's what servants do, they obey. Slaves obey. So whatever it is, **you are that one's slave whom you obey,** so whatever it is that we're obeying and putting before God. If we're obeying our own natural carnal mind, or we're obeying our lusts of the flesh, or the pride of life, or any of those things, that's what we are slaves to. It's what we're obeying, what we're putting first. That's what we are slaves

to. We're *admitting* being a slave to it, that it has control (rule) over us **...whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?** So there *is* two choices here. We are either slaves to sin – and if we are, which is our own natural carnal mind, our selfishness – that will lead to death or we are servants or slaves of God, and by that we are obedient to God. And what will that lead to? Righteousness – God living and dwelling in us that makes us righteous.

This is about what we yield to (submit to), what we have chosen to serve (to be servants of), be servants to. We are slaves to our opinions because they come from the natural carnal mind. We are slaves to our attitudes and prejudices that we have because that's the bondage that we were held in, and when we are in the world, we are slaves to our opinions because we *are* the way we are because we think we're right. If we're in the world we think we're right. We have an opinion about something and we hold to that opinion and our attitudes, which are our moods – or another way to put it is the spirit that we choose – the way we view people, the way we have reflections of our inward man out to others. And a lot of people say, "Oh, it's a mood you have," and they can see it on our face. Well, that's just a reflection of an attitude, of something that's going on in our mind, in our thinking. So our attitudes come from within our thinking, and our attitudes are reflected by the way we treat others and what we say and what we do...and our prejudices. So that's what's holding *us* captive because we have these pre-determined ideas or these set ways of thinking. And of course, they're all based on.... we think we are "better" than others. That's what a prejudice is. And when we're prejudice about anything it's because we think we are right and we think we are better.

Well, these are all sin. If we sin, we have *not* served God. Now, when we are called out of this world, out of the bondage, out of the captivity, and when it's time to leave – because it's only "time to leave" spiritual Egypt, it's "time to leave" it when we are called (because we can't leave it before then - it's impossible) – because we can only leave by the power of God's holy spirit. That's the only way!

So it was the same for the Israelites. They can't leave unless God leads them out! And we're going through, now, this story where Moses is going to be called to serve God in the process of leading the children of Israel out. So he was there to support them, to *serve* Israel, to *serve* God. So *we* have to yield to God's spirit. We are servants of God, servants of righteousness once we are called and receive God's spirit. *Now* there is a process that we have to undertake. We now become "slaves of" or "servants of" God because of our obedience, and that obedience leads to righteousness.

So we are now servants of righteousness. Our choice is obedience or disobedience. Now, there is only two ways of life, really, when you look at it. There's only two ways. One is that of righteousness, which is having God's spirit and yielding to God's spirit, which creates obedience, the choice to obey. It's a choice that we have to do. We have to choose to obey or the choice to disobey, which is the using the natural carnal mind. That is about as simple as it gets; they're black and white.

Verse 17 – But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, so we were once *in Egypt*, we were held captive, we were slaves of Egypt, we were held in bondage (the natural carnal mind), so we were slaves of sin **...yet you obeyed from the heart (the inner thinking and intent) **that from the doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin** – so how were we "set free from sin"? Well, it requires a calling from God to remove us out of Egypt, and we are "set free from sin" by Passover and ongoing repentance – **you became slaves** (servant) **of righteousness**. So that's the process that we have undertaken.**

We *have* been set free from sin. There is a process there. So when we are "set free from sin" it's because we partake or have accepted Jesus Christ as our Passover sacrifice. So at that point we are actually "set free from sin," so all sin is taken from us – the time that we are baptized and accept Jesus Christ as our Passover. Then each Passover, of course, we know that we re-establish that commitment that we have to God. And of course, that is all about an ongoing repentance. So this ongoing repentance that can happen *every day* of our life – ten times a day if it is necessary – sets us free from the penalty of sin, which is death, because God forgives us. And when we do that, we are no longer now "serving sin." We are now serving God. We are then (and we have become) "servants of righteousness." We have been set free from Egypt. We have been set free from sin. We have been set free from the bondage and the captivity by which we were once held, which is sin in the mind, the selfishness that we have inherent in us because that's the way we were made.

So God has provided us a way to escape spiritual Egypt and it is always "time to be leaving Egypt." So every time that we desire to leave Egypt, it is time for us to repent because it is through repentance that we leave Egypt.

Back to **Exodus 1:14** – **And they** (the Egyptians) **made their lives bitter with hard bondage—in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field.** So now they're actually forcing them to make these bricks, to make the mortar, and to serve in the fields. So it's out in the fields, they're working hard, and it's a "hard day" for these Israelites. **All their service in which they made them serve was with rigor,** now, this "hardness" or this "cruelty."

We'll go to Exodus 2, pick up the story further... **Exodus 2:23** – **Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned,** "in pain and in grief," that word is. That word is, that "groaning" is, "in pain and in grief," **because of the bondage,** and that is "the labor of work that they were forced to do," **and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage.** Now, it wasn't that God wasn't aware and that God was not aware that they had been crying out in a particular way, but here it is that God has decided that it is now time for the children of Israel to be prepared to leave Egypt.

Now, if we look at this, brethren, that these things all happened on a physical level for our benefit because it is for us to learn from on a spiritual level. So all of this happens to them for the purpose of something that was going to take place in the future, which could start, really, from 31 AD, from Pentecost 31 AD when God would call people out from the bondage that *they* were in. And therefore, we have this potential to use this analogy today because we too have been called out of this very same process of sin, "out of Egypt."

So God had heard their cry well before this and He knew the situation, but now it's really a matter of the children of Israel now turning away from themselves and being dependant on themselves to rely on their Creator, to ask their Creator *for* an intervention. **So God heard their groanings, and God remembered His agreement** (His covenant) **with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.**

Verse 25 – **And God looked down on the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them.** So it was time to deliver the children of Israel from what they were slaves to. Now, that is on a physical level because they're being held captive. They're being held bondage.

Well, it's the same for us, brethren. Our calling is exactly the same. It is God that decides when to start the process of delivering us (or anybody) from our captivity, from our spiritual bondage, and that is all

done through a calling. So it is God that decides to call and it is God that decides to deliver us and acknowledge us, and draw us out of the bondage and the captivity of our thinking, what holds us captive in our minds, which is the natural carnal mind, which is one of selfishness, of pride and prejudice. That's exactly what we are before we are called and that's what we are being delivered from.

Turn to **Exodus 3:1** – **Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian** (and that is a child of Abraham). **And he led the flock to the back of the desert**, and this is in Arabia, **and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the angel** (messenger) **of the LORD appeared to him**. Now, this is a “type” of a physical manifestation. It isn't actually God being manifested, but it's a manifestation. And God, of course, can manifest different things, but it doesn't mean to say He's physically there in the sense of being spiritually there as a "being" there, but it's a manifestation of God, an aspect of God being manifested here, **in the flame of fire from the midst of the bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire but the bush was not consumed.**

Verse 3 – **Then Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn. So when the LORD saw that he** (Moses) **turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, Moses, Moses! And he said, Here I am. And then He** (God) **said, Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground**, holy, of course, because God's presence is there, because it's God's presence that makes something holy. It is God now calling Moses into a role of service. Now, Moses isn't aware really of what's actually taking place here and what he really faces. He's got his natural carnal mind, and of course he's out there looking after the flocks of his father-in-law and he has a background of around forty years of doing this, and previously had about forty years in Egypt where he grew up, and therefore, now he's at a particular age and he has a particular way of thinking and he's actually held captive to his way of thinking – the way he sees things – because he's only got his natural carnal mind.

Well, here we now have, is God actually intervening into his life to have Moses fulfill his role as a servant of God. If you'd like to hold your place there and go to 1 Peter 2:4. Now, we have this very same role of service. That's why we were called, brethren. Moses is being called here. God is revealing an aspect of Himself to Moses, so that Moses will fulfill a role for God – be a servant of God, which is "to support God" in the sense of God appointing him as a leader to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, but it was God that actually led them out of Egypt. But God in His loving mercy uses humans as roles of service to fulfill His will. Well, we have been called to a role of service. It's the very same role, which is "to support God's will and purpose."

1 Peter 2:4 – **Coming to Him** (to God) **as a living stone**. That's talking about us, brethren, us. We have been called out. We are "lively stones" or "living stones," **rejected indeed by men**. We've been rejected by this world, **but chosen by God and precious**. So this is the way God views us. He views us as *special*, as something *precious* to Him. So we've been chosen by God. Now, this alone, this, these words "chosen by God" should mean a lot to us, brethren. It's a very humbling thing. And it's like what happened to Moses. It's a very humbling thing that God decides to use us as servants. So we're off in the world doing our own thing, then God calls us and chooses us to be *His servants*! What an honour and what a privilege it is to be a servant of God. To have been called is for the purpose of service, to be a *servant*. So, "chosen by God and precious." That's how God views us. And this word "precious" is "to be prized, having *great value*." So we have great value in God's eyes. Now, we don't always "see" each other this way, members of the Body. We should! We should look at each other as baptized members of the Body of Christ. We should have this same view, which is God's view, the way God sees it, that each individual is precious, highly prized, having *great value*...having great value. Because we are family! But God sees it

as *great spiritual value*, as "precious, prized possession." Incredible thinking! Well, this is the thinking that we should have.

Verse 5 – you, then, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual House, a holy priesthood. So that's what's actually happening to us – we're being built up on a spiritual level. We've come from our natural carnal mind. Now God's mind lives and dwells in us, and God's thinking is being developed in us as we grow. We are "a holy priesthood"! So we're special and valuable! Why? **...to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.** So now that outlines why God considers us as precious, why we are prized, *why* we have been built up this way. Because? We are holy because God lives in us. Why? *...*"to offer up spiritual sacrifices." So we are to sacrifice ourselves because it is *God* that lives *in* us that does the works. The "good works" come from God.

So these "spiritual sacrifices" can vary in many ways. We are the servants of God when we sacrifice ourselves for Him. We are servants of God when we sacrifice ourselves *for Him*. Our sacrifices are that of prayer, the pulling down of our own pride, and the pulling down of our own desires, the sacrificing of ourselves, our will and our desires, those lusts that dwell in us! So this is how we become "children of God". This is how we become "chosen by God and special", and "a spiritual House" built up for the purpose of sacrificing. Because that's what our life is. We are to sacrifice ourselves. That's what it's all about, and by doing that we become "slaves" or "servants" of God.

Verse 6 – Therefore, it is also contained in the Scripture, Behold, I (God) lay in Zion (the Church) a chief cornerstone, elect (chosen), precious, and he who believes on Him, talking about Jesus Christ now, **will by no means be put to shame**, will not be "dishonored" or "confounded" or "confused." **Therefore, to you who believe**, and what do we believe, brethren? We believe the truth that God has placed in the Church. We believe Jesus Christ! **...He (Jesus Christ) is precious; but to those who are disobedient**, and that is "not willing to be servants," because when we're disobedient we're really saying that we are not willing to yield, we're not willing to be servants, of God. Because servants of God, what do they do? They obey. Servants obey. And if we don't obey, we are unfaithful servants; therefore, we become disobedient because to be disobedient is to be unfaithful.

Now it's referring to Christ, **He is precious; but to those who are obedient, The stone which the builders rejected has become the Chief Cornerstone, and a stone (referring to Christ) of stumbling and a rock of offense. They stumble, being disobedient to the word**, so they're disobedient to God. They don't believe God. They won't believe God... **to which they were also appointed.** So this is where they've been placed.

So we, brethren, we're in the world, and we were disobedient to the word. We didn't believe God and the reason is because we didn't have the calling that God drew us out of this world to believe Him. Because it's only by a calling that we can actually truly believe God on a spiritual level.

Verse 9 – But you are a chosen generation. This is incredible for us, brethren, to grasp this on a spiritual level. **But you**, you and me, brethren, **are a chosen generation**, we have been chosen by God just like Moses was, **a royal priesthood, a holy nation**, "holy" because God lives and dwells in us, **His (God's) own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him (of God) who called you out of the darkness**, out of this world, out of sin, **into His marvelous light**, into the truth, **who once were not a people but are now the people of God.** Now, this is amazing to understand! We are *God's* people. We have been called by God to serve God in the flesh now and, of course, to serve God in the future in Elohim. But we are now a people, brethren, we are the Church of God–PKG! We are *God's people*! We

are God's people, and therefore, we can walk boldly and confidently knowing this fact, that we *are* now a people because we are the people of God, and that's what we have been called to and that's what we are servants to – servants to God **...who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy**. And we've obtained that mercy because God has called us out of this world and because of His loving mercy and His approach to all things, which is love, we are now the people of God and we have obtained this mercy by a calling. Isn't that amazing? That we have obtained mercy. We have obtained the forgiveness of sin because of a calling out of sin that has happened to us.

Verse 11 – Beloved, I beg you also as sojourners and pilgrims, so we're just passing through...we are just passing through. We are just "sojourners." It's temporary. Our life is temporary. We're just on a journey and it's a journey of conversion **...abstain from fleshly lusts**, those desires, "lust of the flesh" that goes on in our minds, these desires that we have **which war against the life**, so we fight the fight in our minds. So we are to war. We are to battle on a spiritual level. It's not a physical thing, it's on a spiritual level, but we must be fighting. And that is a sign that we all must consider... *Are we fighting? Are we fighting?* Well, that's a sure sign of what is really going on in our life. Are we fighting those thoughts when they come in? Now, if we're not, there's problems in our life, brethren...problems in our life. Because we must be fighting! And when we're fighting we are abstaining, we're leaving behind these "fleshly" or "carnal desires" that actually do take place in our life. They *war* in our life! Well, we war against them.

...having your conduct honorable, which is "honest," **among the gentiles**, well, a "gentile" is someone who is a non-believer, **that when they speak against you as evildoers**, which what they do because they can't understand us and that's the only thing they can do, **they may, by your good works**, so these are the "deeds" that we do, the way we live our life **which they observe**, because of what we do, how we live our life, **glorify God in the day of visitation**. So they're not going to do it now but they're going to do it when? When will they do it? When *they* are called! At the point they are called they will then "see" our "good works" because they are God working in us. And they'll observe it because they will "see" the way we live, the way we speak, the way we treat them, the attitudes that we take on. That's what they'll see. But they won't see it now; they'll think it's weird. But when they are "visited," when they are called just like Moses was called, well, they're going to "see" it. They're going to go, "Ah, now I know what those people were doing," because they're going to become like *one of us*. They're going to become like one of us, called out of the world, called out to leave sin behind, called out of the bondage of the thinking of this world.

Back to **Exodus 3:6 – Moreover He (God) said, I am the God (which is Elohim) of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face for he was afraid to look upon God**. Well, today no one *fears* God. Nobody fears God. Only God's Church, God's true Church, *fears* God, because to fear God is to obey Him. So there is no fear of God in the land, and all of the religions of the world, they don't fear God at all because they haven't been called to it. You have to be called *to* fear God to be able to fear God, because we can only fear God through the power of God's holy spirit. It requires a calling. Just as what was happening to Moses, it's exactly the same thing for us. Because he was called to fear God. Now God was going to work with him as a servant to serve Him, to serve His will and purpose. Well, the same for us. We have been called to serve God, to serve God's will and purpose, and God's will and purpose at this time is different than at the time when God called Moses.

Verse 7 – 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. Well, same for us today,

brethren. God hears our prayers. God hears our cries because of the taskmasters, which are the world and this system and Satan and his demons, who *do* set out to oppress and to destroy, to enslave, to hold in bondage God's people. Now, we're held in bondage by sin. If we either serve sin or we either serve God. So we can be held captive, we could be slaves to sin – and we can, brethren, each time we do it, which proves we are a slave to sin – but it's through repentance that we can come out of sin, that we can be forgiven of sin...by repentance.

Verse 8 – So I (God) have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, to bring them up from the land to a good and large land, 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.

Well, today, brethren we can look at this on a spiritual level. God has called us to deliver us out of the hands of Satan – because we *are* slaves of sin, which is slaves of Satan and the demon world – because that's what it really is. If we are serving sin, we're serving Satan. Well, God has called us to "bring us up out of the land" to something better. So out of this world, we've been called "to a land flowing with milk and honey." Well, on a spiritual level the Church is a "type" of the promised land. And I use the word "type" because it is a place of "a land flowing with milk and honey," the milk of the word, God's word – food. Honey is the food, which is the truth. So God has called us for this.

The physical promised land was in the land of Israel, which is where we know Jerusalem is today. *Our* promised land is the Church and the Millennium. That's looking at it on a physical level. The "spiritual promised land" *is* the Kingdom of God to dwell in Zion. So we can look at this in two different ways. There is a promised land now, a place of protection for us, which is in the Church, because this is where we are protected on a spiritual level. And, of course, we have to choose to *stay* in the Church. We have to choose to stay *in* "the promised land," in the protection of God by staying in the Church. And of course, going into the Millennium where Satan and the demons are removed, there is a physical promised land. Of course, people will be given the opportunity to be part of the Church, which is a spiritual organism (because it requires God's spirit to be *in* God's Church). Now, the spiritual promises are, of course, the "spiritual promised land," which is to be changed to spirit, to enter the Kingdom of God on a spiritual level, to dwell *in* "spiritual Zion.

To be called is to be delivered from Egypt. So when we are called we are being delivered from Egypt, we're being delivered out of the bondage. The Church today is where we can consume the "milk" of God's word, the truth.

Hold your place there and we'll turn to **1 Peter 1:22 – Since you have purified**, or that word really is "are purifying" **your lives** – how? – **in obeying the truth through the spirit in sincere** (genuine) **love**, which is "Philadelphian" love **of the brethren, love** (agape) **one another fervently with a pure heart**. So there are these different types of love, of course, we understand two of these, there's just a third, but this one here is talking about we are to "obey the truth through the spirit." So it requires God's spirit, and we're to do it in a "sincere" (genuine) way, and one of these things is to "love (Philadelphia) the brethren." We're to love the brethren. We're to sacrifice ourselves *for* the brethren and "love" (this is agape), which requires God's holy spirit. "...we're to love one another fervently with a pure heart." It has to be done sincerely, has to be genuine, has to be no ill will towards another member of the Body **...having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever**. So this is God's thinking in us, the Word of God, which is God's mind living and dwelling in us.

Verse 24 – because, all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass; it's only temporary. The grass withers and its flower fades away...

Verse 25 – But the word of the LORD endures forever. So God's spirit endures forever. God's spirit lives forever because God is eternal. So God spirit, which cannot die because it comes from God, it endures forever. Well, we have this potential, brethren. God's Word, God's thinking through the power of God's spirit, can endure in us or live in us forever. **Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.**

1 Peter 2:1 – Therefore, because of this, because we understand the word, because of our calling and we know our life is temporary, because we have God's spirit, we should now do something different. It says "therefore," because of this, **laying aside all malice,** lay aside all ill will, ill will to anybody, **all deceit,** all this deception, trickery, and the way the natural carnal mind manipulates things. We're to lay all that aside, put it away from us **...all hypocrisy,** so anything that is hypocrisy, of course, is being insincere, when we act insincerely towards somebody. So we might reflect one thing to somebody but deep down we're being hypocrites because it's not what we really think **...envy,** which is jealousy of others, which can raise itself up in our thinking because we think that they have achieved something that they don't deserve, so we become envious of it. We don't see God in the picture. We become jealous of others **... and all evil speaking,** so all pulling down of others. We're to lay these things aside **...as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.** So spiritual growth can only come by the power of God's holy spirit, the "milk of the word," the truth. So we should desire this. We should desire to grow spiritually.

Verse 3 – If indeed you have tasted, lived or experienced, **that the Lord is gracious,** that God is merciful and forgiving. Well, we have experienced it, brethren! We were called, we have received God's spirit, and therefore, we have *experienced*, we have *lived* that God *is* gracious, God is merciful and forgiving. Because *every* time we sin we can go to God on our knees (or standing up - it doesn't really matter). We can go to God in spirit and truth and ask God to forgive us, forgive us our sins. Because we have no ill will to anybody else, and therefore, we are forgiving, God will be forgiving towards us.

Exodus 3:9 – Now, therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come up to Me (to God), and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. God sees our oppression by the things that we do, because we are dealing with those that are not called at this point in time to serve God. They serve themselves just as we did before we were called to serve God. We were exactly the same. We're no different, and that's why we can never look out and judge or condemn anybody – because we were exactly like them and it's only by the grace of God go we, because of God's mercy, because of God calling us. And therefore, we're no different. We are no different than them. It's just by God's great mercy that we *are* different on a spiritual level, that we are different *now* because – nothing that we did – it was something that God did for us.

God has established a time for everyone to leave Egypt. They cannot leave without a calling. By nature we oppress others by our selfishness. Now, this is something that we come to see in time. It's by our nature, this natural carnal mind, by nature we oppress others, and we do that because of our selfishness, because we're selfish. So all our ways, before we are called, are that of selfishness, and we are in actual fact destroying ourselves, but we can't see it. But we oppress others because of our selfishness, the way *we* want it, the way *we* see it. We often don't see that we oppress others. That is what our calling is about. We've been called out *not* to oppress others. We've been called out to *set others free* from *our* prejudices, from the way of *our* selfishness.

Now, this is a spiritual principle that we can learn in time, that we understand that our selfishness is something that oppresses. Now, we've been called *out* of this world. We've been taken *out* of Egypt (out of sin) because we *do* oppress others. That's what we do by nature. Now, that's what our calling is really about. It is about coming out of this oppressing of others. Because *we* actually hold others – just like in Egypt – we hold them as slaves. We do, because of our selfishness. We hold them in bondage and captivity in our thinking. Well, we've been called out of that to set others *free*, to set others free from our prejudices. We are called to set others free from *our* ways of selfishness. Selfishness is oppressive to others. We have been called to set others free from the bondage of *our* thinking. That's what our calling is also about.

Verse 10 – Come now, therefore, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt. Now, we are God's people today, we are the spiritual Israel of God. *He* brings us out of Egypt, out of bondage, out of sin, by a calling. Leaving Egypt, on a spiritual level, takes a lifetime because it's a "process of leaving." Christ came as a servant to make the way possible for us to leave Egypt. And as we go into the season of Unleavened Bread, we see this; it's about coming out of Egypt, and that's what "coming out of sin," "coming out of the bondage" that we are held with, which of course, is "coming out of pride" as well.

Verse 11 – But Moses said to God, now, here it is, "But Moses," of course the word "but" means a lot in scripture...which means there's an excuse or a justification normally coming up. Now, here is Moses giving God the reasons why he doesn't want to leave his own captivity (but he doesn't see it that way, of course, he doesn't know it), but he's really just making excuse for his own selfishness. He wants to *stay in his selfishness* but he doesn't know it (he can't think that way), but he's fearful because he doesn't want to expose his own self, which is exposing his pride to others. **Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh.** Well, of course, in the back of his thinking he's probably thinking, well, he had killed somebody in Egypt and more than likely people will recognize him, and therefore, this is not a good idea to be going back there... **and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?** So he doesn't really want to do this job. He doesn't want to go back to Egypt to do a role and he's making excuses in his mind and what he's really thinking about, we don't really know, but the natural carnal mind, of course, when it doesn't want to deal with something, generally there is an element of pride involved.

Verse 12 – So He said, I will certainly be with you. So God is saying, "Well, I will be with you so there is nothing to fear." "There is nothing to fear because I will be with you." Now, that, if we understand it on a spiritual level, would be so encouraging, but to the natural carnal mind, well, "That's okay to say, 'You're going to be with me...'" but the natural carnal mind can't grasp what that really means. And what that really is, is that God will do the works. "I will certainly be with you," is that God is saying, "Well, I am going to do *everything*. I am going to do everything; there is nothing to fear. You can't fail because I'm going to do it all." But the natural carnal mind won't see it that way. **And this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the children of Israel out of Egypt,** so this is *after* the event, after you've actually done it, **you shall serve God on this mountain,** on this very place where we are.

To Moses' thinking, "Well, that's *after* the fact! What's the sign beforehand, not what's the sign *after*." Well, this is a sign for Moses, because once it's been achieved, once God has achieved it, in Moses' thinking he will *know* that God did it all because here he is serving God on the very same mountain where God is now communicating to him.

Now, we understand that "mountains" are symbolic of government. We are to serve God in "*this mountain*," this government, the Church of God. This is where we do it. Because you can't go and do it in another "mountain" or in another government or another location. We are to serve God on *this* "mountain," or in this "mountain," *in* this Church, the Church of God where the truth is. And that's what God is saying here to Moses: "Well, here is the sign that I have done it all, and you will know it all because I'll have achieved it all when you are back here serving Me."

Now, Moses tables the reasons he cannot do the role of being a servant as God has asked him to. Because that's what God's asking him to do. God is asking him to serve Him, to do what God's will and purpose is, and Moses is going to now come up with all the excuses of why he can't do it.

Exodus 4:10 – Then Moses said to the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, and this is because of the way that he spoke, **neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant.** So he's saying, "Well, I wasn't eloquent before, I couldn't speak well before and now, since you've spoken to me, nothing's changed, I'm still the same, my speech is not the way that is seen as being eloquent," **but I am slow,** and that is "heavy or dull" **of speech and slow of tongue,** slow in language. He made excuses because deep down he did not want to do the role, the role of a servant. Although he says, "I am a servant," here, he says, "You have spoken to *Your servant*," so Moses is now saying, "Well, I *am* Your servant," but deep down he's not because he's not wanting to serve, to do what his "Master" is asking him. Because what does a servant do? They do what is asked of them. Based on human nature it is because of his pride, why he doesn't want to do it. He doesn't want to be exposed, to see what he is really like, so he's making this excuse about the way that he speaks.

We don't want to expose ourselves to others so that they may think that we are weak or "less than" them.

Verse 11 – So the LORD said to him, Who has made man's mouth? Who has made language? Who has that power? Who has given you all that you actually have? It's not really you; it's *God* that creates these things! **Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the LORD?** Now, God is just reminding Moses here that God is in charge of the way we are, because we are a genetic follow-up, because we come from our parents, but God created the genetics so we are the way we are because of genetics, but God allowed it that way for a purpose...for a purpose. And God will use us according to His will, and generally you will find that God uses the weak. And Moses here is admitting that he's weak because he can't speak, but God is going to use Moses because that's the greatest attribute that God can use, when we are weak, when we *have* physical problems and we're not "high and mighty" in our own thinking, when we are "less than," God can use it because we won't take it to ourselves. So now if God uses Moses, the glory is going to be given to where it belongs, to God, and it won't be given to Moses.

So God is now reminding him, "Have not I, the LORD?" He's made all these things. **Now, therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say.** So God is saying here, "I will do the works in and through you," but it is God doing the works in and through Moses.

It can be the same with our calling. We can turn around and say, "It's all too hard." So God can call us out of the world and we start to leave Egypt, and when that time comes we can turn around at the beginning of it saying, "It's all too hard." Because of our genetic disposition of what we are, and our human reasoning, and our human thinking, we can say, "It's all too hard. I cannot do it." But it's actually

God that does it. It's God that does it! It's a matter of us turning around and trusting in God because He will be with us if we choose to allow Him to dwell in us. It is God that does the spiritual works in us and it was God that was going to do the works *in* Moses. We have our part by yielding to God's spirit. Well, Moses had his part by yielding, by desiring to be a servant, by saying, "Yes, Lord," by being obedient, by being faithful. Same applies to us. We have to be yielding to God's spirit. We have to be faithful servants.

Verse 13 – But he said, O my Lord, please send by the hand of whomever *else* You may send. In other words, "Get somebody else to do it." "Work with somebody else, but don't use me." So he's actually fighting a calling from God, but God had a purpose for Moses to achieve something, which was to deliver the children of Israel out of Egypt.

Well, God has a purpose for us, brethren, and that is to deliver *us* out of the bondage and captivity by what we're held by, which is, of course, the bondage of this world's thinking, the natural carnal mind. We should never turn to God and say, "Work with somebody else," no matter how difficult our life gets. No matter how complicated our life gets, we should never give up on God, because it is God's work *in* us that will be achieved if we will and desire it.

Verse 14 – So the anger, and that word really is "displeased" or "to be displeased." **The anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses ...** Why? Because Moses was limiting God. Because God had said that He would do the works, He created mankind, He created things, and God is all powerful and God could achieve it in and through Moses no matter what Moses thought. Whether he thought he was strong or he was weak, it didn't really matter. God was going to do it. But Moses was now just simply saying, "I don't want to do it. I can't do it." Well, it wasn't *him* doing it, because by his actions he was actually saying to God, "I limit you, God." So God now has become displeased with Moses' attitude, **and He said** (God said): **Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart.** If after a calling and the start of a relationship with God we decide to no longer yield or to serve God, God will establish someone else to work *in* and *through*. So we shouldn't limit God because God can work in and through *anybody* He chooses to work through. His will, will be achieved.

Now, we should take it as a great honor and a privilege to have been called. It's a very humbling thing when we consider it. Because God could have called anybody, because God's will, will be achieved. God will work in and through whoever *He* decides to. God will achieve His will in creating Elohim. *Nothing* can or will stop it. So we should take that on board, and that's why we should always be willing and desiring to *yield* to God – always willing to be a "servant" or a "slave" of God, because God can work with anybody. It's just a great blessing and a privilege that God called us out of this world at this time to leave behind the natural carnal mind's way of thinking, the way of reasoning, to take on the very mind of God. It is a great honor and a privilege to be called and to be part of the Body of Christ at this time.

Verse 15 – Now you shall speak to him (Aaron) and put words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do. So he shall be your spokesman to the people. And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God. So it was going to be that God would influence Moses about what to say. He would communicate to him what he was to say and Moses was then to speak to Aaron and Aaron was going to be the person that spoke on behalf of Moses, which was really speaking on behalf of God. But God was going to work with Moses and use

Moses no matter what Moses put up as an excuse, and God was now going to provide a mouthpiece or a spokesman on behalf of Moses to the people.

Verse 17 – And you shall take this rod, which is symbolic of power and authority, in your hand, with which you shall do the signs. Leaving Egypt is difficult and we will run into many tests and trials, but in all these tests and trials God is *with* us and God is *for* us.

Now, this is the point that Moses had lost, but that God was going to work with Moses and then with Aaron, for the purpose of delivering Israel, but God was going to do it *in* them and *through* them. Well, God is going to deliver us because He is going to stay with us and He is for us and He is with us, and it is *Him* that delivers us out of Egypt.

Exodus 5:1 – Afterward, Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, Thus says the LORD God of Israel: Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness. Now, this is like our calling, brethren. We are to "leave Egypt" and start to keep the seventh-day Sabbath and the Holy Days. So that's why we are being released out of Egypt, is to worship God, which the first one of course, is the seventh-day Sabbath, which is a day of worship. And then we have the Holy Days. But Satan will work at stopping us by placing stumbling blocks or resisting us leaving or our leaving his control over us. Because he has control over us because of our natural carnal mind. Well, he's going to fight against God in drawing us out of the captivity and the control he has over us. Only God can achieve our exodus from sin by His great power.

Verse 2 – And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, nor will I let Israel go. Now, that's exactly what will happen, because Satan will fight against us leaving Egypt. He will put up the stumbling blocks because it is something that takes place in the mind. But what actually happens is that we begin to change our behavior. We begin to "exodus sin." That's the first thing that happens. We begin to "exodus sin" so we change.

Verse 3 – So they said, The God of the Hebrews, and the word "Hebrews" is a word that translated is, "One from beyond," has met with us. Please, let us go three days journey into the desert and sacrifice to the LORD our God, lest He (God) fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword. So they are saying, "Well, if you don't let us go there is going to be a punishment that comes, so let us go and let us take the children of Israel lest God afflict us!"

Verse 4 – Then the king of Egypt said to them, Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people from their work? Because they were out there building storehouses and making brick and things like that, and working, and all it is, is they're seeing that Moses and Aaron are trying to stop the people from working as slaves for Egypt. **Get back to your labour.**

Verse 5 – And Pharaoh said, Look, the people of the land are many now, and you make them rest from their labour! So the same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their officers, saying, You shall no longer give the people straw to make brick as before. Let them go, gather straw for themselves. Now it is that the slave masters, the taskmasters, the slave drivers (we would call them) are saying, "Well, we're not going to give the people any more straw as before, but they're going to have to find it for themselves. They're going to have to gather it themselves." So we can see from that, that there must have been a location where the straw was gathered and taken to a central place where the Israelites were able to gather the straw and it was provided to them so then they could just simply go

and make the bricks. Well, now they're being told that the straw is not going to be gathered for them anymore. They're going to have to go out and actually get the straw themselves.

Well, this is similar to us, brethren. Once called, things get much harder for us in our life. We could have been provided employment, for example. Now that could be taken away. Family support may be removed. So it's all going to get much more difficult. We're going to have to start to do things and stand by ourselves. So we have to gather the straw ourselves which means we have to stand ourselves and make decisions and do things that will affect others, and they will see it as being difficult, that we're being uncooperative often, or that we're being strange. Well, this is hard work.

Well, gathering straw was hard work as well. Well, this is hard work for us, brethren, because we have to make decisions as servants of God and not servants of Satan. Pharaoh is turning around and saying, "Well, we're going to make it as difficult as possible for you! You go and gather your own straw!" As we start to withdraw from Satan's system and prepare to leave we will face great resistance.

Verse 8 – Pharaoh continues... **And you shall lay on them a quota of bricks which they made before.** So it's exactly the same quantity as they had before, because they had a quota to meet, but now they had to spend more time and go and get the straw themselves. **You shall not reduce it.** So the same number of bricks, but no straw provided.

Now, this is about time management. Whereas before if you had a quota of bricks you'd be able to produce so many an hour because you didn't have to go off and wander off and find the straw. It was provided. Well, now you had to go and wander and find the straw but make the same number of bricks. So if you're working as a slave or as a servant there for eight hours or ten hours, well, now it might take twelve or fourteen or sixteen hours to do it because you had to do both roles.

Continuing on in **verse 8...** **For they are idle; therefore, they cry out saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God.** So the way that Pharaoh saw it was, "Well, they're just being lazy! They're idle! They've nothing to do, they've got time to think, and now they want to wander off because they're bored and they want to go off and sacrifice to their God."

Verse 9 – **Let more work be laid on the men, that they may labour in it, and let them not regard false words.** So they're virtually accusing Moses of stirring up the people with these promises that aren't going to happen.

Verse 10 – **And the taskmasters of the people and their officers went out and spoke to the people, saying, Thus says Pharaoh: I will not give you straw. Go, get yourselves straw where you can find it; yet none of your work will be reduced.** Now, we on a spiritual level – once called – Satan's system will generally not support us. It requires God's intervention to enable us to leave.

I remember one particular time where I needed God's intervention into a situation in my life where I actually had a tax bill and I had to go to the tax office and declare what my income was. Well, the tax department didn't recognize tithing as a deduction from my income and they had said that I needed to pay a certain amount of money from my income to pay back the tax bill that I had, and therefore, I went to the tax department with my wife and I stood there at the desk and I submitted my listing of income and expenses, and under expenses I had registered (or listed) 1st Tithe, 2nd Tithe, and 3rd Tithe as an expense. Well, the tax department didn't recognize 1st and 2nd and 3rd Tithe as an expense (we were in 3rd

Tithe year that year). So when I stood in front of the person to go through my listing of my income and expenses he got down to the 1st Tithe and he said, "What's that?" And I explained to him that 1st Tithe, because of my beliefs, was God's money, and therefore, it was an expense to me against my income because I had to pay it. And at that point we were paying on gross, if I remember rightly. We then had this discussion about his non-recognition of 1st Tithe, and in the end I made a statement, as being as bold and confident and possibly as arrogant as I was at that particular time, that it didn't matter what he said, because he might not recognize 1st Tithe as belonging to God, but I did, and therefore, no matter what he said it wasn't going to make any difference to my bottom line about what was left over.

And then he went down to the 2nd Tithe and I said, "Well, that was 2nd Tithe. It was money that I needed to save to attend God's Feasts, to worship God," and he said, well, he didn't recognize that. And I said, well, didn't matter what he thought. God recognized it and I recognized it, and therefore, it wouldn't make any difference to the bottom line because I was going to take it out no matter what he said.

And then we got down to 3rd Tithe. Well, by this time he was quite frustrated, and I said to him, "Well, 3rd Tithe was money that was put aside to support and help God's people that were in need." And of course he said, well, he didn't recognize it, and I said, "Well, doesn't matter what you think, it's what God says, and therefore, I recognize it, and therefore, it won't make any difference to the bottom line, and therefore, there is only so much to be able to repay this debt."

So he went off and got his superior, or his manager, and he came back in and we went through the same thing all over again. And at the end of it I could see them. They'd walk off and they'd talk a bit, and then they'd come back. Well, in the end, they actually recognized the fact that I could not fund the amount of money that *they* wanted me to repay back, and they recognized that my bottom line was what they would recognize, and therefore, I had to pay so much a month back to the tax department as a way of refunding the money that I owed them. So although they said they didn't recognize it, they allowed it at that time – which is, of course, I believe God intervening to help me during that time. It was a difficult time. I was oppressed. We were oppressed because we were obeying God as servants of God in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Tithe at that time, and God supported us by allowing it, that the understanding was given that they would *not* hold me to those things and they recognized the bottom line that I submitted, not the one that they had submitted, which was the removal of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Tithe.

Another form of oppression comes with employment because I wouldn't work on Friday night and Saturday. Well, God had blessed me greatly in many of my roles where I had people that recognized that I was different and they recognized that I would stick to keeping a Friday night and Sabbath observance – all day Saturday – that I wouldn't work on those times. And there was one particular man in the company that I worked for that went out quite aggressively and defended me in many times. Often in a meeting he would stand up – because we were having meetings on Friday afternoons and it was getting later, and he didn't understand the time difference, that it was from sunset to sunset. He knew that I left work in the winter months earlier than I did in the summer, but he always thought it was around 4:30 or 5:00 here in Australia that it was time for me to go. So, we'd be in the middle of a meeting and I'd be conscious that we were drawing to the time that I would have to exit the meeting (and the meetings could be quite intense). Well, it got to the point when I'd done that a few times. I would just simply say at the beginning that, "Look, I need to leave at 4:30 because I have to leave work at 4:30." I wouldn't have to explain it in great detail, I would just say that. And Chris (that was his name), he knew that I was actually going to be leaving. Well, as time went on within this company I would never ever have to actually raise it, because in the middle of a meeting Chris would actually stand up, or in the middle of the meeting to say, "Excuse me, everybody. Excuse me, Wayne, I think you're about to leave now?" In

other words, he would actually *prompt* it. And of course, in the summer where the sun doesn't go down until about 8:40, 8:30, or something like that, he would get up at 4:30 or quarter-to-5 and he would say, "Oh, excuse me, everybody, I think Wayne is about to leave." Often I didn't even have to leave at that time because the Sabbath was still three hours away, and he would actually *prompt* me to be able to leave. So he remembered that I was a Sabbath-keeper and he reminded everybody by his actions.

Well, I appreciated that greatly, and I know God provided that. But in that it also created another level of oppression, because there were one or two (and particularly one person), that despised me and despised the fact that I was able to leave at 4:30 or 5:00 from a meeting where he was held – and often they were held there until 8 or 9:00 at night! And it was very difficult. So he despised me and despised the beliefs that I had, and he actually fought aggressively against me in that time. So there was an oppression because I was "leaving Egypt," I was leaving sin behind by obeying God and submitting to God. Well, of course, Satan stirred up troubles to oppress me or make life difficult. And it did get very difficult, and maybe in another time I'll reveal how difficult it *really* got for me on a personal level within that organization because *one* person was against my belief system – really was against me – and despised the fact that I got away with not having to work Friday night and Saturday when the company had had a policy that *everybody* had to be available Friday night and Saturday...but this loner, Wayne, didn't. And of course, that caused great problems. Now, I was shown favor by group general managers and by the hierarchy of the company, and it was very hard for people to understand how that could be, and therefore, that caused issues.

Verse 12 – So the people were scattered abroad throughout the land of Egypt to gather stubble instead of straw. So there wasn't this provision being provided for them; now life is going to get difficult. **And the taskmasters forced them to hurry,** so, "Get along with it! You've still got to make the same number of bricks, so you're going to have to hurry along getting it," **saying, Fulfill your work, your daily quota, as when there was straw.** Oppression on God's people comes because of our obedience. Now, that is a guarantee. The moment we turn to start to obey God, oppression will come, things are going to get difficult for us, brethren. It's just the way of life because we're going against a system that has been established, which has been established about disobeying God. Now we're moving to obedience.

Now, today, brethren, it is all about the spirit of a matter. We are required to obey our physical masters, the government of man, *unless... unless* they encourage or request us to sin, transgress *God's* law. So we are to obey man's laws to the point where it doesn't transgress God's law. But the moment it transgresses God's law in spirit or in truth, we are to obey God's law and disobey *man's* laws. Now, examples of that would be going to war. We would not go to war to fight to kill because that would be going against God's law. Voting, where we would choose or select somebody or select a style of government – well, that's going against God's because we are part of *God's* government. We are subject to *God's* way of life in spirit and truth; therefore, we wouldn't go and vote and vote for man's way of governing. Now, if there's a penalty to be paid, we pay it...we pay it. We suffer because that's what we've been called to.

It is good that we remember who it is we are servants of. **Exodus 6:1 – When the LORD said to Moses, Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh. For with a strong hand he will let you go, and with a strong hand he will drive them out of his land.**

Verse 2 – And God spoke to Moses and said to him: I *am* the LORD. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, as Almighty God (El Shaddai), but My name LORD (Yahweh, Yahweh the Eternal, Self-Existing One) I was not known to them. So here we have that God had not revealed to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that He was Yahweh Elohim. He only revealed Himself as God Almighty. *Now* God is revealing to Moses a *new* name that explains *more* of what God is and *who* God is, the Eternal, the Self-Existing One.

Now we see the promise that we also have. Now is the time to leave sin, for us.

Verse 4 – I have also established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan and the land of their pilgrimage, in which they were strangers. And I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel – it's the same as we've been called out today and He hears us – whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, I have remembered My covenant (My agreement). Now, we have a covenant (agreement) too, because God *did* promise to Abraham that He would benefit his generations – in other words, people that came from Abraham. And that has been fulfilled in the fact of our calling is a witness to the very promise of Abraham.

Verse 6 – Therefore, now this is the promise to us. Verse 6 – Therefore, say to the children of Israel, and we can say the Church of God today, us, brethren, I *am* the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you – and how are we rescued? By a calling – from their bondage (and our bondage is sin), **I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.** And here it was referring to the ten plagues.

"To redeem us" is to purchase us by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, our Passover. So if we were to look at that, brethren, on a spiritual level, God says He will "bring us out from the burdens of the Egyptians," and that is from the bondage of our thinking, the bondage of this world, the captivity with what we're held by, our views, our opinions, our thinking. God is going to bring us out of it and that's what our calling is about. "I will rescue you" – we have been rescued. We are in the process of being rescued "out of the bondage," out of the bondage of Egypt, out of the bondage we are in ... "from their bondage." And what's the bondage we are in? Sin. We are "slaves to sin." We are "servants to sin" until we are called out from it to now serve God and not serve sin. "I will redeem you with an outstretched arm" – well, we've been redeemed. We have been purchased. We have been purchased! Isn't that incredible, that God did all that for us!

Verse 7 – I will take you as My people, which is what has happened to us on a spiritual level, I will be your God. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burden of the Egyptians.

It was God that delivered us *from our slavery*, from our captivity, from the bondage of *our thinking*. It was God that did it! "The burdens of the Egyptians" is the thinking of the natural carnal mind – selfishness! So God says, "I will make you My people. I will take you to be that." Well, that's what's happened to us. We've been called. We are God's people! And God says here that He promises to "bring us out from the bondage (the burdens) of the Egyptians." Well, that's exactly what's been happening to us, brethren, and it's called "conversion." We are being taken out from the way we think to a new way of thinking, which is the Word of God (the mind of God) *in* us, dwelling in us.

Verse 8 – And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I *am* the LORD. Now, these are both physical and spiritual promises.

Today we are "heirs of the promise," of the promised land, the spiritual promised land, which is to enter Elohim. So we've been brought out of a land (which is a land of captivity), and we're going to be brought into a promised land, one which is freedom (*true* freedom), one of peace and one of unity, which is in the Kingdom of God where all that exists, which is having the mind of God, thinking like God.

Verse 9 – So Moses spoke to the children of Israel; but they did not heed Moses, because of anguish of spirit, so they were impatient with God, **and of the cruel bondage.** So they didn't believe Moses because they were hard oppressed. They were in such bondage and captivity they didn't want to think about it.

Well, there's a warning there for us, brethren. Is it possible that we will not heed what God teaches us because we are distracted by the physical things of life? Now, that's what happened to the Israelites. The children of Israel, they were distracted. They didn't want to heed Moses or listen because they were "anguish of spirit," they were oppressed, they were in "cruel bondage," and they were focused on the physical. All you would do going to bed at night would be to think about, "Well, I've got to make so many bricks and there's no straw! I've got to walk further now to go and get the stubble, because there is no straw left. I've got to go and pull up the stubble. I've got to drag it, do it, and this is going to take me much longer." And all you'd be worried about, "Oh, how am I going to make that quota tomorrow?!" So they're so focused on the physical and they were focused on the hardship of the bondage of their life that they couldn't think of anything else. So they didn't want to heed Moses because there was too much pressure in life.

Well, we have to be also careful about this, that we're not so distracted about the physical things of life.

We can be impatient with God because things are not happening quickly enough for us. Because we can think, "Well, things are dragging on! They're not happening the way I thought it," and therefore, we can become impatient with God. And by becoming impatient with God we focus on the physical things of life once again.

I think we'll stop Part 1 there and we'll pick up Part 2 next time... and we'll pick up Part 2 and pick up where the plagues begin in Exodus 9:1.□