

Welcome to this Feast of Unleavened Bread, brethren. I do hope that you had a meaningful Passover.

Today's sermon will be titled *Time to Leave* and this will be *Part 3*.

In *Part 1* we looked at the calling of Moses and how the Egyptians held the Israelites in physical bondage. God has promised to deliver the children of Israel into the promised land, "a land flowing of milk and honey." We also looked at how the Church is a "type" of the promised land because it is "a place flowing with milk and honey" on a spiritual level, the "milk" being the word of God. We are fed spiritual food while we are *in* the Church, the Church of God, and we also know the Kingdom of God *is* the actual spiritual promised land. So although the Israelites were captive at this time by the Egyptians, we looked at how God was going to use Moses as a vehicle, as a servant, to do the work of God, which was to deliver the Israelites from the Egyptians, from this bondage that they held in a physical level.

We looked at the fact that there was a spiritual analogy here about being called to be delivered out of bondage. Our calling is a spiritual one, as Moses' was. He had a physical role, which was to deliver Israel from physical bondage. Well, we're called, brethren, and placed into the Body of Christ, into the care of Jesus Christ in the Church of God for a spiritual purpose, and that is to be delivered from this spiritual bondage by which we are held, the bondage of our own natural carnal thinking. We are placed in this "land of milk and honey," type of which, of course, is the Church, and we understand that we are being delivered, and it takes a time. It takes a process of time to be delivered from this spiritual bondage and captivity that we are held in. And it's the captivity of our thinking, our prejudices, our carnal, natural thinking that we are to be delivered from that. And the only way that we can be delivered from that is to be under the care of our High Priest, Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church who will deliver us by providing the word of God, which is the "milk" of the word, to deliver us, to wash us clean. And as we consume it and take it on board within our thinking, we become transformed.

In *Part 2* we looked at Exodus 9:1 if you'd like to turn there. And this is all leading up to the Days of Unleavened Bread, which is about being delivered from sin, and now the process of coming out of sin, which is a lifetime. And over these seven days of Unleavened Bread we partake of the *unleavened* bread, which is the unleavened bread of life. So physically, yes, we eat a small piece of unleavened bread which symbolically points to this desire to be unleavened, and we can do that by living a way of life that is unleavened, without sin. And we understand, also, that it requires God's spirit to lead and guide and direct us in that particular process.

**Exodus 9:1 – Then the LORD said to Moses, Go in to Pharaoh and tell him, Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: Let My people go, that they may serve Me.** So the point was that it was about God delivering His people from this captivity, "Let *My* people go," and the reason was that, "they may serve Me." And it is about serving God, worshipping God. This is what our calling is all about. Once called, it's time to leave sin and serve God in spirit and truth.

Then we reviewed Exodus 12 and the Passover of the fourteenth of Abib. We looked at what the Israelites were required to do and what spiritual Israel today *should do*.

**Exodus 12:13 – Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.** Now, the blood of the New Testament Passover is a "sign" of a spiritual relationship we have with God and Christ, and we understand that the blood is symbolic in the sense of we take wine, which is symbolic of the blood, the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Now, we take that as a sign of a spiritual relationship that we have with God and with Christ. We understand that, "the wages of sin is death." Death will not strike us on a spiritual level as long as we accept the shed blood of Christ into our life by partaking of the Passover in spirit and truth. And we looked at this point of "spirit and truth" and we looked about being unworthy or taking it in an unworthy manner, which requires us to have the spirit of humility.

So we partook of the Passover in spirit - which is having the right attitude, having it in a worthy manner; we had a spirit of no ill will; we have a spirit of humility, a desire to serve – and in truth. Now, we kept it in truth because we kept the correct day, which was the fourteenth of Abib. And it's an annual Passover, so we did it in truth, the way God outlined it to be done, which was done through Jesus Christ, which was taking of, firstly, we washed one another's feet as a sign of our humility. We did that in spirit but we did it in truth. We also partook of the bread, which was a sign of the unleavened way of life, that Jesus Christ *was* the true bread of life, which was part of taking it in truth. And we also partook of the wine which symbolized the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

So Jesus Christ gave a new way to keep the Passover; therefore, on that night, on the night of the fourteenth, we partook of the Passover of God, which was the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and we partook of that Passover service in spirit (because of our attitude) and in truth (because we did it the way God has instructed us to do it).

We looked at *who* should take the Passover in Exodus 12:43; just drop down to that. **Exodus 12:43 – And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the Passover: No foreigner shall eat it.** We looked at the spiritual principle, which is, only a baptized member of the Body of Christ can take the annual New Testament Passover, as it is a spiritual matter. Because it's about a spiritual relationship with God, so it's spiritual in nature.

Then we covered the Days of Unleavened Bread. Exodus 12. Back to **Exodus 12:15 – Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread.** These seven days that we have now entered, we are going to partake of a small piece of unleavened bread each day, and that points to something. It points to our desire to be unleavened, to be without sin. **On/before the First Day you shall have removed leaven from your homes.** We have already removed that leaven that symbolizes sin. So we've removed this leaven from our homes for this period of time and we will strive to be on guard, not to partake of any leaven during this seven days. We know that this also points to the fact of that we have removed sin from within our thinking. So this physical process of de-leavening was really spiritual in nature because it points to the fact that we desire to be without sin. So we've strived to examine ourselves, to look and see where sin is in our life, and when we have found it, we have committed before God that we're going to strive to overcome that sin. Now, we can't remove *all* sin from our life – it's impossible – because by nature we have a sinful, selfish desires that exist within us; therefore, we will sin. But during these days it's about highlighting the fact that we desire to *be* unleavened. We desire not to have sin within our *thinking* that will be manifested in words or actions. So it is about the thinking of the mind.

Continuing on... **For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.** This points to the fact that we are going to strive not to be cut off

from the flow of God's holy spirit. We understand that leaven is symbolic of sin. Sin is what cuts us off from God. Sin will cut us off from God's people in the sense we cannot have a *true* spiritual relationship with them. Why? Because we are no longer in unity of spirit, because this sin will cut us off from the flow of God's spirit, which is the source of our life. It's the only way that we can understand spiritually. It's the only way that we can have *true life* living and dwelling in us. It's the only way we can be righteous – is to have God's holy spirit dwelling with us to help us make right choices, because without God's spirit we cannot make *righteous* choices.

**Verse 16 – On the first day a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but *that which everyone must eat—that only may be prepared by you.*** So there *are* seven days which we will not partake of leavened bread or anything leavened. And on the first day and on the seventh day are holy gatherings, or holy convocations. They are set aside. They are High Days. And on those days we deliver an offering to God for the first and seventh day, and we would do no manner of work. So we would stop. As a Sabbath, we would stop working, we would stop thinking about work or earning an income on that day, and we would only prepare that which is necessary for the fact of having food.

**Verse 17 – So you shall observe (keep) *the Feast of Unleavened Bread* – Why? – for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore, you shall observe this day –** First Day of Unleavened Bread is the time they started to leave Egypt – **throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance.** So this very first day is the day that God began this process of bringing the physical Israelites out of the land of Egypt, out of their bondage. Well, we also begin this process with a calling, that when we are drawn out we begin to leave. Now, we really don't fully leave until the point of when we die, because we really are in a process of leaving sin (which is leaving Egypt).

We are to remember the time we started to leave Egypt, which began with a calling, the time we started to become unleavened. Now, without God's holy spirit we cannot become unleavened. And it's at baptism all our leaven, all our sin, is actually washed away. It's cleaned on that very day, and the moment we raise up and walk anew, we come up as a "new man" with a commitment to follow the ways of God. Well, from that point we also will continue to sin, because that's our nature, but now we have access to God the Father and that we can be forgiven if we stay in a state of repentance. So it's a wonderful process that we're going to go through, which is one of a journey of being unleavened for the rest of our life. We're going to *strive* to be unleavened. Now, we will be leavened. That's just a fact of life. We will be leavened because of the way we are because of our selfishness. But the beauty of it all is that we can be unleavened every time that we come before God and repent of the sin and seek forgiveness.

**Verse 18 – In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening,** at the end of the fourteenth, sundown, and the fifteenth has started, **you shall eat unleavened bread, till/until the twenty-first day of the month at evening;** at the end of the twenty-first. So there are seven days of Unleavened Bread.

**Verse 19 – For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether *he is a stranger or a native of the land.*** Well, when we look at this we can understand that Passover was for baptized members of the Body of Christ, but the principle of being unleavened or putting leaven out of our lives, or putting leaven out of our homes – and on the spiritual level, deleavening our inner thinking – it applies to all baptized members, but it also applies to non-baptized. So non-baptized people associated

with God's Church – they may have started their calling or have a relationship with the Church and they're beginning the process of coming out of sin and haven't been baptized yet – should deleaven their homes or their residence, or where they work, their area of responsibility, and that is what is required. So they are required to deleaven their location, which is they are to start the process of deleavening their minds. They are called, but not yet baptized, but they are required to actually deleaven their home on a physical level, deleaven their area of responsibility, and therefore, they should be working within their thinking to deleaven their life of actions or thoughts that they know are not right until the point of their baptism where those things will be forgiven and covered and they can walk anew.

**Verse 20 – You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.** Now, during the seven days we are to consume only unleavened bread. And that's what we do as a principle.

We also looked at how the Israelites left Egypt on the night of the fifteenth of Abib. The title of this sermon, being *Time to Leave*, being *Part 3*, continues with the process of the purpose of the sermon series (which will continue to *Part 4*), is to examine the physical exodus and why it is *always* time to leave spiritual Egypt. It is always time to leave sin.

**Leviticus 23:4-8 – These *are* the appointed times of the LORD, holy convocations which you shall proclaim at their appointed times. On the fourteenth of the first month at twilight,** which is "between the evenings," between the thirteenth and the fifteenth (*all* is on the fourteenth), ***is the LORD's Passover.*** And we have observed that in spirit and truth.

**Verse 6 – And on the fifteenth day of the same month *is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you shall eat unleavened bread.*** We understand that this unleavened bread points to a way of life, the way Christ lived, because He was unleavened His whole life. "Unleavened" is "to be without sin." To be "leavened" is "to have sin," and that's what we are by nature. Now, we understand that the biggest problem that we all have is this leavening in our thinking, and it all is associated with pride because pride puffs up. We lift ourselves up in our thinking and we don't "see" ourselves as we truly are, the way God views us. Now, leaven puffs an object up. So once you put leavening into a bread or a scone or something, it will actually puff it up. It makes it rise. Now, sin does the same thing; it puffs us up. Now, *pride* is our biggest problem because the sin of pride – and you can connect pride to *all* sin, *all* Ten Commandments. If we break them it is all done because of our pride; therefore, *all* sin is motivated and driven by this pride.

**Verse 7 – On the first day,** which is the fifteenth, **you shall have a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work on it. But you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD for seven days. The seventh day *shall be* a holy convocation; you shall do no customary work *on it.*** These are the days, these two High days, are days where we would give an offering.

The main point is we have been called to come out from this world, come out and leave our past way of life. Our past way of life was one of selfishness and pride; we were motivated to please the self. We weren't sacrificing ourselves for the benefit of others. We were setting out to please ourselves. Our thoughts, our actions, our desires are about self-satisfaction, because that's natural. God has called us to leave *spiritual* Egypt, to leave sin.

Now, we are born into a world that is riddled with sin, and by nature we absorb sin and live sin because of our thinking, because we have no other way of being. But God then calls us to leave this behind, and that's what conversion is about. We leave sin when we repent. To repent is to *think differently*. And

that's our purpose of being in the Body of Christ, the Church of God. This process of God revealing truth to us in the Church is about *thinking differently*, to think more like God. And that is that whole process of time. And no matter how long we are in the Body of Christ, the Church of God, no matter how long we have an association with God, this whole process just takes time. We don't get it all as one big download where we understand God fully or "see" God fully, it takes time. And therefore, no matter how long we are in the Church we will always grow spiritually and we will always continue to leave sin.

God reveals sin to us progressively, because the sin of pride takes years and years and it takes a lifetime...and really, deep down, we begin to "see" our motivations. And when we really examine ourselves in any given day we will see that either thoughts, words, or actions have an aspect of pride connected to them, because that's our base nature, because that's our base motivation. If we dig deep enough and God gives us the gift of repentance to be able to "see" our own pride, we will see it. And therefore, God requires us to leave it behind, to repent of it, to start to think *differently*, to examine our motives of why we do what we do.

**Exodus 12:37 – Then the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children. A mixed multitude went up with them also, the flocks and the herds—and great deal of livestock.** So with this children of Israel was a mixed multitude, so other Egyptians were involved, and others were involved and joined in and they went up together and they took the flocks and the herds, and there was a great lot of livestock. "A great deal of livestock," so there was cattle, sheep, and goats, *all* types of livestock went with them. So can you imagine the organization that would have been required to have this exodus.

**Verse 39 – And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because they were driven, and that word is "thrust," out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves.** This is where the children of Israel went to the Egyptians and the Egyptians just wanted to see the back of them. They just wanted them out. So when they requested anything, the Egyptians gave them whatever and more, because they wanted to "thrust" them out. They wanted to *drive* them out. They wanted to get rid of them because of what had happened by the fact that the firstborn and the animals had died. And they knew that this was connected to God and the children of Israel. They didn't understand it all, what they were really going through, but they wanted to thrust them out and get them out. So during this period, the children of Israel didn't have time to *leaven* the dough. So this is actually unleavened and they've left with the dough being unleavened.

We are to deleaven our homes, which points to our desire to be spiritually unleavened. And that's the main point. We have to have this desire to leave Egypt. We have to have this desire to leave sin.

**Verse 40 – Now the sojourn (the "dwellings"), of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years—on the very same day—it came to pass that all the armies of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt, which was on the fifteenth of Abib.**

**Verse 42 – It is a night (or a "vigil") of solemn observance ("night watches" that word really means) 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.** Now this points to a fact, of course, that in God's calendar there is a night and then the light part, which makes a day, whereas the Roman calendar looks at things differently – it starts from midnight to midnight. God's calendar starts

with sundown to sundown. So it starts with a night and ends with a day going into a night. We are to be on guard and watch that we do not get *caught in sin*. This is about watching spiritually.

We are to fight to ensure we are leaving Egypt *every day* of our life. So this is about an ongoing process. Now, this "night of observance," there is an article on the website which covers this in detail, and at this point I'm going to cover it because it *is* worth reflecting on, being that a fact that it is a High Day. Now the "Night to be Much Remembered" is about a spiritual matter. It's not about a physical thing. It's about a matter of watching *spiritually*. Now, it's a "night to be remembered" from the point of view it's actually a High Day, being a night and the daylight portion. From the website it talks about this very fact about a tradition that has taken place within God's Church, which often dwelt more on a physical rather than something that is actually spiritual.

From the Church website, FAQ-Topics-"Night to be Much Observed": "As the children of Israel were to observe the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread from generation to generation, the first night of feasting together (after sundown that began on the 15th of Abib) carried with it special meaning and a special remembrance (or observance) of God delivering them out of Egypt."

Now, this is the night when we can reflect on the day that we were "delivered out of Egypt." We had a calling and the time that we were actually delivered was actually our baptism. The reality is we were delivered when we were baptized because we *then* have made this commitment to God to walk anew, where we are delivered from the penalty of sin, which is death. And then if we receive of the holy spirit of God by the laying on of hands by a true minister of God, we now have the power to continue to leave sin (to leave Egypt) for the rest of our life. We have that commitment and God will honor His commitment; it's more about whether we will honour *our* commitment to God, to walk anew, to *strive* to walk anew.

"God's Church does not observe the practice of sacrificing or feasting as the physical children of Israel did. The Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread carry deep spiritual lessons that God gave to the Church. We reflect, both privately and very often in sermons, upon the spiritual meaning of our Passover and our deliverance out of Egypt during the night (spiritually [of course, we look at that and we understand that spiritually] this is the world, in the first age of mankind)." Because of the darkness that the world is in.

Continuing on... "We observe God's holy days in a spiritual manner and not in a physical one, except in those things that God specifically tells us to do in a physical manner," and we have examples of that, "(of i.e., partaking of unleavened bread [it is something that is physical but God has given us this physical exercise of de-leavening and eating unleavened bread because it points to something spiritual] and wine on Passover night and the eating of unleavened bread)" during the seven days.

"As with our observance in all of God's holy days, God's people often eat meals together," now, this was the tradition of the "Night to Be Much Observed," "but such things are not commanded and not on the 1st night of the Feast of Unleavened Bread either." So this was not a command that everybody would get together on the "Night to Be Much Observed." It actually is a tradition. That was strictly a tradition. Our observance is a spiritual one and a private one between each of us and God. In this word "observed" in the expression "night to be much observed" as of Exodus 12, is a

word that is only used once. That means "night watch as *in* a vigil." The spiritual lesson should not escape us, just as Jesus Christ told us of the necessity to always keep vigil (keeping vigil) and watch over our spiritual lives, especially in the "night" of this world. We are to be of the day and not of the night as Paul has said," and you can look that up in 1 Thessalonians 5:5, "'You are all the children of light, and the children of the day. We are not of the night, nor of the darkness.'"

The main point here is that there is no command to get together and have a meal on the "Night to Be Much Observed," or this vigil. It actually points to something spiritual. And the most important thing that we can do on this night is just to examine our thinking, to go over in our minds whether we are children of the light or children of the night. Are we involved in the world? Are we coming out of the world? Are we coming out of sin? And *that's* the most important thing about the very night that the children of Israel left, because they began their journey on the evening part of the fifteenth and they began to leave Egypt.

**Exodus 12:51 – And it came to pass, that on the very same day, that the LORD brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt according to their armies.** And we understand that they came out by night, which is the beginning of the day.

**Exodus 13:20-22 – So they took their journey from Succoth and camped in Etham at the edge of the wilderness. And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night.** So they could walk for a twenty-four hour period because God was providing them the light (or the direction, or the way) to walk. **He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night *from* before the people.** God is the one that leads us out of sin. God provides the light, the direction, the truth. So God is the one that is bringing us out of Egypt. God is the one that is leading us and giving us the direction to leave sin, and it's only by God, who provides the light (which is the truth) to come out of sin, otherwise we can't come out. So *nobody* can leave Egypt, nobody can leave sin of and by themselves, because they will be in the darkness. It was *God* that provided this light, this direction, for the people of Israel. Same for us on a spiritual level. God has to be the one that provides us the light (the truth) and the direction (the way to leave sin). To repent, of course, is the way that we leave sin.

We are to follow where God leads us, and this is particularly in the Church. God leads us *in* the Church and He leads us through providing us the truth, providing us the light, the direction on a spiritual level, the way to walk. We are to follow. The cloud by day was something obvious. So it would have been obvious if you were there, is that we would see that there was a cloud and it was over the tabernacle (in the future) where we know where the cloud was. But at this time there is no tabernacle, and therefore, the children of Israel have to follow something. What direction do they walk? Well, they look up and they see this cloud by day, and it would have been obvious, the direction they had to follow. And where the cloud went was where they walked. They followed. And at night there was a light (by night) and that, again, would have been something obvious, that there was this bright light in the sky, that they would follow the direction. Now, it would have been low enough to be able to have been seen so they would follow this fire, this light by night.

The main point about the cloud and the fire is that we must learn to follow where God leads us on a spiritual level. Now, this is an incredible aspect of our life. We are to *follow* God where He leads us. To *follow* will require us to *yield* ourselves to God. And this is a key to staying within a relationship with God, yielding to God's way. Now, the natural carnal mind doesn't like to yield. The natural carnal mind, by its selfishness, thinks it's right. It *desires* to be right. It *wants* to be right. Well, it actually *is* right in its

own eyes. Well, God requires us to *yield* our spirit, *yield* our self to Him. When He points out something to be *true* and we have to then learn to admit we are in error. We are wrong. God is right; we are wrong.

So the cloud by day and the fire by night points to the fact of a need to follow where God leads. Now, God leads His Church with an apostle and prophets, and then there comes down to evangelists and others, but God has provided us true leadership in the beginning by establishing Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church. Now, Jesus Christ works with an apostle to provide us the direction, the truth that is placed into the Church of God, led by Jesus Christ, for a purpose – which is to lead us on a spiritual level in the right direction, to begin this whole process of transforming, renewing our thinking. And that's why we are in the Body of Christ, the Church of God. Our minds are polluted of and by themselves. The natural mind is polluted; it's actually sick. It's *so* sick because it is *so* selfish and riddled with pride.

Well, God then calls us to come out of this way of thinking and He does it through a structure, and God does it because He *leads us* by the light. We are led by this light. So we are to follow. We are to move forward... we are to move forward where God leads us.

We're going to jump forward now in time and just look at this aspect of the cloud and the fire. So we jump forward in time where the children of Israel have moved into the wilderness and the tabernacle has been raised up in Numbers 9. And we're doing this for the purpose of: The Days of Unleavened Bread are about coming out of sin, which means we have to follow. We have to follow the light. Because if we don't follow the light, we cannot come out of sin. We can't come out of Egypt; it's impossible. If we don't follow we *can't leave sin*. We can't leave Egypt.

**Numbers 9:15-23 – Now on the day that the tabernacle was raised up...** This points to the fact of, we ask a question: When were we raised up, brethren? When were we raised up? So here we have the tabernacle raised up (in other words, it's built, it's finished). Well, we can look at this on a spiritual level and say, well, we are a tabernacle. We are a place where God dwells. So when were we raised up? Well, we were raised up at baptism. At baptism we were then *fit* for God to dwell in us. Isn't it a beautiful picture? Because we can often look at a physical tabernacle, and we see God inspired various people to do and fulfill certain roles of service in building the tabernacle in the wilderness. And this was, of course, symbolically pointing to where God was going to dwell. And He dwelt there, as a manifestation of God, in the sense of cloud and fire. But here we have, we can look at it and say, "Well, who is the tabernacle now? Where is the tabernacle now?" Well, we know in New Testament scripture, *we are* the Temple of God. *We are* the tabernacle. *We are* where God dwells, and we were raised up as a tabernacle at baptism when we were then *fit*, because the sin had been forgiven, washed clean; we then raise up. We are now *fit* for God to dwell in us. But that, at *that* point God is not dwelling permanently in us. It requires then the laying on of hands by a true minister of God and then God will impregnate us *with* His holy spirit. That is the same as the cloud and the pillar of fire now dwelling over the tabernacle. So this is where God is.

**...the cloud covered the tabernacle, and the tent of the testimony.** Now, this is the "type" of God dwelling in us, His dwelling place. We are a witness, a *tent* of witness! This is exciting! When we go into this and understand it on a spiritual level it is so exciting that *we carry* God's thinking *in us*. We are the tabernacle! This is where God dwells! There is no need for a physical tabernacles and a tent.

**...for the evening until morning it was above the tabernacle like the appearance of fire.** So here we have the tabernacle in the wilderness and here we have "from evening until morning it was above the tabernacle as the appearance of fire." So there was this fire! Well, we understand, brethren, that that's

really symbolically pointing to us. Because what's the point of a fire over a tabernacle? What does it prove? The Israelites had it, and did it change them? They got familiar with it. They got used to it. They expected it. They travelled with it for many, many years, and what did it do? They soon sinned because it's only a physical thing. And we do become familiar with physical things, and therefore, it doesn't change our behaviour. In actual fact, we go back into our selfishness quite quickly.

Well, here it is. It's about, really, God living and dwelling in us – God and Jesus Christ living and dwelling in us so that we are now that tabernacle, we are that "tent of witness," because of the way we live our life out to the benefit of others. How God lives in us is the most important thing. We are God's dwelling place.

**Verse 16 – So it was always: the cloud covered it *by day*, and the appearance of fire by night.** So we understand that there were these years of wandering in the wilderness, which was forty in total, but there was a period where there was no tabernacle, but there still was this pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. This is all about God's presence, about having God present. Well, they knew that God was present because of the cloud and the fire.

Well, we, brethren, should know that God is always present in His Church. Jesus Christ is always present in His Church. There is a promise in the Bible that there would always be the Church of God till the end. And no matter what is happening to it, whether it's persecuted, whether it's numbers are smaller or greater, it doesn't matter. God has always said that there will be a place for Him and Jesus Christ to dwell until the return of Jesus Christ. And then we understand, of course, there is a magnification of this very process. That the numbers of the Body of Christ, the Church of God, are going to explode to numbers that we can't even imagine. Because at the moment, although God's Church is small, it is where God lives. It's where God dwells. It's where Jesus Christ lives. It's where Jesus Christ dwells. We are that tabernacle and we look forward to the day that God will awaken many from the scattered group to have that same opportunity. That God and Christ will dwell in them. And then go on into the Millennium where there will be millions of people with the potential to have God and Jesus Christ dwell in them, that this will be the tabernacle of God.

God is always with His people and He will always lead them, guide them, and direct them. And that's something that we can learn by the pillar of fire and the cloud, is that God will never leave us. He is always there and we have direct access to God at *all* times – twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. We have access all the time.

Hold your place there at Numbers and turn to Hebrews 13:5. We're going to come back to Numbers 9. **Hebrews 13:5 – Let your conduct be without covetousness**, which is our natural carnal mind, the way we are. We're covetousness. We're selfish desires. Because covetous really is about selfish desires. We want something that God says we shouldn't have. Now, there are desires which are lawful, but there are also *unlawful* desires, which goes into this realm of covetousness which is connected to selfishness. **...be content with such things as you have. For He Himself** (talking about God the Father) **has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you.** Now, this is a promise that was given to Jacob, Joshua, and God's Church. This is a promise given to you and me: "I will never leave you, nor forsake you." The problem is that *we choose* to leave God. When do we choose to leave God? Because of sin, and in particular, when we sin we then strive to repent and we repent and God will forgive us if we have a forgiving spirit, but there are times when God will leave us, and it is because of our actions and our choices and it's to do with *unrepentant* sin, because God cannot dwell in sin. The tabernacle has to be clean so that God can live and dwell in it.

Back to **Numbers 9:17 – Whenever the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle, after that the children of Israel would journey; and in the place where the cloud settled, there the children of Israel would pitch their tents.** Now, if we just look at this, because I found this one rather fascinating, because natural carnal thinking, you can just understand how this goes on a physical level. Well, it applies on a spiritual level as well, because will we follow? And if the tabernacle moves – in other words, if God introduces new truth to the Church - what will we do? Will we journey or when the Church settles in a place do we settle with the Church? Do we pitch our tents? Do we stay in unity, in our *order* that we should be in?

So they had to learn to follow. This is a lesson for us today. We are to follow the lead provided by God through Jesus Christ through God's apostle. This is a spiritual matter of following, and when we follow it's about our calling, fulfilling our calling, why we were called, to transform, to follow. We were called to *follow* the leadership placed within God's Church through Jesus Christ.

There are times when we decide for ourselves what is right and wrong, and that's the problem. So, *will* we choose to decide for ourselves what we think is right and wrong? Or *will* we let God show us the way? *Will* we follow God?

So the children of Israel, you can understand those times happened. I'm sure there were different times when the cloud would move and the people say, "Oh, we're moving," and they might have only journeyed for two days and then they'd stop, and two days later they pick up and pack up again. Can you imagine the attitude and the spirit of packing up and unpacking on a continual basis? And there was other times when the cloud would settle and it would last for maybe a month, or two weeks, or three weeks, or five weeks, or a year. The children of Israel, their attitudes were tested by this moving.

Well, it's the same in God's Church today, this moving in *thinking*, which is associated with *doctrine*. When there is a change of doctrine, will we move? Or will we stay settled where we were, thinking we would "hold onto our own integrity" and not follow? We're right in our own eyes and unteachable? So, will we move or won't we? Well, that test of moving that the Israelites faced, the spiritual Church of God, the children of Israel today, God's Church, has to do the same thing. It has to move. When the cloud moves, we move and we pitch our tents. We settle in the doctrine that is placed in the Church. And when there is a new doctrine or an amendment to the understanding of the truth, we move. We pick up our tents and move to the new location.

1 Peter 2:21... Just on that point, brethren. It is interesting that over the time, whenever we begin to read a truth – now, if we are in unity with God, if we have God's spirit and we're actively finding ourselves to be in unity and not leaning on our own understanding – when truth comes into the Church, when we read it and we come to "see" it, we come to understand it and dwell on it, our moving will be reasonably easy. Now, if we have sin, if we are looking to think that we know what is right and wrong, we are going to *resist* the truth. We're going to resist the truth; it's going to be in our mind. We're going to *disagree* with what God is teaching us. Now, this is a warning. The moment we begin to read or study a new truth that is placed in the Church and we begin to resist it and start to think, "Well, hang on a minute!" There is a big warning. The moment that thought comes in, "Hang on a minute," there is a warning. We may have an unrepented sin. We may have a problem in our thinking that we're not even aware of. So that can be a sign for us as a warning. Maybe we're not as unified or at-one with God as what we may think if we have those thoughts entering our mind.

Hold your place where we were in Numbers. **1 Peter 2:21** – For to this, it's referring to grace and mercy, **you were called**. We were called to *live* grace and mercy to others. Now, this is an incredible thing to come to grasp. The reason for our calling is to change our thinking, to be transformed. Well, we've been *called to live* (which is the way we think) grace (which is favor), mercy (forgiveness) towards others. That's why we were called! Why? **...because Christ also suffered for us**, so Christ went through this experience of life, physical life for us. He died and became our Passover for us. That was His appointment as an appointed role, but He did it for us, for you and me! **...leaving us an example**, so this sacrificing was for an example, **that you should follow His steps**. So what we are to do is *to follow*. That's the whole point of life, is about this following.

So here we have the cloud and we have the fire and the Israelites had to follow. Well, we have an example in Jesus Christ to follow. So no matter what happens we are to follow Christ. And how did He set an example? By suffering. By sacrificing Himself for the benefit of others. That's the example that He left for us and that we should follow His steps. We should be willing to suffer for others, just like Christ did.

Now this, of course, this requires God's spirit to do this. We can't do it of and by ourselves. With God's spirit empowering us to give us the choice we *can* choose to sacrifice ourselves to the benefit of others. Are we willing to sacrifice the self? Are we? That's the choice we have every day.

Now, the next scripture we're going to look at and continue on here, in Luke 9, is about a priority of thinking. It's about a priority of thinking, what we're going to dwell on. Is it something we're going to dwell on physically or are we going to dwell on it spiritually? Luke 9:23-26 – then after that we'll go back to Numbers 9.

**Luke 9:23** – Then He (Christ) **said to all**, it says "them all," it says "to all," **If anyone desires**, and that word is "wills," **to come after Me...** Now, this is about following. It's about following this example. What do we have to do? **...let him deny himself...** Now, this sounds easy but it's not! To deny one's self takes *sacrifice*! To deny our will or a desire that we may have takes *effort*. It requires a discipline of thinking. And that's what our life's about, a discipline in thinking. **...let him deny himself and take up his stake daily**, so we've got to do it *every single day*. There is not a day where we cannot continue to take up our stake. Now, the stake that we have to carry, of course, is carrying the burden of denying ourselves all the time. Because Jesus Christ denied Himself...He denied Himself. He did the will of His Father. He carried His burden every day! So He carried His stake daily. Well, we have to do it. So Christ carried His stake to His death by sacrificing. We have to carry the burden of denying the self all the time. And why do we do that? **...and follow Me**. So we have to follow Christ.

Now, "to carry this burden" means to deny the self. We have to deny ourselves because it's not a burden if we don't deny ourselves. It's easy; there is no load. It's called selfishness, pleasing the self. There is no putting the self out; it's easy. There is no load. Well, here we are, we have to follow Christ because He carried the burden. We have to carry the burden and *follow* His example, which was one of sacrificing.

**Verse 24** – **For whoever desires to save his life will lose it**. They will lose it physically in the end, but also spiritually. Because of that selfish desire, if we don't overcome it, well, we're going to lose it spiritually. Everyone will lose their life physically in the end. Everybody dies. **...but whoever loses his life**, and this is talking on a spiritual level, sacrifices self on this spiritual level, because it's about the mind, the way

we think, **for My** (Christ's) **sake will save it**, spiritually. They will save their life spiritually because they're following the example Jesus Christ set.

**Verse 25 – For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world**, physically – so they focus on the physical. They're about trading and earning more money, bigger houses, bigger this, bigger that, more money, more so-called "physical security," **and is himself destroyed or lost?** So, "what profit is it if he gains the whole world?" So you're so wealthy and you're a famous movie star and you're on TV, "and is himself destroyed?" Everything is temporary! And when it comes to things on a physical level, it is all temporary and it's pointless gaining all these physical things *if* we've neglected the spiritual where we're going to be destroyed ourselves... we're going to be destroyed in a second death.

**Verse 26 – For whoever is ashamed** (to dishonor) **of Me**, so "whoever is ashamed of Christ" **and My words**, so the truth that is placed in the Church, if we're ashamed of those things, **of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His glory**, at His return we will not be part of this Body, the Church of God. We will not be part of the 144,000, but we also will not be part of God's Church going on into the future. **...and in His Father's, and of His holy angels**. So when Christ returns He comes back in the glory that He has been given, but He comes back in the glory of His Father, God the Father's, because He was appointed by God the Father *to* this role of glory, "and with the holy angels" that He comes back with.

We can dishonor Christ by the way we choose to live and not following His example of sacrificing for others. So we were given this clear example of what to do; we are to follow, just as the Israelites followed. We are to follow the example of Jesus Christ.

Back to **Numbers 9:18 – At the command**, which is "from the mouth" **of the LORD the children of Israel would journey, and at the command**, and that is "the instructions given," **of the LORD they would camp**. So they would move when they were told to move and they would camp when they were told to camp, **as long as the cloud stayed above the tabernacle they remained encamped**. Now, this goes back to a spiritual lesson. Will we remain in a relationship with God? In other words, will we camp with God? Will we remain in that relationship with God? It's a choice; we don't have to. But it's a choice. Will we stay with God? Will we remain camped with God's Church? Will we stay with the Body of Christ where God is giving us spiritual food? Will we wander in the desert? Will we wander in the world? Will we go out and "play" with the world? ...the things *of* the world? You know, the garbage that's out there, will we just go out and touch a little bit of it and play with it? Well, that's like the Israelites, if they didn't stay in the camp, they would wander off and go outside the camp and wander around. Well, what's the outcome? They're going to be destroyed. They were going to be attacked by thieves or other tribes, or there were wild animals. So they would be destroyed in the wilderness if they weren't careful.

Well, brethren, it's the same for us today. We *will* be destroyed if we are willing to wander in the wilderness, the darkness of this world, the wilderness of sin. Because once we start playing with sin and not repenting of it, handling it, putting our minds into the sin, into the darkness, we *will* get burnt with it... we will. And it's a big draw! Satan knows what he's doing! He knows the system he has built. And the temptation of sin, the things of the world, these desires of our flesh, will draw us into wrong relationships. In other words, we'll sever our relationship with God and His people and we will be drawn into a state of sin. And the difficulty is that then we are required to repent of it. Well, if we go too far and we set our minds at some point that we don't want to repent – so there is a danger of playing with it – we should always be very careful not to wander into the desert, into the darkness, to wander into a place where sin is.

So the children of Israel followed the instructions. Well, we should follow the instructions, brethren. We've had many instructions over many years about what we should and shouldn't do when it comes to various things of the world – how to avoid them, and not to get involved – not to read other religious literature, for example. Now, *why* would we do it? Why would we want to go and read error when God has given us the truth? And yet, you know, human nature is that people choose – within God's Church even – to read error...to read error, to read something that is *not* from God or Jesus Christ. Isn't that incredible, that we have that potential? But that's what we do. We have that potential to shove our heads into the septic tank. We really do.

**Verse 19 – Even when the cloud continued long, many days above the tabernacle, the children of Israel kept the charge of the LORD and did not journey.** They were obedient. So these Days of Unleavened Bread, these seven days of Unleavened Bread that we are entering, are about keeping charge of ourselves...keeping charge of ourselves, and to follow the instructions God gives us, and not to journey into sin, but to stay unleavened during this period. And that's what we're striving to do. And that's the example that the Days of Unleavened Bread point to; it's about coming out of sin and trying to strive to remain out of sin, to become unleavened.

Now, there are scriptures that talk about that we *are* unleavened, which is on a physical level, but it's more important that we become unleavened on a spiritual level.

**Verse 20 – So it was, when the cloud was above the tabernacle a few days: according to the command of the LORD they would remain encamped, and according to the command of the LORD they would journey.**

**Verse 21 – So it was, when the cloud remained only from evening until morning: when the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they would journey; whether by day or by night, whenever the cloud was taken up, they would journey.** Now, *this* would be a time of testing of attitudes. If we just place ourselves there on a physical level, here we are we are following this cloud by day, and at some point it would change to fire by night. And you could be walking during the day, you could be walking during the night, and then you would arrive at a particular location, and within our natural carnal mind we'd say, "Well, this is great. We've stopped!" Then all the belongings that we have, have to be organized. You have to pitch the tent, then you've got to unpack, got to make your bed up, you've got your cooking utensils, you've got all this to organize – and this is at night. So by the time you did all that and you got into bed. Then in the morning you find out that it's time to pack up again. It's time to do all of that again. Load it all back up and put it into an organized way to move again and you begin to move. Now, this would test *anybody's* attitude, and I'm sure it did, many, many a time.

Well, this is the same within God's Church. If we look at this pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire and this journey and relate it to God's Church, which is doctrine. This is about doctrine. That when God decides to introduce truth into the Church or update a truth, will we move when God instructs us? This is the point of what we can learn from the pillar of cloud and fire – about dwelling over the tabernacle. Because that's where it was. Well, the "tabernacle" is the Body of Christ, the Church of God. So when this movement takes place, what will we do? What's our attitude? Well, now we know often that doctrine is placed in the Church – just like ordinations – for the testing of attitudes. You know, "We've only just *arrived* at this truth and now we're moving again!" That's the thinking that can happen. It's a lesson, of one of obedience without complaint. So the lesson is one of obedience without complaint. And I'm sure the children of Israel failed miserably because they did not have God's holy spirit – where we should not fail, brethren, this very test. This movement that takes place, we should not fail it.

**Verse 22 – Whether it was two days, a month, or a year that the cloud remained above the tabernacle, the children of Israel would remain encamped and not journey; but when it was taken up, they would journey.** Problem that happens within humans is whether or not we're thankful. For us, being in the Body of Christ, we should be *thankful* for what God does in the way that He leads us. We should be *thankful* every time a new truth enters the Church or an update in the sense of deeper understanding of a truth is provided by God to us and we are required to move in our thinking, in our spirit. We should rejoice and be thankful to God that He loves us so much that He is willing to *share* what He has with us. It's so exciting! And the children of Israel, I'm sure, at times had their issues in life, but it does say here they did follow those instructions (on a physical level). Well, it's more important for us, brethren, that we follow these instructions on a spiritual level, to move.

The moment we refuse to move, the moment we refuse to encamp and not journey, we're in big trouble... we are in big trouble on a spiritual level.

**Verse 23 – At the command of the LORD they remained encamped, and at the command of the LORD they journeyed; they kept the charge of the LORD, at the command of the LORD by the hand of Moses.** They followed instructions. Obedience *is* required within God's Church. Obedience to God the Father and Jesus Christ *is* required.

God has provided us an apostle to lead us when it comes to doctrine within the Church. So it *is* about government.

John 10:1. Now, when we look at this, brethren, we can see, seeing, well, we're going through all this on the Days of Unleavened Bread, because being unleavened is important, because being unleavened is about a spiritual matter. And this spiritual matter is about whether or not we will follow God and Jesus Christ the way He leads, and government is part of that. Our willingness to yield is a sign of our being leavened or unleavened.

**John 10:1 – Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door,** and that "door" is Christ, **but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.** Now, it's impossible to enter the Kingdom of God another way, but people have striven to do that through conforming and acting out a role. Now, the thief and a robber has an evil intent or a carnal mind. The only way to enter Elohim is by the way God has *established*. There is no other way! We have to have followed the cloud and the pillar of fire. We *have to follow* where God leads His Church. And if we *don't* follow we're going to get lost in the darkness, in the wilderness.

God established that Christ *is* the way, and that's what Passover was about. It all started *with* Passover, because Jesus Christ was appointed by God the Father as our Passover, the way that sin could be *covered* so that we could have a relationship with God. If someone will not start with Passover, God's way, they cannot and *will not* enter Elohim. There *is no other* way. There is no other way to enter Elohim.

**Verse 2 – But he who enters by the door (Christ) is the shepherd of the sheep.** Christ obeys God the Father's instructions, and therefore, leads others by His example. Now, we understand that Jesus Christ, from the point of view of born as a human with the very thinking of God, and He obeyed God, He followed God's instructions. There was no other way. It was the way He thought. And He, by His example, one of *sacrificing* has set us the way. The way that we have to follow is by sacrificing. So we are to enter by "the door." We are to enter by Christ and follow His example.

**Verse 3 – To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hears his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.** We are to follow Christ's example of *how* He lived, of *how* He lived His life on a spiritual level. We hear His voice (on a spiritual level) by the power of God's holy spirit, because it requires a calling from God to hear His voice. That's why the world is in darkness. That's why God's Church is the size that it is, is because people cannot *choose* to hear God of and by themselves. They can choose it all they like. If they chose to hear God's voice in the sense of follow what they read in the Bible, they end up confused. They end up being either a Catholic or a Protestant or some other religious group and they are deceived within their own thinking because they think they are hearing Christ's voice, and they think they are being led by God to do things and they pray to God and ask these various things.

There was an article the other day with regards to somebody praying about a football team winning, and there was somebody else who had "thanked God" for the fact that they had provided a particular player in a team. And that's the way the natural carnal mind operates, because it was all based on selfishness, pleasing the self. But we, brethren, have been called by God for a purpose, and that is to follow His voice by the power of God's holy spirit, the way He leads us to think.

We "hear" spiritually where others cannot "hear." Other's cannot "hear" this sermon. They cannot "hear" or *follow* God's Church. It's not possible because it requires a calling first.

"To follow" is to obey the instructions from God. Just as the Israelites followed the instructions, well, we have the same thing today. We have to choose to follow the lead of Jesus Christ, which is one of sacrificing, but also we are to follow where God leads us doctrinally.

**Verse 4 – And when He (Christ) brings out His own sheep,** well, we're sheep. We are the sheep of God. We are Christ's sheep. We are willing to follow. ...**He (Christ) goes before them; and the sheep follow Him** – why do they follow? – **for they know His voice.** We understand our calling because God has given us the spiritual wisdom and the spiritual understanding to "see" our calling. We understand it and we know what is required. We are required to follow where He goes. They know the truth and *believe* the truth, and that's why they follow. Well, that's why we follow, brethren, because we know the truth and we believe the truth.

**Verse 5 – They will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.** Now, this is interesting, because *if* we are a follower of Jesus Christ and we are sacrificing, we will *flee* something else, which means we won't go down the path of studying into false doctrines and other people's views and opinions or any other religious group. Whether it's part of a scattered Church or the churches of the world, we wouldn't go down that path, because we would reject the voice, because we know it's garbage, they're talking drivel, and therefore, why would we want to go and read it, which is someone who is a stranger. Someone, a stranger of course, is someone that does not have God's spirit and is not being led by God. We would follow God. So anybody that's a stranger, they can only speak false doctrine, so what would we do? We would *flee* that person! We wouldn't follow it!

Just like the sheep will not follow a stranger, they'll follow the voice which is the voice of the master, and they do not follow the voice of a stranger. And that word there is "another man's servant ... another man's servant." So we will follow a servant of God, but we wouldn't follow somebody that is not serving God. Who and what is a stranger? Anybody that is not in unity of spirit with God or God's way of life. They're "another man's servant." Now, "another man's servant" will not be in unity with God, with God's

spirit or God's way of life, so we wouldn't want to follow a stranger. They are "servants" and are serving something other than God.

Now, we understand that they are serving themselves, really, because that's the natural carnal mind. Because without God's spirit we *serve ourselves*. And that's what a servant does, they serve. But a servant of another man, another way of life, another doctrine, they're really serving themselves. A "stranger" is someone that tables or expresses their way of seeing things, their opinion, which is contrary to what God has established. They are serving themselves.

What should we do? What should we do with *anything* that is contrary to God? Somebody that is serving themselves, what should we do? What should we do? Flee for our own spiritual protection! We are saved because we flee. We must come to know *what* to flee!

So these are spiritually important matters during these Days of Unleavened Bread, because we want to be unleavened. That's the point of the Days of Unleavened Bread; we desire to be unleavened. Well, how do you become unleavened? Well, we flee sin. And why do we do it? We flee for our own spiritual protection. We are saved because of the very sacrifice of Jesus Christ. *Because* we flee sin, we leave sin behind – which is fleeing it, leaving it well behind us – we *then* have a relationship with God. So this is that "voice of the stranger." We don't want anything to do with it. We would flee it!

Now, this applies also to people that may bring into the Church false doctrine or their own views. The best way around it? Flee it as quickly as possible! Why? For our own spiritual protection. We must come to *know* what to flee! Well, how do we know what to flee? Well, "the voice of a stranger... a voice of a stranger." *Anything* that is contrary to doctrine, sound doctrine, we should know we should flee it! We should stand and then flee! Get out of it! Don't listen to any more! Reject it! Stand firm for God's way of life! Stand as a servant of God rather than following "a stranger's voice."

Anything that is contrary to the truth, contrary to God's way of life, we should flee it. We need to stand for the truth. We need to stand for God's way of life.

**Proverbs 11:15** – This is a spiritual principle about being a surety, but we're going to look at it from a slightly different angle. **He who is surety**, now, this is "pledges or guarantee's," another word is "meddles." So, **He who is surety for a stranger**, someone that we don't know, **will suffer, but one who hates being surety is secure**, that is "confident," and another aspect of it, "will not suffer." Now, this explains, virtually, money, talking about money on a physical level, but we're going to look at it on a spiritual level as well. Physically, it says, "He who is surety," in other words, becomes a guarantor for somebody, "of a stranger," someone we don't really know and we don't really understand their motives. Well, what's the consequence of being "a guarantor"? So somebody may want to buy something and they say, "Look, I need a guarantor." In other words, you take on the debt, and if they default, you take on the responsibility and the guarantee to make the payment.

Well, it says here, "He who is surety for a stranger," someone that we don't know, "will suffer." Well, we will! Because "the natural carnal mind is hostile against God and not subject to the law of God, indeed, can't be." In other words, it's selfish; therefore, we will suffer. We're going to pay a price because the stranger will more than likely betray us. Now, not all. Not all do. But a lot do. And now the answer to it is to do the opposite. "But one who hates being surety," for a stranger, "is secure." So if we understand that guaranteeing anything, which we can't do - we can't guarantee anything in life because tomorrow we don't know what's going to happen, this afternoon, let alone tomorrow – so why would we want to

guarantor something for someone we don't know? We don't know their motives. We don't know their intent.

So it says here, "but one who hates being surety," a guarantor or a pledge or getting involved in a stranger's life, "is secure." We'll be confident because we will not suffer. We're not going to have to pay or repay what the stranger has borrowed.

Now, that's the physical example. But spiritually the same principle applies when it comes to false doctrine. So we can look at it, "We must not meddle with something strange." So false doctrine is strange. So if we're going to get involved in it, if we're going to meddle in it, we're going to start to guarantee it by the way we think, it says, "we will *suffer*." So we must not meddle, get involved or get involved with *strange doctrine*. It's something strange. We don't really know it, but we're going to meddle and get involved in it. So we have to learn to "hate" what is strange, this different doctrine. We have to learn to hate it, don't get involved in it, don't meddle with it, but flee it.

So when we look at that and it says, "He who is surety for a stranger...." so anybody that gets involved in dealing with this stranger, they're going to suffer. Same with false doctrine – you get involved with false doctrine, you and I will suffer. We will suffer, brethren, if we get involved in it.

So the best answer of it is? "But one who hates..." someone that hates, "being surety, is secure." Someone who hates false doctrine, we'll be secure spiritually because we won't want to get involved in any of it, so we won't suffer! If we desire to handle or meddle with leaven (which is sin), different doctrines, we *will* suffer. If we hate to handle or meddle with leaven (sin), different doctrine, we will spiritually be secure. So we must have to learn to hate it. It says, "Hate things." Well, we should flee these things that we hate. If God hates it, we should flee it. Well, false doctrine, God *hates* false doctrine; therefore, we should flee it.

**Verse 6** – back to verse 6... (John 10:6). **Christ uses this illustration but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them**, which was about the sheep and the fact of needing to follow.

**Verse 7** – **Then Jesus said to them again, Most assuredly I say to you, I am the door of the sheep**, so there's only one way to enter Elohim; it's through this "door." It's through Jesus Christ. One way. There is one Church, which is Church of God. Jesus Christ is our High Priest, He's in charge of the Church, so this is the only way. There is only one faith. So this one "door," through Christ, there's only one faith. There's only one lot of doctrine to believe, and there's only one Passover. There's only one way to keep the annual Passover and it's *exactly* the way Jesus Christ has instructed. That's the *only* way. There *is* no other way to keep it. It has to be through the foot-washing. It has to be through the unleavened bread, and it has to be through the wine, those symbolic things that point to something spiritual. So it's all done through the *one* Church, through *one* belief.

**All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.** So they didn't follow them because of that strange voice. Christ is saying, "Everybody that came before Me didn't have the right way to lead the sheep," to lead us spiritually, it's referring to. All who stated another way to enter Elohim are liars.

So today, brethren, we can apply that principle. *All* that have come before Jesus Christ (before His time), they were thieves and robbers. They weren't leading to the Kingdom of God. But then those that God had called (the sheep), they didn't *hear* that other way, which was the scribes and the Pharisees and

other aspects of life that the natural carnal mind had developed. Well, the people that God was working with (a very limited few before Christ), they didn't hear that voice.

Well, now on a spiritual level the same thing applies, that now there is only one way. God has called us into a relationship with Him. There is only one way to enter Elohim, and if it's anybody outside of the Body of Christ, the Church of God—PKG, that is saying there is another way, they are thieves and robbers. But we, brethren, wouldn't hear that voice! In other words, we wouldn't get involved in their literature and all their other stuff...and all the other stuff that they may have.

There is only one way. Those God calls according to His will and purpose, all will follow His instructions. They will not hear and follow false doctrines or other ways. And it's very clear what Christ is talking about here.

**I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, through Christ, through the Church, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.** He's talking on a spiritual level there; it's about entering Elohim. It is only through Christ that we can have access to God the Father (and that's by prayer), and access to the truth (which is by God's spirit), and it's all done by and in through God's Church. It is only through Christ that we can have access to spiritual food. Without Passover we cannot have spirit life. Now we should "see" why we need to partake of the annual Passover service in spirit and truth. We have to follow! We have to follow those instructions.

Now, we have to follow in the sense of the Days of Unleavened Bread. We have to delevan our homes because we follow. We have to delevan our minds because we follow, we follow the instructions, because it's about a spiritual relationship with God. Now we should "see" why we must strive to remain unleavened *every day* of our life! Why? Because this is the only way to enter Elohim... this is the only way to enter Elohim.

**Verse 10 – The thief does not come except to steal, to kill, and to destroy.** The "thief" is anybody other than the true shepherd. Any of the other religions outside of God's true Church, they are only there to steal – to steal our *spiritual life* – to kill, to destroy it completely. That's what they're there for, because it's motivated by Satan's thinking. The reason why Satan places false doctrine into human reasoning is because it will steal the truth, it will kill, and it will destroy us in the end. So Satan puts false doctrine into churches because of the very reason is to destroy, and he does it through human reasoning.

**I (talking about Christ) have come that you may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.** Spiritual life comes through Christ. There *is* no other way. If we do not have God and Christ *in* us, living and dwelling in us, we do not have *life* in us.

**Verse 11 – I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd gives His life for the Church.** Christ sacrificed Himself for us. Christ gave His life for the Church. We are required to follow Christ's example and sacrifice our selfish desires, put them to death for the benefit of others. The real joy is spiritual in nature. The real joy is in giving, the sacrificing so others will benefit.

Now, it doesn't seem that way often, but the reality is that if we allow God's spirit to live in us, and that we choose to sacrifice (powered by God's holy spirit) and others benefit, there is a spiritual joy that is in it – to see others benefit.

Now, anybody that has had children probably see's this more than other people can, because having a family, you realize that as a parent, that as your child grows up your *desire* is to benefit that child. You

benefit that child in other ways that you wouldn't other humans, which is another form of selfish love. But that's what happens to humans. They will guard and protect their own children and they will do it to great lengths. They will give to their own children and at the expense of other children of course, but they give to their own children and they are willing to actually sacrifice on a physical level (without God's spirit) to benefit their children, to see their children advantage.

Well, God's love covers *all* people, and therefore, He sacrificed for *all*. And that's what Jesus Christ achieved. He sacrificed Himself for *all* mankind. There is no bias or prejudice. Now, as we are called into God's Church and we have God's spirit, we learn over time that we are to sacrifice not just for our own family, but for all – not only members of the Body of Christ, but for *all* mankind. We are to sacrifice, give up ourselves, give up our views, our opinions, and put ourselves down (our desires down) to benefit others. And that is what God requires. That's what Christ achieved. That's what God requires of us.

**Verse 12 – But a hireling**, that is somebody hired, **he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep**, so this is somebody else that's been hired, like a hired shepherd. He's not part of the family, but he's been hired to look after the sheep. We understand, brethren, that we have been purchased so we are actually owned. So we are owned by the shepherd, really, but this here is this hireling. It's somebody that's been employed to do the job. **...he sees the wolf coming**, and we look at this on a spiritual level, false ministers out there, that they're hirelings. They're not purchased by the shed blood of Jesus Christ at this point in time, and therefore, they are *false* shepherds. We have a true shepherd looking after the Church. Well, this false shepherd, this hireling who's been hired, **sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees**. Well, this is symbolic. Satan comes and things get too difficult and what do they do? They leave the sheep; they don't sacrifice themselves to the benefit of others, but they just simply run off and leave the sheep. **...the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them**. So, this "type" of Satan is about his attacks. Well, Satan manipulates the churches of the world, but also within God's Church he attacks the brethren. Well, Christ says that He doesn't leave us. He doesn't run off, so when these attacks come, Jesus Christ (the true shepherd) *stays with us*. He doesn't flee and leave us!

**The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep**. There is no love for the brethren, but Jesus Christ is the true shepherd and there *is* love for the brethren, and therefore, He stays with us. God and Jesus Christ stay with us to guide us, to protect us from this wolf, which is symbolic of Satan.

**Verse 14 – I am the good Shepherd; I know My Sheep, and am known by My own**. Now, we know Christ because God the Father called us into a relationship with Himself and with Christ. Now, we are to strive to be unleavened.

Hold your place there, brethren. **2 Timothy 2:14-21 – Remind them** (the brethren) **of these things, charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers**. Now, these words that create arguments or contention, words of disagreement, words that disagree with God's way of life, words that table another way, words that are tabled against God or against God's Church or against sound doctrine, words contrary to sound doctrine, words that are contrary to the true way to enter Elohim. So we shouldn't get involved in these "words of contention" and the words that are not profitable. They're just rubbish. They're just not worth listening to, because they will be "ruin to the hearer." Because if we listen to them and dwell on them, they can cause doubt, and it will cause problems to us.

**Verse 15 – Be diligent to present yourself approved to God,** and we do that through obedience, **a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.** Now, where does the truth come from? Well, it comes from God through Jesus Christ to an apostle into the Church. Now, we can divide it by studying it and meditating on it, but not by disagreeing with it. We are to apply the truth into our life and we do that by *living* God's way of life.

What should we do? **Verse 16 – But shun** (and that is, "avoid or flee") **profane** ("empty") **or idle babblings,** so these false doctrines, these ideas of men or other ways – why? – **for they will increase,** (those will lead) **to more ungodliness,** because they will lead to sin. Anyone who goes down the path of unsound doctrine or anything contrary to God's ways that have been placed in the Church, it will lead to sin. It will be sin upon sin. Because going down that path and reading this garbage and dwelling on it *is actually sin...* it is actually sin. We're listening to the voice of somebody else, of a stranger, and therefore, when we get that far we've already sinned. We've turned against God.

**Verse 17 – And their message will spread like cancer.** So this "spreading" was happening within the Church because there was two there that were a problem and had caused issues by spreading false doctrine.

**Verse 18 ...who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.** So these false doctrine that were being spread about was the resurrection had already happened, and they caused others to stumble in the faith. So these are these words of vanity. These are about words or empty words that bring ruin to the hearers.

**Verse 19 – Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands.** What is that? The truth. It's the truth stands, **having this seal** (and this is it): **"The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity."** And that's what we're doing through these Days of Unleavened Bread; we are departing sin, we're departing iniquity.

**Verse 20 – But in the great house,** which is a "type" of the Church, **there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also wood and clay, some for honour and some for dishonor.**

**Verse 21 – Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from the latter,** remains in a state of repentance, remains unleavened, **he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified** (set aside) **and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work,** which is, God uses us to the benefit of others. God prepares us to do *His* works *in* and *through* us! Isn't that exciting?

Go back to **John 10:15 – As the Father knows Me,** talking about the Father knowing Christ, **even so I (Christ) know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.** Now, this is what we are required to do, brethren. God and Christ have the same mind, the same sacrificing love. They are at-one. They are in unity. Now, we are to lay down our life for the sheep, for one another, brethren.

**Verse 16 – The other sheep I have,** now, this is from the house of Israel, physically and spiritually, those yet called or awakened (which are the other sheep) **which are not of this fold** (at that time). They're not of the fold. They're not in the Body of Christ at this time... **them I also must bring, and they will hear My voice,** so this same voice, the same shepherd, they will hear it. When will they hear it? When they're called or awakened they can hear God's voice, they can hear Christ's voice. **...and there will be one flock** (one Church) **and one Shepherd** (one way – Jesus Christ, one Passover, one faith, one doctrine).

So it's about this "one." It's about unity. Because when there is division, there is not unity. So there has to be *one* flock, one Church. There is only one spiritual flock under Christ. These "many folds" over time, will be called into "one flock," one Church, the way of life *in Christ*, the one true Passover for all mankind.

**Verse 17 – Therefore My Father loves Me – why? – because I lay down My life that I may take it again,** may receive it anew. So Christ would die a physical death so that He would have a spirit life. We are required to do the same. We must learn to choose to lay down our physical life, sacrifice the self so God can give us spirit life in His Family.

**Verse 18 – No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down Myself,** so this is a choice. **I have power** (authority) **to lay it down, and I have power** (authority) **to take** (receive) **it again. This command I have received from My Father.** It was God that did it all. Christ could not resurrect Himself! Only God can give life, spirit life, to anybody.

We'll actually finish *Part 3* here and pick up *Part 4* by continuing on in John. I do hope that you have successful Days of Unleavened Bread and that during this time we focus on overcoming our selfishness by sacrificing ourselves to the benefit of others. And by sacrificing ourselves we remain unleavened, because we will be putting down sin and repenting and staying in a state of humility, which is about service to others. □