

Striving to Keep Sin Out

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Brethren, we always need to remember how God called you and me. We need never forget what we said at baptism. All of us said that we wanted our sins forgiven, and God has made a way for that to take place. He made a way for His Son to become our Passover.

We all said that we wanted to live life, our lives, by striving to keep sin out of our lives. This Unleavened Bread season reminds you and me, those of us in God's Church, how sin affects this human life and how it affects those of us in God's Church. We can see the world and how it has affected them, but this is about you and me, those of us in God's Church.

So, God reminds us every year about sin. And that will be the subject today. It's about *Striving to Keep Sin* out of our lives.

Those of us in God's Church, we never need to forget that this is not God's world. This is a being's world, named Satan, at this time. But that's about to become short-lived for him. And it's you and me that he's after at this time, those that God has called into His Church.

It's not easy to come out of this world and it was not meant to be easy. But it's not all about Satan either. We have to battle this human mind and those pulls that pull at this mind, those lusts of the flesh that all of us have to deal with. It's been a trap for so many that walked side-by-side with you and me. They have fallen into that trap.

So you and me, though, have to live a life free of sin. We have to strive to do that. But we understand that's why we have to have a Passover. Because in this human flesh, we slip, and we sin. But this is about a different way of life at this time, and God tells you and me how we are to live our lives. We have God's Son as our Passover to help us do that. He forgives our sin when we fall into that trap, trap of sin, and against our God and His Son.

This day paints you and me a picture of this part of God's plan, and it pictures an aspect of God's plan of salvation. And as we know, it must be observed by those who have been called by God. I will not speak much today about putting leavening out of our lives, out of our homes, as we know we are to do as God says in His book. We do this every Unleavened Bread season, and I think everyone understands about putting the leavening out of their homes.

We understand what this represents. It paints you and me a picture of putting sin out of our lives and it paints you and me a picture about sin and how it's always impossible to put all the leavening out of our homes. I think most of us find some leavening after these days have passed.

But you and me, those of us in God's Church, we have to become atoned to the Great God of this universe. We must become at one with Him. We have to become in complete agreement with our God and we have to be cleaned up individually and we have to be cleaned up collectively as the Body of Christ, and sin has to be dealt with. That's what this sermon is about. It's about sin and the cleansing that will take place.

When we slip and when we fall we should always reflect back on the Ten Commandments and understand that sin is the transgression of those laws that God gave a long time ago, those Ten Commandments. But also remember that Joshua the Christ made a way for you and me, and all we have to do is repent when we sin and try to never do that sin again. The time that you and I live in I think it better be quick when we sin now. Repentance should take place quickly, brethren.

Let's turn over to Romans 5:18, the last part of verse 18. We know that Joshua the Christ made a way by becoming the Passover. And this is where we'll start here. **Romans 5:18—through one man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For it is by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one man's obedience—let's notice—many will be made righteous.**

Moreover, the law entered that the offense might abound. In other words, made manifest is what it's saying. **But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more.** Because Joshua the Christ came and died so that you and I could be forgiven of our sins and cover our sins. **So that as sin reigned in death, even so—let's notice—grace might reign through righteousness through eternal life through Joshua our Lord.**

Romans 6:1 let's notice the question that was asked. **What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?** How could we continue? That's the question that's being asked. **Or do you not know as many of us as were baptized into Christ Joshua were baptized into his death? Therefore, we were buried with him through baptism—that's what it pictured—unto death.** Putting to death this flesh, this body. **...that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so, we also should walk in newness of life.**

For if we have been united together in the likeness of his death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of his resurrection, knowing that our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin—let's notice how it's being said—might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over him. For that he died, he died to sin once for all; but that he lives, he lives to God. Likewise, you also reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Joshua our Lord.

Therefore, do not let sin—let's notice—**reign in your mortal body, that you should not obey it in its lusts.** So, we need to bring it into subjection when it comes into the mind. We have to grab it in the mind, brethren. That's where it has to take place. And do not let sin reign in our mortal bodies. Always bring it into subjection, repent quickly, and put it out of our minds.

And do not present our members as the instruments of unrighteousness to sin. That's what it's about. That's what it's speaking about. **...but present ourselves to God as being alive from the dead.** In other words, a new way of life, a new way of living, and recognize what we've been offered, brethren. I hope everyone understands what they have been offered- to have God's spirit and to live into eternity, brethren. And if we sin, we cut ourselves off from God and we no longer have that life living in us, when we sin and don't repent. So, repentance has to take place quickly, brethren. That's what our focus should be, to repent quickly when we sin.

This season is about sin and it's about striving to keep sin out of our lives. And it is a different way of life for you and me to live by those commandments that God gave a long time ago, to strive to keep those commandments.

Verse 14 God tells us, **Sin shall not have dominion over us**—and it shouldn't—**for we are no longer under law but under grace.** In other words, the penalty of death is what it's speaking about. That price was paid for you and me through/by what Joshua the Christ did by becoming our Passover and making a way so that we could be part of God's Family, to become Elohim.

To receive God's spirit and live this way of life is a privilege, brethren. It's a privilege to understand what we are going through today, to understand how sin has to be dealt with and the price that our Savior paid to make it all possible. He paid that penalty for you and me. And when we understand, sin should not have dominion over you and me, we should always repent. That takes care of it, brethren.

So, this Holy Day season of Unleavened Bread tells us a lot about sin, and it tells us that you and me have to be cleaned up. The Church of God has to be clean at the end. And if we are cleaned up, we can see that the gift of God is eternal life, eternal life in the God Family forever and ever. That's what's being offered, and it's the only way that you can have eternal life.

We know through these scriptures that it will be a clean Church at the end, at the end of this age when Joshua the Christ returns to this earth.

The Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread season pictures a time when God delivered the Israelites from captivity and from a system of government in which they were suffering mightily. So, we find physical stories in this book for spiritual examples for you and me. It's written for us and it's like a picture that God painted for you and me, the Church of God that is preparing for the return of God's Son to this earth.

There are many that have gone before you and me, brethren. Abraham, Noah, Moses, all of the disciples, just to name a few. There are many, many others that have faced some awesome situations in order to obey their God. It's the same for you and me whom the end of the ages has come.

The entire chapter of Psalms 78 if you just want to note it, it's a history lesson of Israel, about their disobedience. It's a warning for you and me. It's good to go back and read through it. And it's a warning to remember God's interventions for them, all the miracles that He performed for them. Yet we know that they always forgot. They always forgot what God did for them. It's the history. It's our history and you and I need to learn from that past.

Let's turn over to Colossians 1. It's a little harder to find sometimes. **Colossians 1:9** we find, **For this reason, we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled—let's notice—with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.**

It is the past that is an example for you and me, examples for those of us for whom the end of the ages has come. It's what God says. He says that we are to take these lessons and glean from God's word which is recorded for you and me so that we may learn and apply the spiritual meanings, so that we may rid our lives of sin and be ready when our time of deliverance comes, whenever that deliverance might be.

Verse 10 tells us to rid our lives of sin so that we **may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.** And that is why we have these Holy Days, so that we can learn and increase in the knowledge of the plan of God and be strengthened through the sermons that are given during this season.

Verse 11—strengthened with all might—let's notice—according to the glorious power, talking about the power of God, brethren, **for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified you and me to be partakers—**and let's notice—**of the inheritance.** That's what it's about. It's about what we will inherit. **...of the saints in the light.**

Verse 13—He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of His love, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sin. Christ came the first time as the Passover Lamb, and it's how you and I are forgiven of our sins. He made a way for you and me, and he paid an awesome price. He paid that price with his life, and he was beaten beyond recognition for who he was. He was unrecognizable as Joshua.

We hear about his suffering at every Passover during this season, but now it's almost time for his return as King of kings to set up God's Kingdom upon this earth, to rescue us from this world. It's not God's world. We're looking for a new world. But for now, we're in Satan's world, the world that he has created, the system that God calls Babylon, the Babylonian system. And it's about Satan's influence upon mankind, this system that has been created.

But it's about time for a new world, a new age. It's about time for a new government to be set up upon this earth, a just government that will be here to teach mankind about how to live their lives. That teaching will go forward through God's Family at that time, the ones that have come back to this earth and set foot upon the Mount of Olives with Joshua the Christ. They will teach mankind about sin, that sin we understand can destroy lives. We've seen it do that.

But this will be a time about teaching about the lust of the flesh and how partaking of those lusts will cause marriages to be destroyed, it will cause children's lives to be destroyed, and most important, it can take one out of God's Church. We have seen that very thing take place when some of us walked among us on every Sabbath and every Holy Day.

But you and I are being rescued now until the promised kingdom and the promised Kingdom of God if – IF – there's always that word "if," but if we stay fast. We're on a countdown to that Kingdom, that Kingdom of God that will be set up in just a short while.

Verse 21—And you, who were alienated—let's notice—**enemies in our mind.** That's a very profound statement. That's exactly what it is. We were enemies in our minds. We were hostile to the Great God of this universe. This is where the battle lies; the battle is for the mind. That's what it's about. That's where it begins, right in this mind, and that's where we fight the battle. We have to capture the thoughts when they hit this mind, and we should learn during this season that God reminds you and me so that we do not become the enemy of God again through our mind. I always remember what Paul had to say, "O wretched man that I am." And I can relate to that very statement. I think all of us can. I think every one of us is beginning to understand what we are in this flesh, and I understand why Paul said that "O wretched man that I am," but he said something else, but with the mind, he served His God. That's the way it is. It's about the mind.

And it's a wonderful way that Paul explains it in God's book. He knew and understood what he was in this flesh. And it says, **You who once alienated and enemies in our minds by wicked works.** And we all were, all of us, **yet now he has reconciled—**let's notice verse 22—**in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight—**and let's notice, here's that word "if" that we spoke about just a moment ago—**if we continue in the faith.** There's always that word "if." We've seen so many that this word "if" has taken out.

So, "if we continue in the faith," which was needed for those of us at the end of the age. Just as it was needed for Moses, it was needed for them, and it was needed for all that have gone before you and me. They had to be **grounded and steadfast,** all of them did, and they had to be able to be **not moved away from the hope of the good news.** This writer tells us that if we continue in and are not moved away from the truth we will succeed.

So, let's turn over and look at 2 Peter 1:2, and let's notice what Peter had to say. **2 Peter 1:2—Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Joshua the Christ, our Lord, as His divine**

power, speaking about the power of God, **has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us to glory and virtue, by which are given to us exceedingly great and precious promises.** God has made some awesome promises to you and me, brethren.

I know everyone doesn't understand this, but I hope they do come to understand what the Great God of this universe has offered to those in God's Church. I hope everyone sees the importance of this Feast season and where we are in time. I hope everyone sees the importance of living the way that God says, the way that He is instructing us during this Feast of Unleavened Bread. He teaches us the way to strive with keeping that sin out of our lives. It's valuable lessons that we learn through this season by just simply putting leavening out of our life, out of our homes. It teaches us so much about God.

Verse 4 tells us, **by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may**—let's notice—**be partakers of the divine nature**, regardless of when your change comes, brethren, **having escaped the corruption that lies in the world through lust.** Those lusts of the flesh that have taken so many out, that have destroyed so many lives. The influences of this world, Satan's world has destroyed so many lives, brethren. But his time is short-lived.

But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, talking about the way that we should live, talking about the way that we should conduct our lives, and let's notice, **you will be neither barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Joshua the Christ.** The knowledge that we need to be there, brethren.

For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness. That's the way God had it written. That's what happens when your mind turns. Your mind, when it turns from the truth, you will end up being blind to the truth. That's what this is speaking about. And if you lack these things, you will not be able to see and you will not be able to understand what is taking place.

And let's notice the rest of what is being said... **and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his sin.** The very thing that they said at Passover, that's what they forgot. They said that they wanted their sins forgiven. They said that they wanted to live a new way of life, the way that God says, but they have forgotten it, brethren, and it's a sad thing. But it's a warning for you and me because the Feast of Unleavened Bread is a time that we reflect upon our lives, and we have seen how sin has affected so many.

So, it's for our learning, these examples that are here and the examples that have been amongst us. There are some that have lost so many friends, but you and me are at the end of an age. But these examples and this learning is for you and me. We are knocking on the door, brethren. Our deliverance is very, very near.

Verse 10—Be even more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble. And let's notice—an entrance will be supplied to you—let's notice where—into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Joshua the Christ. That's what's being offered to you and me now.

But it doesn't matter when our deliverance is. But for those that live to see Joshua the Christ returning to this earth that will be an awesome event to see. It should excite every one of us beyond our wildest imaginations just to be able to see that one event in itself and to see this earth transform in a way of life that only God and God's power can bring about.

So, we need to reflect on our lives during this Feast and examine ourselves and not forget about what God has done for us, the miracles that He has already performed. It's a miracle that you are here listening today. It's only because God has called you and opened your mind that you are here. That's a miracle in itself, to open one's mind to God's truth.

Let's turn over to **Matthew 16:1**. This is where **The Pharisees and the Sadducees had come, and they were testing Christ. And he was asked if he would show them a sign from heaven, and he answered and said to them, When it's evening you will say it's fair weather for the sky is red. And in the morning it will be foul weather today for the sky is red and threatening.** And let's notice what he said to them, **Hypocrites!**

You know, the protestant world pictures Christ, their Jesus, as a weak human being. But Christ was a strong individual when he walked the face of this earth in his physical form, and he didn't mince his words when he was dealing with the Pharisees and Sadducees as we can see here. He called them to their faces, hypocrites. So, this shows you and me that he was a strong individual, and he stood up for what he was teaching.

And he said, **You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern—the signs of the time.** And it's no different today. When we look around at this world and we see the condition that this world is in, and they cannot discern the times that they are living in. And if you cannot, you're in deep trouble, brethren.

The only way that we know the condition of this world is by God letting us know. That's the only way that you can know that it's about time for God's Son to come back to this earth. And this world is clueless to that event. But it's how we understand, and it's through the mind that God does it. We can look around and unless God intervenes in this world, man's world, Satan's world, it's headed for total destruction.

Verse 5—When his disciples had come to the other side—let's notice what had happened—they had forgotten to take bread. And this is what Christ said to them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. They were speaking among themselves, and **they were reasoning**

among themselves and saying, **Is this the reason he's saying this, is because we forgot to take the bread?**

And let's notice what he was doing. He was aware of what they were speaking about, **And he said to them, O you of little faith...** So, why did he tell them this? Let's see what he was doing. **Why do you reason among yourselves because you brought no bread?** This is what he was doing. He is reminding them of who he is and the miracles that they saw him do. **Do you not yet understand?**

And the same question that can apply to you and me, do we not yet understand who Joshua the Christ is? Do you not understand who God the Father is? Do we not understand what is about to take place upon this earth? When we look through this book we can ask the same questions. Do we believe there was a flood? Does everyone believe that a man named Abraham walked the face of this earth? Does everyone believe that Joshua the Christ was upon this earth and came as the Passover so that you and I can be sitting here today? Do we believe the miracles that Christ did while he was upon the face of this earth?

And he asked them, Do you remember the five loaves of the five thousand? How many baskets did you take up? In other words, he was asking them, "Do you remember?" **What about the seven loaves of the four thousand? How many large baskets did you take up?**

And let's notice **verse 11—How is it that you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread?** It was not about the bread, brethren. Let's notice—**but to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.** God has called you and me out of this world, and we have to be aware of the influences of this world, the doctrines of this world. It's not God's world.

So, do we believe that God has sent two at the end of an age to lead His Church, the one that is preparing for His Son to come back to this earth? Do we believe that this is where God has revealed 57+ truths to His Church?

Let's notice what Christ had to remind them of, of where the truth was. And let's notice **verse 13—When Christ came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples—and let's notice what he asked them—Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? And they said—let's notice what is said—Some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, others said Jeremiah or one of the prophets. Verse 15 let's notice what he said to them. It should be the same question to you and me, the same one that he asked them. But who do you say that I am?** He knew what others were saying, but here he got very specific with them.

Simon Peter answered and said, You are the Christ. "That's who you are. You are God's Son, and you are the Christ. ...**the Son of the living God.** And I hope we begin to understand who Christ really is and what he has done for you and me.

And let's notice what Christ told them – **Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah**—let's notice what he said to them—**for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but it was revealed by my Father which is in heaven.** “That's how you knew this.” And it's how you and me know. It's through the mind that we know these things. And if you're understanding and you believe that God has sent two at the end of this age, it's the same God that revealed it to them. He has revealed it to you and me just as He did to them. It's how you know, by God revealing it to your mind.

In everything, brethren, we should be thankful for what the Great God has revealed to you and me. We should be very thankful for the knowledge that we have. We should be thankful that we have the privilege to know the correct way to live our lives. It is a privilege, brethren.

Let's turn over to **1 John 1:5—This is the message which we have heard from him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.**

Verse 6—If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness—just what we're discussing, this is just another way of explaining it, **If we say we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness we lie and do not practice the truth. But if—**here is that word “if” —**if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Joshua the Christ, God's Son, cleanses you and me from all sin.** This is talking about fellowship with God and Joshua the Christ.

But when we come together in God's Church in fellowship we experience something. We feel it when we walk into a room with brethren where they have gathered, and we can feel the bond with each other, and it's a wonderful thing to experience. And what you are actually experiencing is the spirit of God in those rooms when we come together.

And it says, “If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another.” That's what it is. And we understand this, it's God's spirit. When it's in the room you know you are in true fellowship, and you feel as you have known everyone all their lives.

Verse 8—If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

1 John 2:1, let's just continue on. He says, **My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin.** That's why he's doing it, so that we will not sin. **If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Joshua the Christ the righteous. And he himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.** Those that will accept God's offer.

By this we know him—let's notice—**if we keep His commandment.** Those commandments tell us how to live our lives. **He who says, I know Him, and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is being perfected in him** (better

said this way). **By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought also to walk just as he walked.**

An example, brethren, walk without sin. It's a way of life for you and me. It's a way of life that God instructs those of us in His Church, and He tells us about it in this book through examples. He says to walk without sin, put it as far away from us as we can. Strive to always keep sin out. That's what this season is about, teaching a way of life that teaches us the correct way to live life.

Verse 15—Do not love the world. It's not our world, it's Satan's world. **...or the things that are in it.** It's Satan's. But there's a new world coming. His world is passing away; a new age is on the horizon in just a short while.

And if anyone loves this world, talking about Satan's world, **the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, Satan's world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father,** it is of Satan's world. And let's notice what's being said. **And the world, Satan's world, is passing away, and the lust of it.** It's just a matter of time now and Satan's world will come to a close and a new age will begin where Joshua the Christ is the King. **But he who does the will of God abides forever.**

But when we look around, do we see just how sick this world is that has been created? Do we see the lust that is so rampant? Do we see the pride that shines like a light in this world that has been created? Can we see the sins that are so visible to you and me in this world that's been created by this being? Can we see that no one really wants God? No one wants God in their life at this time. But the good news is, is that this age is passing away and it's coming quickly, brethren. This world does not have long before a new world will begin.

I can't wait until this age is passed away and a new age is here. And I long for this day, and I hope everyone else does too. And just as Christ told the disciples that it was not about the bread – and it's not about the bread that we put out of our homes, it's about putting and keeping sin out of our lives – and putting the leavening out of our homes is a reminder of sin for you and me.

This Feast is a reminder for those of us in God's Church about sin and the effect that sin has on one's life. It can lead one out of God's Church. We've seen more leave than have stayed. Hopefully, repentance will take place for some of those. I'm afraid for some the unpardonable sin has taken place for them.

God tells us that He has dealt to each one of us a measure of faith. God also tells us that the just shall live by faith. And this is how we live, by faith, the same as those in Hebrews 11. Moses lived by faith. All that are listed in Hebrews 11, they all lived by faith, and they all had to live this way of life. All had to try to keep sin out of their lives. Just as you and me, all of them had to strive against sin, to keep sin out. All have God's Son as their Passover so that their sins can be forgiven.

Joshua the Christ is the nobleman that Luke tells us about in chapter 19. You don't have to turn there. Christ is the nobleman of that parable, and it teaches that he went to the throne of God, a far country, and he was coronated as King of kings over all the nations, and then he will return back to this earth. We're waiting for him to do that. At its very climax, when mankind would destroy everything that is alive upon the face of this earth, that is when Joshua the Christ will return.

This time he's coming as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish world government upon this world, upon this earth, and then he will begin to teach mankind the correct way to live their lives, a way that you and I are learning about now.

Mankind will be taught about sin and how to strive to keep sin out of their lives, and to teach them about a Passover that they now have, that when they sin they can have their sins forgiven and live the way of life that God has instructed mankind to live, the way that He instructed you and me to live.

So, brethren, have a wonderful Feast of Unleavened Bread.