



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Exodus 13: 1-16

“The Feast of Unleavened Bread”

TRANSCRIPT

Tonight, we are continuing our study from Egypt to Canaan. Contrary to the pattern of the last few weeks, I would like to turn first to a passage in the New Testament, and then we will turn to a passage in the Book of Exodus. 1 Corinthians chapter 5, verse 6 through verse 8 because, later on we will be referring to this passage again. 1 Corinthians chapter 5, verse 6 through verse 8. Remember the context the apostle is talking about, the problem of discipline that existed in the church of Corinth and he has spoken about the discipline in verse 5 and then in verse 6 he says:

“Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out, therefore, the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

And now let's turn to the Book of Exodus. We will read first verses 25 through 30 of chapter 12 and then we will read a few verses of chapter 13. Now, in chapter 12,

Moses has given us a description of what was to take place on the night of the Passover and, particularly in verse 12 and verse 13.

“The Lord had told Moses: ‘For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt both man and beast and, against all the gods of Egypt, I will execute judgment for I am the Lord. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial and you shall keep it a feast of the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever.’”

Remember, the Passover then became the first of the feasts that Israel celebrated and the month *Aviv*, which was the month of roughly our April, became the first month of the Jewish calendar. Now, in verse 15 through verse 20, we have the unfolding of the second feast which follows immediately upon it.

“Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. And in the first day there shall be to you a holy convocation, and in the seventh day a holy convocation to you. No manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you. And ye shall observe this feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies or your tribes of people out of the land of Egypt. Therefore, shall ye observe this day and your generations by an ordinance forever. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even.”

So, as you can see, the Passover lamb was sacrificed in the afternoon and then, when the next day began at evening, that was the first day of the Feast of unleavened bread. Verse 19:

“Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger born in the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.”

Now, as you read through the Bible, of course, you would know that leaven becomes, often, a typical thing, typical of sin, and so this is a reference to the fact that no leaven was to be eaten because that week, which as we shall see, symbolized the life of Israel, was to be an unleavened kind of life. Now in chapter 13, verse 1 through verse 16, we have further details concerning the feast of the unleavened bread and we going to read now verses 1 through 16:

“And Jehovah spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast it is mine. And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the Lord brought you out from this place. There shall no leavened bread be eaten. This day came ye out in the month *Aviv*. And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that thou shalt keep this service in this month. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day shall be a feast to the Lord.”

And, of course, this feast is the second of the feasts of the nation Israel, which they were to celebrate annually.

"Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters. And though shalt show thy son in that day saying, "This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt and it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand and for a memorial between thine eyes that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth. For with a strong hand hath the Lord brought thee out of Egypt. Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year. And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites as he swear unto thee and to thy fathers and shall give it thee, but though shall set apart unto the Lord all that openeth the matrix and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast. The males shall be the Lord's. (Kind of a feminist remark but that is permitted for the Lord God.) And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb. This is the word for redeem that means to ransom so we have a nice illustration here of ransom and, of course also, for substitution.

And if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break its neck and all the first-born of man among thy sons shalt thou redeem. And it shall be, when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand Jehovah brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage.

You know, I think that this is not in the message, particularly tonight, but as we bring our children in to observe the Lord's Supper, and we observe this week after week, it is not uncommon for the children to say, "Daddy, why do we do this?" and what an opportunity to tell them why; to give the gospel. And I do not know whether you know this or not or whether you remember this, but when the Passover service were celebrated

there was a particular place in the Passover when the "pater familias", that is, the father of the family give a little exposition of the significance of the Passover.

Now, I don't know what is done today because I have never sat in the home in which orthodox people sought to observe the Passover, but I would like to hear some of their explanations. The one, of course, that I would have liked to hear more than anything else, was the one that the Lord Jesus who was the "pater familias" for the apostles gave them at that point in that service when they asked, "What meaneth this?" And the Lord expounded to them the significance of the Passover supper. Verse 15:

"And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man, and the first-born of beast. Therefore, I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the first-born of my children I redeem. And it shall be for a token upon thy hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes for by strength of hand,' (this is the fourth time he said this, verse 3, verse 9, verse 14, verse 16) 'by strength of hand, the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt.'

Now we have been studying, from Egypt to Canaan, and we have been concentrating attention up to this point in the Book of Exodus, but we are not going to give a complete exposition of the Book of Exodus because the theme is from Egypt to Canaan, and so we'll be picking out those interesting typical incidents in the remainder of the story of Israel in the wilderness that illustrate the theme, from Egypt to Canaan. But the picture, so far we have seen, is something like this: the children of Israel went down into the land of Egypt, and there they became bound slaves of the Egyptians. Now, the typical sense of that is very plain, that is designed to typify our human bondage to sin and to Satan. And so, Israel and the land of Egypt illustrates the individual who has never been redeemed in bondage to sin and in bondage to Satan.

And then remember in the earlier chapters of the Book of Exodus, the Lord laid his hand upon Moses and Moses was given the commission to deliver the children of Israel from the bondage in the land of Egypt and so Moses, of course, becomes an illustration of the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. Moses, himself, is a type of the Lord because he is the one who was given the prophecy, "There is going to come a prophet after me who is like unto me and unto him you Israel shall harken." But Moses is particularly a deliverer in the sense that he is the leader of the children of Israel and the services that God gives to the nation Israel during this experience; the Passover, the feast of unleavened bread, and others, also represent the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. And then, of course, the deliverance from Egypt through Moses' leadership and through the Passover and the land that was slain, that illustrates the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ who delivers us from bondage.

As Hebrews puts it in the 2nd chapter, and the 14th and 15th verses of that book, 'For as much then as the children of partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself, likewise, took part of the same that through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil,' you can think of Pharaoh as an illustration of this, 'and deliver them who, through fear of death, were, all their lifetime subject to bondage.'

So now we will continue the pageant from Egypt to Canaan and it's natural for us after the Passover to think about the feast of unleavened bread. Remember Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians chapter 10 and verse 11 where the apostle looking back over the history of the nation Israel reminds them that the things that happened to them were examples. 1 Corinthians 10:11, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come. So we read the book of Genesis and Exodus and Leviticus and Numbers and Deuteronomy because they illustrate things that are true of us. This is the great example book, "The Law of Moses" and from Genesis all the way through Deuteronomy, we have some marvelous illustrations. In fact, the whole of the Old Testament, of course, is illustrative.

When we come to the gospels, we have the manifestation of the fulfillment in the ministry of the Lord Jesus. And then in the epistles, we have the interpretation of the things that have happened in the gospels and of the illustrations that has been set out of the of the Old Testament. Augustine, in a very, very familiar statement, often repeated, express the essence of it when he said, "The new is in the old contained; the old is by the new explained." So let's think of the fulfillment of these great prophecies in the ministry of the Lord Jesus as we look at the feast of unleavened bread.

Now let's turn to chapter 13 in verse 1 and verse 2 and let me again read these verses. "The Lord spake unto Moses saying, "Sanctify unto me all the first-born whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel both of man and of beast; it is mine." Now, it is important, I think, to remember that the first-born in the family had priestly rights for the family and thus was representative of the family. Let us also remember that the Lord has already called Israel his first-born. So, in this feast of unleavened bread, those who had been spared by the destroying angel represented the nation Israel and so God speaks to Moses and says, "Set apart to me all the first-born, man and beast."

One might ask why the beasts and probably the answer would be something like this. First of all, for illustrative purposes but also because the destiny of beasts are tied up with the destiny of men. Remember that the fall of men took place in history, the redemption of man takes place in history so far as man's spirit is concerned. It's natural to expect the full redemption of men and of the animals who were subjected to the results of the Fall, to also take place in history. And that is, of course, the theme of the great kingdom of God passages of the Old Testament. The Fall that took place in history, the effects of the Fall touching not only men but animals and the creation, the Lord Jesus has come to make the great sacrifice by which the deliverance from the bondage occurs. The redemption has taken place so far as the spirits of men are concerned, but their bodies await the resurrection and the creation awaits also the ministry of him at his second

advent. So the firstborn had priestly rights for the family and thus they were representative and, in the sanctifying of the first-born, that was illustrative of how Israel itself belonged to the Lord.

So they were to set apart the first-born, both of man and beast, and the Lord was claiming, in effect, the nation as a whole because he had redeemed them through the great Passover sacrifice. Now, you can see from this that we have here of a picture of divine ownership. We have death, so far as the bondage was concerned. We have redemption through the sacrifice of the lamb, and now the people who are redeemed belong to the Lord. That is one of the great simple truths of the word of God that we so often forget. Listen to Paul's words, after he spoke about the feast of unleavened bread and the feast of the Passover in 1 Corinthians 5 in chapter 6 verse 19 and verse 20. "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which you have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are brought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

So, as a result of the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are not our own. We belong to him. That's being expressed right here in the Ancient Book of Moses: "Sanctify unto me all of the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb; it is mine." So this is a beautiful picture of divine ownership of the people of God. As Isaiah puts it, "Fear not for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name and thou art mine." It is so hard, at times, for us to remember this and even great men have difficulty with it too.

Many years ago, I read an account of an experience in F.B. Meyer's life. Mr. Meyer was one of the great preachers of the 19th Century, lived on into the beginning of the 20th Century, as I remember, but he preached at the same time Spurgeon preached; and they both preached in London incidentally. What great preaching there was in London in those days.

Now, I would have gone around to hear Mr. Spurgeon, because he was a Calvinist, but Mr. Meyer was also a great believer in the sovereign work of God as well. He was to recommend the people if they asked him where they should go to hear good preaching, "Go around the corner and hear Mr. Spurgeon; he is about as good as you will ever expect to find." Well, in one of his books, I think it's his book on Jeremiah because the title of the chapter in which his story is found is marred so he made it again, and thus it represents the work of the potter with his potter's wheel, and the fact that what he had been making was broken and marred and so he had to remake it.

And in it, Mr. Meyer says that 16 years ago he was a minister in the midland part of England and he was not at all happy. He said he was doing his work for the pay that he got. But he held a good position and he was highly regarded among those who knew him as a preacher. He sent Hudson Taylor, the great missionary, to China and two other fellows came into his life. They were just young men. He said, "I watched them; they had something I did not have." And those young men stood there in all their strength and joy and I said to one of them whose name was Charles Studd. Now, if you have read much missionary biography, you will recognize that this is C.T. Studd, also a great missionary to India and then to other places as well.

Mr. Meyer said to him "There is something that you have that I don't have. Why are you so happy? Somehow I am in trough of the wave." And Mr. Studd replied to him, "There's nothing I have got that you may not have, Mr. Meyer." And the Mr. Meyer said, "But how I am to get it?" Now, mind you, this is a man who has been preaching and preaching for a number of years. And he said, "Well, have you given yourself right up to God?" And Mr. Meyer said, "I winced when he said that. I knew that if it came to that, there was a point where I had been fighting my deepest convictions for months. I had lived away from it, but when I came to the Lord's table and handed out the bread and wine in serving the Lord in the local church, he said that problem in my life that, cupboard in my life," as he put it, "came back again and again."

"Whenever I went to Bible conferences and heard preaching, it again came into my life. It was the one point where my will was entrenched. I thought I would do something with Christ that night after talking with Studd and I would settle it one way or the other and, that night, I met Christ." And then Mr. Meyer said, characteristically. He said, "You will forgive a man who owes everything to one night in his life if to help other men, he open his heart for a moment. I knelt in my room and I gave Christ the ring of my will with the keys on it, but kept one little key back: the key of the closet in my heart, in one backstory in my heart. And the Lord said to me as I was in the room with him, 'Are they all here?'"

Now I am sure that the Lord didn't speak audibly to Mr. Meyer. He is talking about what was going on in his heart and he said, "All but one." And he said the Lord said, "What's that?" And he said, "It's the key of a little cupboard in which I got something which you you'd needn't interfere with, but it's mine." And then, as he put the keys back into my hand and seemed to be gliding away towards the door, he said, "My child, if you cannot trust me with all, you don't trust me at all." And he said, "I cried out, stop!" And he seemed to come back and, holding the little key in my hand, in thought I said, "I cannot give it to you, but if you will take it, you can have it." That's very characteristic of Mr. Meyer. He said, "I can't give it to you but if you can take it, you can have it. And he said, "He took it."

And within a month from that time, he had cleared out that little cupboard of things, which had been in my life for months. I knew he could and would. And then he said, "May I add one more word? Three years ago I met the thing I gave up that night." He never tells us what it was but he said, "I met the thing that I gave up that night and as I met it, I could not imagine myself being such a fool as nearly to have sold my birthright for that mess of pottage. I looked up into the face of Christ and I said, now I am thine. It seemed to me as that was the beginning of a new ministry. The Lord got me on his

wheel again and he made me again, like the potter, and he has been making me ever since. I learned that night to say yes and I tried to say yes ever since."

Well that is really what is meant ultimately by this little statement in verse 2 of chapter 13. Sanctify unto me all the first-born whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel both of man and of beast, it is mine. And my Christian friend, if you have been redeemed by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, if you have been bought with the price of that infinitely valuable blood, you belong to him all of your life. All of those cupboards that you may be trying to keep from the Lord, they are his and they are hindering fruitfulness and usefulness and happiness in the things of the Lord. You belong to him. You are bought with a price you are not your own. Therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which belong to the Lord.

Are there some cupboards in your life? Are there some things that you have been keeping back from the Lord? Are there things that you know are really hindering fruitfulness in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ? We all are ministers you know? We all are servants but not preachers like F.B. Meyer or C.H. Spurgeon, but we are all servants of the Lord and we all have the responsibility to be fruitful in our Christian lives, but if we keep back those cupboards, we will discover that we are not going to be fruitful for him. There is another picture here not only of ownership. It's the picture of identification and that's in the statement in verse 2. "Sanctify unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast," and that, of course, is the old story of the identification of this creation with the destiny of men.

Now, the command to keep the feast follows. And remember this about this feast. It begins on let us say on the Friday night as our Lord was sacrificed. It begins that night at evening and it lasts for seven days. I remember in this account that Moses gives, there is a convocation or feast on the first day of the feast, and then there is a convocation or a

gathering on the last day of the feast. So on the first day and on the seventh day, there are convocations, but the whole week is the feast of the leavened bread.

Now, I am going to ask you to turn again to 1 Corinthian, chapter 5 and let's notice what Paul says about this feast. He says here in verse 6 of 1 Corinthians 5, "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" Now remember that they were to have no leaven in their homes and furthermore they were not to eat any leaven that week. At the beginning of the week they were to go through the house and they were to see that no leaven was in the house.

In fact, the Jews have a little ceremony which was called the *bedikat hamez*; *hamez* is the word for leaven in Hebrew. It was a little ceremony called the ceremony of searching for the leaven and that existed in the time of our Lord and it still exists among the orthodox Jews in the lands of their dispersion. David Baron, one of the great Christian Jewish men whose books are really well worth reading, says he remembers the interest with which he has a boy he used to follow about his father on the evening before the fourteenth of Nisan as with the lighted wax candle in hand after uttering the prayer in the Jewish home, "Blessed art Thou, Jehovah our God, king of the universe to have sanctified us by thy commandment and commanded us to remove the leaven." He said his father would go through the house and he had followed his father and his father would look for all of the pieces of bread or leaven that might be found in the house, and they would be in some of the most unlikeliest places because they had been put their ahead of time.

It was a ceremony. And so they would go and he would pick up the leaven where they had put it beforehand, but he said I can remember my father going through that ceremony and then at the end of it, he would say to the Lord in the Chaldaic language, "All the leaven in my possession, that which I have seen and that which I have not seen be it null, be it accounted as the dust of the earth." In other words, if I have missed anything in my search for the leaven, don't count it against us, Lord.

So here in verse 6 now, he says, “Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out, therefore, the old leaven, that ye maybe a new lump, as you are unleavened for even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore, let us keep the feast.” So we have Christ our Passover who has been sacrificed for us. That's a past tense in the original text. 'Therefore, let us go keeping the feast.'

So you can see what Paul is doing. He is talking to the Corinthians and they had been involved in failure to exercise discipline. There is sin in the congregation in Corinth and he is just reminding them typically of where they stand in the Lord’s work for Christ, the Passover, has been sacrificed at Calvary. That's Passover sacrifice, and the feast of Passover has taken place, but now just as following the sacrifice of the lamb of the Passover, they were to live for a week without any leaven so those who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and had received the redemption that comes from the Passover sacrifice, they are to live their lives not for taking of leaven, that is in holiness and in righteousness of the truth.

So I say to you my Christian friends, this applies to you too. Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed. We live in the perpetual observance of the feast of unleavened bread because we as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are to live a life of holiness. No leaven. Nothing that is representative and exemplary of sin is to be seen in our lives. So we have here then a picture of the believers work. “Let us go on keeping the feast.” The Passover is his work....to keep the feast is our work.

Now, I want you to notice the things that are stated by Paul there because I think we can notice some special aspects of the way in which we are to keep the feast. First of all, it's to be a work in self-judgment. In other words, Paul is telling us that we not keep the feast with the old leaven. There is to be no leaven in the house and, in fact, in Deuteronomy, in chapter 16 when Moses refers to this. It's Deuteronomy chapter 16 and verse 3 reference is made to affliction. Listen to it. “Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction;

for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste; that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life."

And so the Passover sacrifice has been made, but the feast of unleavened bread continues. We have received the forgiveness of sins through the work of Christ on the cross, but we are to observe the feast of unleavened bread for the rest of our lives. So not live with the old leaven as Paul puts it. "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump as ye are unleavened." Isn't that interesting? Our position is that of people who are unleavened. Our position is that of being holy people before the Lord.

Now, if that's our position then we are to live in accordance with our position. So Paul is saying. I do not know whether you grow things in your yard like I try to grow them in mine and I say try, but I think it was one of the commentators, I don't remember which one. It may have been F.B. Meyer who said, "I have noticed when raising tomatoes that after planting the young tomato plants, in a week or two, the field would be littered with weeds. I never planted any of those pests. They came along uninvited. Adam is the originator of them.

I guess about a month ago, I planted about 25, I believe, chrysanthemum plants. I just took up little shoots off them put them in some little things like this and I have them in the greenhouse and they have already got buds, some of them, but those little pieces, those little containers just about two inches square, they've have already got weeds in them and some of the weeds are about half the size of chrysanthemum plants now, so you have to go in and pull out the weeds. I never thought of relating that to Adam, but I guess that's really what it is. Adam's been in my greenhouse and he has been causing these weeds to grow.

That's characteristic of the human life and when Paul talks about eliminating the leaven. Well, that means pulling the weeds. There are so many ways in which we displease the Lord. "Never excuse sin in your own life," Billy Sunday once said, and then

a woman said to him "I have a violent of temper, I admit it, but then I am like this. I don't hold the grudge. I am quick up and quick down." You see, she was excusing the fact that she had a temper. And Billy Sunday is reported to have replied to her, "Yes, you are quick up and quick down, so is a shotgun.....does a terrible lot of damage while it's blowing." So many of us Christians are like that and we try to excuse our failings and our sins because we say that's just the way I am, but that's what God is doing with us. He is trying to make us different. So one of the things that we have to think about when we think about the believers' walk and the observance of the feast of unleavened bread, is the necessity of self-judgment.

Now also this was a walk on fellowship because the observance of the feast of the Passover was observed by eating bread and by offering sacrifices. When you read the accounts both here and in another places in the Mosaic law, you will find that they offered sacrifices in the morning, they offered sacrifices through the day, they offered sacrifices at night and they ate unleavened bread. All of that is exemplary. It is designed to represent the kind of life what we live as believers and daily we offer ourselves to the Lord. Daily we are to be occupied with him, our activities in Christian life or activities of worship and praise and communion with the Lord. That's what Paul means when he says, "Purge out therefore the old leaven that ye may be new lump as ye are unleavened. Therefore let us keep the feast not with the old leaven neither with the leaven malice and wickedness."

In other words, those things that characterize the old life, they are to go, and finally this was a walk in freedom too because...it's not stated in Exodus chapter 13, but if you will read over in the Book of Numbers in chapter 28 verse 18, verse 25, and other places, it's said more than once that no servile work was to be done that week. In other words, it was a week of freedom from bondage and that too is illustrative of the Christian life. As Paul says in Galatians 5:1, "Stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has set you free."

We have been freed for liberty in the Christian life, not to subject ourselves to the ten commandments as a code, but we are free and to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit as the standard for Christian living. So throughout the Christian's life what is he to do? He is to bring Christ to God. He is to be occupied with the Lord Jesus. His activity is activity directed by him through the Holy Spirit. His life is a life filled with communion with the Lord Jesus Christ. That was the week of Israel and the feast of unleavened bread. That's the week of our whole life for Him. Not "What I opt to be" should guide us, "But what does God through the Holy Spirit desire for me to do." "Oh, fix our earnest gaze, so holy Lord on thee, that with thy beauty occupied we elsewhere none may see," someone has written.

There is also a picture of continued purity in this because this feast went on for seven days. For Saturday, for Sunday, for Monday, for Tuesday, for Wednesday, for Thursday, for Friday. That's all the days of the week. In other words, that's typical of the whole lifetime. There isn't any part of our life that is not lived on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. This was a feast that by the very fact that it was a week long was designed to illustrate the whole circle of life. And again, that's what Paul is talking about when he says, "But with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, our lives are to be filled."

Notice the difference in tenses, "Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed for us, therefore, go on keeping the feast." The Passover is related to a past time for our Lord has suffered once and for all in the past, but the keeping of the feast, that verb is in the present tense. It's durative action. "Therefore, let us go on keeping the feast." For Paul, if he were standing here, and if I were to step aside and say, "You can speak for a few moments on this point. What does the present tense mean?" He would simply say to you, "That's illustrative of the fact that the Feast of Unleavened Bread represents the whole of our Christian life. From Sunday to Sunday. It is to be lived without leaven occupied with the Lord Jesus Christ."

Now the command to set apart the beasts and redeem the men follows in verse 11 through verse 16, "When the Lord shall bring thee into the land," and there are some interesting things that are mentioned here, but we have just a moment or two and we don't have time to elucidate them, but in chapter 13 and verse 13, we read these words, "And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break its neck: and all the first-born of man among thy children shalt thou redeem." The reference, of course, is to the substitutionary activity of the Lord Jesus Christ. The lamb was to be given for the ass. That's illustrative of how the Lamb of God is given for unclean animals, for the ass was an unclean animal. Unclean animals represent us.

That Hebrew word, which is used for redeem here, as I mentioned in the reading Scriptures the word "For ransom" and so the Lord Jesus is the lamb, the clean animal, given for the ass, the unclean animal. And the ransom price is the ransom price of his person and his blood. See how Moses has given all of these things, which were designed to prepare Israel for the coming of the Lord. Then there is a picture of judgment there. "If thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break its neck and all the first-born of men among thy children shall thou redeem as well." So the unredeemed life must die. That expresses judgment.

And let me close on just this note. We have here a picture of human gratitude, which ought to be our response. Notice verse 3, "And Moses said unto the people, "Remember this day, in which he came out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, for by strength of Him, the Lord brought you out from this place, there shall no leavened bread be eaten."

In verse 15, "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that Jehovah slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man, and the first-born of beast, therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being

males; but all the first-born of my children I redeem. Now, Deuteronomy says this is to be done all the days of your life. We are never to forget the source of our deliverance. And it's the strength of the hand of the Lord. Never is there a time in our life, in which we do not reflect upon the fact that we have been redeemed with the price of the precious blood shed by the Lord Jesus Christ. Let me just remind you that this is called a feast. Therefore, this should be joyous.

And if the Feast of Unleavened Bread is reflective of our whole lives, what does that tell us, my Christian friends? Well it tells me just a very practical thing. If anybody comes in the door of Believers Chapel, they ought to be able to say, "That's a joyous group of people." Now, [name redacted] is joyous. I see him over there. He's smiling, he's joyous already because he is thinking about that, he is. He has the joy of the Lord upon his face. But we all should be joyous. This is a feast. The Christian life is a feast, my Christian friends. And so from beginning to end, it should be characterized by the vitality of a good time, What better time could you have than being a Christian and living a Christian life.

I don't know who told this story, but it's a true story. It seems that there was a ship called the Central America, which got into some difficulties, and they were somewhere, and they didn't know exactly where they were, obviously because they ran up a flag of distress, finally. And another ship happened by and saw the flag of distress and they came over, close enough to signal to them and they said, "What's the matter?" And the answer came back, "Water, water, we are dying for want of water." Then the answer back to them, "Dip it up then, you're in the mouth of the Amazon." And the mouth of the Amazon pours out fresh water into the Atlantic for a long place, a big place, as it enters the Atlantic Ocean. There they were in the fresh water and they didn't know it. Well I imagine they had a kind of a feast when they dipped it up.

So listen, if we have come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and we have the forgiveness of our sins, the Passover has been sacrificed for us, let us go on keeping the

feast, enjoy the Christian life, and also making him known to others too, who don’t have the opportunity that we have to know our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Aren't these marvelous illustrations of spiritual truth? It's a sign of the inspiration of the word of God. It's one of the greatest signs of the inspiration of Holy Scripture, that so many years ago, these things were given by God to instruct Israel and prepare them for Christ, but also to help us understand the kind of Christian life that we are to live today. Let us bow in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we thank Thee and praise Thee for these marvelous typical stories which speak to us of important things that have to do with our Christian life. And we ask Lord that we may live this Christian life as if it were a true feast, for that is really what it is. A feast. And may Lord, there be no leaven in our houses. Deliver us from sin, and disobedience and the things Lord that keep us from fellowship with thee. Take them out of our lives. Give us Lord the enabling power to turn over to thee the keys of all of the cupboards of our lives. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.