

Audio Transcript of Sermon
April 2, 2026
First Day of Unleavened Bread

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. Today we celebrate the First Day of Unleavened Bread, the first of the Holy Days given by God in the Bible. We do this when most who call themselves Christians ignore the Holy Days and Sabbath, and we look to what is given to us in the Bible. The New Testament references the Holy Days, including the Days of Unleavened Bread. In Acts we have recorded for us a time after the death of Jesus when Herod sought to bring harm to the church by killing James the brother of John and attempting to take the life of Peter as well to placate the Jews. This all happened during the Days of Unleavened Bread. Acts twelve verse one.

Acts 12:1-3

- 1. Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church.**
- 2. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.**
- 3. And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. Then were the days of unleavened bread.**

Some will look at the passage from Acts and might conclude the Days of Unleavened Bread were only mentioned because it was during this time that the Civil authorities tried to please the Jews, much like had been done earlier with the crucifixion of Jesus. The Holy Days rehearse God's plan for mankind and because a good portion of God's plan is still pending in what we call prophecy, understanding prophecy is much more difficult when the Holy Days are ignored. Within the Church of God we keep the Holy Days understanding them through the lens of faith in Jesus Christ. In seven weeks we will be keeping Pentecost, the Holy Day on which the Holy Spirit was first given, and later in the fall will come several Holy Days, including the Feast of Trumpets, and trumpets are prominently used in prophecy in the Book of Revelation. Getting back to the passage in Acts, this all happened during the Days of Unleavened Bread, which marks a week during spring. We believe like us, the early church kept the Days of Unleavened Bread, and that the reference to the Holy Days was not just a reference to something that was Jewish.

Later in Acts, during the journey of Paul, we know that the Days of Unleavened Bread were used to mark the time during the year when Paul sailed from Philippi to Troas. Acts twenty verse one.

Acts 20:1-6

- 1. And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia.**
- 2. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece,**
- 3. And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.**
- 4. And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.**
- 5. These going before tarried for us at Troas.**
- 6. And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.**

When James was killed and Peter was taken during the Days of Unleavened Bread earlier in Acts because it pleased the Jews, and the Jews also kept these days, we can understand why many might conclude the Days of Unleavened Bread is only for the Jews. But, when the journey by Paul's entourage from Philippi to Troas is referenced as taking place after the Days of Unleavened Bread, between two cities outside of Judea, then those days were of importance to the early church. If Easter was of importance to the early church, this would have been a great passage to mention it, but the Days of Unleavened Bread are mentioned instead.

To us, the First Day of Unleavened Bread and all of the Holy Days given by God in the Bible are more than just a place on the calendar. In writing to the Colossians, Paul shows that Holy Days, the calendar of God, and weekly Sabbath all give us a shadow of things to come, and we can use these days to help us better understand God's plan of salvation, what will happen in prophecy, and what will happen in the future for all who are saved. We know that as we keep these days that nothing replaces the death of Jesus, because without the death of Jesus, the meaning of these days would have no importance for us, because without the death of Jesus, there would be no opportunity for salvation. We are also reminded to let no man judge us in our faith. Colossians two verse sixteen.

Colossians 2:16-17

16. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

17. Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

Christians who ignore the Holy Days, the Sabbath, and the calendar used by God, are not reminded year after year, month after month, and week after week of the shadow of things to come. The meaning of prophecy for them becomes distant and confused. Considering the current Holy Day, bread and unleavened bread have a huge role in the symbolism of the Bible. Of and by itself there is nothing magical about bread or unleavened bread, but these serve as symbols to remind us of our faith and further us towards our salvation. During this feast, it is especially timely for us to focus on Jesus as our Bread of Life, because scripture shows there is no other name by which we may attain salvation. During the next week we will be eating unleavened bread during this feast as we focus our life on sincerity and truth, but of and by itself, eating unleavened bread will not attain eternal life for any person. Jesus is the Bread of Life, which is one of the reasons why during the Passover those who observed ate unleavened bread which represented His body. It is through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that life, eternal life, can be given to people, and as we surrender ourselves to His will and love, we will never hunger and we will never thirst. John six verse twenty-seven.

John 6:27-58

27. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

28. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

29. Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

30. They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

31. Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

32. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.
33. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

The disciples wanted to eat of that bread and Jesus told them He was the bread of life. All whom would be called by God the Father would come to Jesus and would never spiritually hunger or thirst and have eternal life.

This caused a controversy among the crowd because they had a hard time understanding the message of Jesus. He then added an important point not often considered today. A person must first be called by God the Father to come to Jesus. While we often don't think of people of faith murmuring against Jesus today, all we need to do is look to what people do to see murmuring in action, practicing a faith inconsistent with what is in the Bible. These people keep Sunday, Easter, Christmas, and religious holidays of man's design instead of the Sabbath and Holy Days found in the Bible. Even though they look at what is written in the Bible and what Jesus taught, they rationalize why these do not apply. Those who are called by God the Father who can come to Jesus, do not murmur against Jesus and they do what is taught in the Bible. Verse thirty-four.

34. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.
35. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.
36. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.
37. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.
38. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.
39. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.
40. And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.
41. The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

42. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

43. Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

44. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

45. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

46. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

As we respond to God's calling, we start to live a life aligned to the Holy Spirit by seeking first the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness, and we demonstrate our belief in not only God the Father but in Jesus Christ without Whom we would have no opportunity for eternal life. The bread from heaven that the children of Israel ate, the manna, did not give them eternal life. They all died. The bread of life is Jesus Christ symbolized by His body. Jesus also taught that we were to drink His blood. Today from events immediately prior to His death, we know that the unleavened bread and red wine that are symbols during the Christian Passover are how we physically eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus. Verse forty-seven.

47. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

48. I am that bread of life.

49. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

52. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

53. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

The symbols of the bread and wine during the Christian Passover keys us into the spiritual mindset we must develop. Do we spiritually consume Jesus Christ in our

life? Much like the old saying, *“You are what you eat,”* we become like Jesus Christ as we consume Jesus Christ. If all we do is partake of the physical symbols of the Passover, the bread and wine and do not also spiritually consume Jesus Christ in our life, we need to ask ourselves if all we are doing is eating and drinking damnation to ourselves. Verse fifty-four.

54. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

55. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

56. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

57. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

58. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever.

In consuming the symbols of the Christian Passover, the bread and the wine, and knowing we are also to spiritually consume Jesus, to make Jesus every part of our life in what we do, imagine the problem that could arise when people did not understand the significance of those symbols and somehow valued other symbols. That was part of the problem in Corinth.

In partaking of the bread and wine which symbolize the body and blood of Jesus, it is like we are being told and reminded to totally consume Jesus, to leave nothing left till morning as was taught during the Old Testament Passover. Imagine if we only consumed parts of Jesus, and did not totally consume Jesus? It would be like being invited to a fine meal and purposefully leaving food on your plate. With Jesus, we cannot choose which parts of Jesus we will consume and which parts of Jesus we will not consume, because we cannot choose which parts of the Bible we will obey or ignore. We consume it all to have eternal life. It is with this understanding of how we totally consume the Body of Christ, the Word of God, what Jesus taught and what is otherwise recorded in the Bible, that we have access to eternal life which will be given to us at the return of Jesus Christ.

Some believe the Feast of Unleavened Bread and the Christian Passover need not be observed because they might think that when Jesus died, so died the commandments and the Holy Days. The New Testament provides evidence that

the early church believed and practiced, otherwise. In writing to the Corinthians Paul references the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread, relevant to this time of year. Paul was well taught and knew the scriptures better than probably any other person alive during his time. He had been given an elite religious education. If the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread were no longer to be kept, Paul would have definitively provided the scriptural basis to do so using many words in multiple letters.

Nowhere does Paul do this. Instead, he tells the Corinthians and people like you and me reading today that Jesus Christ is our Passover and to keep this feast, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, not with the old leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Sincerity and truth comes from not only partaking of the physical symbols of the Passover, but day in and day out totally consuming Jesus Christ in our life. We do not pick and choose which teachings of Jesus we observe. We do not pick and choose from other parts of the Bible what we observe. We consume the words of the Bible as these are reflected in the teachings of Jesus and become what we spiritually eat. First Corinthians five starting in verse one.

1 Corinthians 5:1-8

- 1. It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.**
- 2. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.**
- 3. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,**
- 4. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,**
- 5. To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.**
- 6. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?**
- 7. 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:**
- 8. 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.**

Without this sincerity and truth, instead of becoming more and more like Jesus Christ, all we are doing is fooling ourselves to become more and more like ourselves. In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul gives examples of what we are not to be doing, and if we are doing any of these things, we need to examine ourselves to see if we are keeping this feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, or if we may have problems with the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Let's take a look at a warning given in the New Testament beginning with second Corinthians twelve verse twenty.

2 Corinthians 12:20-21

20. For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

21. And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

What do debates, envy, anger, upheaval, disloyalty, gossip, egos, and chaos lead to? Nothing good. Within the Church of God these will lead to the shattering of the church and alienation of the faithful. Like the early church, we need to put these aside if any of these are present with us. The early church was keeping the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread because these are commanded in the Bible, as are other Feasts of God, and that is the very reason why we are doing the same today. Notice what is written in Leviticus twenty-three verse five.

Leviticus 23:5-8

5. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover.

6. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.

7. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

8. But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

Leviticus twenty-three contains information about all the Holy Days given by God. Unique to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, it is the only feast that is kept with unleavened bread, hence the name. When Paul was writing to the Corinthians

and saying, *“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,”* it was the Feast of Unleavened Bread, with the first day we are observing today that he was referencing. This shows that the church immediately after the death of Jesus still observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread and by extension the Holy Days.

Some who read the passage from Leviticus will ask about the offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days. They might also ask about the sacrifices mentioned with other Holy Days in other books of the Old Testament. The difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament is the death of Jesus Christ, our Passover, Who died once for all. With Jesus, there is no longer a need for the sacrifices and offerings mentioned in the Old Testament. This is explained for us in Hebrews chapter ten beginning with verse one.

Hebrews 10:1-7

- 1. For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.**
- 2. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.**
- 3. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.**
- 4. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.**
- 5. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:**
- 6. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.**
- 7. Then said I, Lo, I come in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God.**

Hebrews was restating a principle shared in Psalm forty, starting with verse six.

Psalm 40:6-8

- 6. Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.**
- 7. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me,**
- 8. I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.**

Many believe the God of the Old Testament is a cruel and an unjust God never considering that it was Jesus Who was the Word in the first chapter of John, Who was with God and was God by whom all things were made, including those things made in Genesis chapter one. That same God of the Old Testament did not desire sacrifice and offering. In Exodus we are given further instructions regarding the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Exodus twelve verse fourteen.

Exodus 12:14-20

14. And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever.

15. 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.

16. And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an 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.

17. And ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance forever.

18. 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.

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, or born in the land.

20. Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.

Jesus compared leaven to the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and linked this type of religious hypocrisy to lack of faith tied to reason. He reminded the disciples of feeding the five thousand men plus women and children with the five loaves of bread. As we observe these Days of Unleavened Bread we must have the leaven out of our house, but if we are not also removing religious hypocrisy from our life, we are missing a major point of the teachings of Jesus. Matthew sixteen verse five.

Matthew 16:5-12

- 5. And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.**
- 6. Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.**
- 7. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread.**
- 8. Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?**
- 9. Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?**
- 10. Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?**
- 11. How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?**
- 12. Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.**

It is in Luke that Jesus links the doctrine of the Pharisees to hypocrisy and through the words He used, showed that what the Pharisees actually did in private was much different than what they taught in public. What we do in the privacy of our homes cannot be different than what we publicly acknowledge, because doing so is hypocrisy, and through these Days of Unleavened Bread we are learning to focus on the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth and not the leaven of hypocrisy. Luke twelve verse one.

Luke 12:1-3

- 1. In the meantime, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.**
- 2. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.**
- 3. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops.**

Jesus affirms that it is possible for religious groups to have hypocritical doctrines that make them look good in the public eye while doing what would be very questionable behind closed doors. Individually and as a group we cannot live with that double standard. We cannot proclaim liberty while we oppress, nor we cannot proclaim righteousness while we live a life of sin. Jesus had issue with the Pharisees regarding their oppressive and hypocritical doctrine. If we allow ourselves to live by a double standard, we will find ourselves living a double standard when it comes to the truth. Instead of living the truth we could find ourselves living a lie.

We can deceive ourselves into believing we are acting righteously out of love towards God, and yet we must examine ourselves according to the standard given to us in the first letter of John chapter four, beginning with verse twenty.

1 John 4:20-21

20. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

21. And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

When we act hypocritically and use our religious faith to oppress people, we cannot claim that we love God. We do not need to sugarcoat what is in the Bible, nor do we need to apologize for the Bible and what is called sin. But we cannot use the commandments as a shield that we weaponize to oppress others because Jesus is a source of liberty, not oppression. We are to be righteous so that our righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees. Notice Matthew chapter five beginning with verse seventeen.

Matthew 5:17-20

17. Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but

whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

In writing to the Galatians, Paul reminded them of the need to obey the truth. There is nothing given to us in any place in the Bible that tells us to disregard the truth. Any thought that there is any excuse to not obey the truth does not come from God the Father nor does it come from Jesus Christ. During these Days of Unleavened Bread, we are to eat the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth avoiding even a little leaven which leavens the whole lump. That leaven that leavens the whole lump is linked by Paul to not obeying the truth, what Jesus called the hypocrisy of the leaven of the Pharisees. Galatians five verse seven.

Galatians 5:7-12

7. Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?

8. This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.

9. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

10. I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.

11. And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.

12. I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

The scribes and Pharisees were berated by Jesus as hypocrites because they kept people from the Kingdom of God. We cannot keep people from God's Kingdom because that is not our call to make. It is God who calls people.

Matthew twenty-three verse thirteen.

Matthew 23:13-28

13. But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

We cannot publicly act religious and use that religious stance to oppress people. Oppression is always oppression even when attempts are made to link it to faith.

Sharing the truth of the Bible is not oppression, but it is possible to twist the truth of the Bible into oppression. In the passage Jesus mentioned how the homes of widows were devoured. The scribes and Pharisees didn't eat the house, but they found crafty ways to take the house away from the widow, who back at that time was a person with nobody else to lean on. Instead of visiting the widow in her affliction through the truth, oppression weaponizes words of the Bible to afflict the widow. Verse fourteen.

14. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

We cannot bring people to the faith and then create a situation where once these people are of the faith, to expect more spiritually of these people than we expect of ourselves. Verse fifteen.

15. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

We cannot use Biblical phrases and words to justify our actions when what we want to do is hypocritical. There is no magic phrase or words that ever will justify an action of hypocrisy. Verse sixteen.

16. Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!

17. Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

18. And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

19. Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

20. Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

21. And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.

22. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

We cannot be laser-focused on only some issues of faith while ignoring the broader spiritual principle. For instance, if we only focus on removing leaven from our homes, without living lives of sincerity and truth, we have ignored the broader spiritual concept while solely focusing on the physical requirement. Verse twenty-three.

23. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

24. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

We cannot live a life where outwardly religious faith is a costume we wear but inwardly our lives are full of spiritual corruption. We need to be less concerned with how other people perceive our faith because God and Jesus are able to look at our inward lives and know if we are living a life of spiritual hypocrisy or spiritual sincerity and truth. Verse twenty-five.

25. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

26. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

Outward appearances of righteousness may impress other people but if we are secretly living a life of sin, we will not impress God or Jesus Christ. Our outward appearance of faith must match our internal reflection of faith. Verse twenty-seven.

27. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

28. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Living a spiritually focused life with our mortal bodies should be a constant reminder of sin, and a constant reminder that it is through Jesus that we attain eternal life. As we are living our life, we are not to be living a life of hypocrisy, but of sincerity and truth. We can read the words of Peter to help us do this by knowing through the Holy Spirit we have a taste of the divine nature of God and with this gift we must through diligence exercise our faith and grow virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love so that one day we can be part of the Kingdom of God. Second Peter one verse one.

2 Peter 1:1-11

- 1. Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:**
- 2. Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,**
- 3. According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:**
- 4. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.**
- 5. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;**
- 6. And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;**
- 7. And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.**
- 8. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**
- 9. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.**
- 10. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:**
- 11. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.**

As we celebrate these Days of Unleavened Bread we are reminded of the leaven of the Pharisees, and the hypocrisy by which they lived and we are to be so far

removed from those religious practices. We cannot oppress others and even think we are right with God and Jesus. We cannot share our faith with others and then use faith as a basis of oppression. Instead, we are to keep this feast, these Days of Unleavened Bread with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, reflecting the teachings of Jesus while rejecting the hypocrisy of the Pharisees.

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.