

UNLEAVENED BREAD

As we read through the Bible we come across the name Abraham, born to Abraham, is his son Isaac, and to Isaac was born Jacob whose name was later changed to Israel and from Jacob came the 12 tribes of Israel, this is the beginning of the people of God. They were the children of God during the Old Testament times. God uses the children of Israel during the time of the Old Testament to help us learn what pleases God and what displeases God.

One of Jacob's sons was Joseph, he was one of his favorite sons and one of the youngest. Because Joseph was favored by Jacob this made his brothers jealous, as a result of their jealousy they sold Joseph into Egypt. However, Joseph trusted in God implicitly, as a result of Joseph's trust in God ultimately he was favored by Pharaoh the king of Egypt who put Joseph in charge of all of Egypt, Joseph was given the task to build up food for Egypt to prepare for a coming famine in the land. By the time the famine struck Egypt had barns and barns full of grain and food stored in preparation for the famine. The famine was so severe that the Egyptians themselves had to sell everything they had to obtain food to endure the famine, and it reached so far that even in the land of Canaan where Jacob's household and family were, they were also severely struck by the famine and had to come to Egypt in search for food and grain and corn.

When Pharaoh learned that Joseph's father and household were coming to Egypt to buy corn, because Joseph meant so much to Pharaoh that Pharaoh asked Joseph to bring his entire family into Egypt and gave them the best part of the land the most fertile in Egypt, therefore, Israel was able to make it through the famine without selling anything of theirs because they had food and fertile land. This was all on account of Joseph and his faith and trust in God, that God blessed him and his family richly.

As time went on eventually Jacob died, and Joseph and all that generation who came to Egypt died, however, Israel was fruitful and multiply in number greatly, to where they became a vast number of people in Egypt and finally the Pharaoh who Joseph meant so much to died and a new Pharaoh arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph, he didn't know anything about the children of Israel who were dwelling in Egypt. All he saw was a group of people who were not Egyptians living in the land of Egypt living in the most fertile part of the land of Egypt and were better off than the Egyptians themselves, so he decided to do something about that. He set taskmasters over the Israelites enslaving them into hard labor and they were now in bondage in the land of Egypt and were made to work for the Egyptians making brick out of clay and straw which were used to make buildings in Egypt. Israel was held in Egypt, in bondage to Egypt for 430 years and they cried unto God because of the agony of bondage they were in.

God is using Israel in Egypt to teach a spiritual lesson. Israel represents the people of God and the land of Egypt represents the world in which we live. Before we are saved we are all held in bondage to sin in this world. The second Pharaoh who arose over Egypt who knew not Joseph represents Satan and we; before we are saved are held in bondage by Satan.

As time goes on and it is approaching nearer the time when God is going to deliver his people out of their bondage; there is a Hebrew boy that is born by the name of Moses. He is taken away by the wife of Pharaoh and raised as an Egyptian. It is this Moses that God is going to use to

deliver his people from bondage in Egypt. This is a spiritual picture of God delivering his people from the bondage of sin and we are delivered out of bondage by Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son.

As the time comes to its fulfillment when God is going to deliver Israel out of bondage in Egypt, God sends Moses and Moses's brother Aaron to Pharaoh, to demand that Pharaoh let God's people go. Pharaoh is not going to let the people of God go. He wants to keep them in bondage to serve him. However, after a significant number of plagues in Egypt, there is one final plague God is going to send on the land of Egypt and that is the death of the first born. In preparation for this final plague Israel is given instructions, each family is to sacrifice a Lamb and place the blood on the door posts of their houses, because God is going to send the Angel of death through the land of Egypt and every house that does not have the blood of the lamb on the door posts of the house, that house will experience a death of the first born. And the Israelites are to bake bread for their journey, this bread they are to bake is not to have any leaven in it, it is to be unleavened bread.

The spiritual picture of this is those who are to become saved are saved by the death of the first born of God, this is Jesus Christ God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ is also the Lamb that was sacrificed and we who are saved; are saved because of the blood of the Lamb which is represented by the blood put on the door posts of the children of Israel who were in bondage in Egypt.

As the Angel of death swept through the land of Egypt. This was more than Pharaoh could handle and he let the people of God go. And Israel began their long journey through the wilderness to the land that was promised them by God. This time is known as the Passover, and God gave the Israelites specific instructions to observe the Passover every year and during the time of the Passover they are to eat unleavened bread for seven days.

This represented the time in which Jesus went to the cross to offer himself as a sacrifice for mankind. Therefore, all through the Old Testament time Israel was given command to observe the Passover every year and to observe the feast of unleavened bread for seven days. Each time they observed the Passover and the feast of unleavened bread this ceremony was pointing ahead to the time of Jesus Christ and his sacrifice that he made for us on the cross. Jesus Christ is our bread.

Unleavened bread is of great importance in the Bible, it is associated with the Passover; the time when the Lamb of God was sacrificed. Which, represents the sacrificed Lamb of God; Jesus Christ, sacrificed on the cross for our sins. The Bible describes the celebrations of the feast of unleavened bread in (Exodus chapters 12 and 13), and in numerous places throughout Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. When we search for the word unleavened we find it mentioned numerous times throughout the Bible. God describes the ceremonies of unleavened bread that Israel was to observe. When the Bible speaks time after time, of these ceremonies that are to be observed, this is so Israel will not forget the importance of it.

When we look for the importance of unleavened bread, there are many people who say the purpose of unleavened bread is because Israel was taken out of Egypt so quickly they did not

have time to allow the bread to rise. However, this does not explain why it was so important that Israel would be required to observe the feasts of unleavened bread in their ceremonies time after time and year after year.

As we search to understand the importance of unleavened bread it is helpful if we first understand leaven and how it is used spiritually in the Bible. We find leaven mentioned in the Bible by Jesus in the book of Matthew.

Matthew 16:5, 6

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.

In the following verses in Matthew we find the disciples thought it was because they did not take bread with them, as to the reason Jesus warned them of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. But as Jesus explained to his disciples, it was not because they did not bring any bread with them. Jesus reminded them of the five loaves and the 5000 people who were fed by it and how many baskets full they took up afterward. Also the other time where they fed 4000 people with only seven loaves of bread and how many baskets full of fragments they took up afterward. We see this in the following verses in Matthew.

Matthew 16:7-11

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?

We know immediately that Jesus was not speaking of physical leaven, in these verses from Matthew, therefore, rather than looking for a physical meaning to leaven we must look for a spiritual meaning to how God would use leaven spiritually in the Bible. As we continue reading from Matthew 16, we find its spiritual use.

Matthew 16:12

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 makes it very clear in (verse 12) that leaven represents false doctrine and false teaching. Jesus knew that the doctrine of the Pharisees and the Sadducees was not the truth, therefore Jesus gave them a warning of the teaching from the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

Leaven is what would be used to put in bread to make it rise when you were going to bake it. So next, we want to also look at how bread is used spiritually in the Bible.

John 6:32-35

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.

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.

From these verses in John we see that Jesus is the bread he is the true bread. As we looked at the leaven, the leaven represents false doctrines and false teachings. These false doctrines and false teachings would be mingled with the true teaching of Jesus Christ and salvation through Christ. Therefore, the observation of unleavened bread during the time of the Passover we begin to understand the importance of unleavened bread during Passover. Jesus Christ is our Passover he is the Passover lamb; the sacrifice, he is the true bread which comes down from heaven. This bread is unleavened bread it is not distorted by the doctrine or teaching of man.

There shall come a time which has already begun when there shall be false teaching added to the true doctrine of salvation, in other words leaven added to the bread. As Jesus gave the warning to the disciples beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. We must remember that Jesus Christ is our sacrifice; the offering for sin. Salvation comes by the way of Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone he is the unleavened bread.

Jesus also gave a warning of the true gospel being overrun by false doctrines.

1 Corinthians 5:6-8

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.

As it says in this passage in 1 Corinthians it tells us in verse 6, “a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” You need only a little wrong teaching to permeate the entire gospel of salvation and distort the entire gospel. In one of Jesus’s parables he mentions this.

Matthew 13:33

33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

We know from the Bible that judgment is coming, therefore, the closer to judgment day we come the more God allows false teachings to spread throughout the gospel of salvation in order to prepare this world for judgment. In (Matthew 13:33), what we find this parable teaching is

leaven being added to three measures of meal, and we are told that a woman hid the leaven in the meal. The woman in this parable represents the church, this is not the truth church which is made up of true believers, this church be parable is speaking of are those who want to be identified with Christ they would better be known as the make believers.

The true church is not only seen as a woman but as a bride made ready for her husband, as we see in Revelation 21.

Revelation 21:2

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

This is the true church the true body of believers. Not everyone who identifies themselves with Christ our true believers, the churches throughout the land are sprinkled with make believers and as we get closer to the time of the end God allows the churches to be made up of more make believers seeing as the woman. As this woman adds leaven to three measures of meal, what is happening is the church introducing false teachings with the gospel of salvation.

What we learned from these verses is the closer to the end we come, the more God will allow the gospel of salvation to be overrun by false teachings. As Jesus tells how the kingdom of heaven here is on earth will be, by using the example of leaven being added to the bread until the whole loaf is leavened. As we see in this parable by using the illustration of leaven the false doctrines and false teachings will be much like leaven being added to bread. It only takes a small amount of leaven in bread and it works its way through the entire lump of dough. Until finally the entire loaf is leavened.

When it comes to God's gospel of grace, there is to be nothing added to it. Our salvation is dependent upon God alone through his Son Jesus Christ. If there is any requirement added to the gospel of salvation that mankind must do in order to be saved, that would be seen as adding leaven (false teachings), to the gospel of salvation. There is nothing that we must do to be saved, there is no action required for us to take in order to become saved.