

Sunday February 3rd 2019
The Word of God
A Survey of the Bible – Lesson 14H
‘The End of Your Faith’

1). 1 Cor 5:6b..... *Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

We had seen last time that God has set in place another unchangeable pattern to be understood by those who would be His household servants in this dispensation as they look to the salvation of their souls. It is the pattern seen in blood and leaven.

a). All begins for us with Christ our Passover who was sacrificed for us. The death and shed blood of the Savior, on whom we have believed; receiving the breath of life, the Neshamah of God, that has given us life for the eternal ages – Eph 2:1 *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins.....8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

Receiving eternal life though is only the beginning. It is our entrance into the race of the faith, a race that we must run to win – 1 Cor 9:24 *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. 25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. 26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. 27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*

Receiving eternal life is the beginning of taking up our cross, the beginning of being the living sacrifice. And although eternal salvation is incredible in its

accomplishment it is not the 'so great salvation' spoken of in Hebrews Chapter 2. And the 'so great salvation' spoken of here is the same salvation seen in – Heb 10:39 *But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.*

And this salvation, the salvation of the soul, is 'so great' that it is impossible to find sufficient superlatives to do it justice, although we can know that even if we were to gain the whole world, such a gain is so inferior that it could not be compared to the value of a redeemed soul.

b). And it is to make this salvation possible that God in the person of Son died and shed His blood.

2). And we have seen how the nation of Israel has been given to us as a type to teach us great spiritual truths concerning this very thing. And simply put, we see that Israel's deliverance from Egypt through the death and shed blood of the Passover lambs was for a specifically revealed purpose – Ex 6:8 *And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and I will give it to you as a heritage: I am the Lord.' "*

The purpose for Israel's deliverance was to receive the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as their inheritance and as God's adopted firstborn son to rule at the head of the nations.

a). And in conjunction with God's purpose for them came the necessity for them to deal with the leaven – Ex 12:15 *Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.*

And with that command came God's expectation for His people, based on the enormity of what He had planned for them – Ex 19:4 *'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. 5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6 And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'* These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

God's expectation then was that the nation should obey His voice and keep His covenant, that they should put the leaven out of the house and eat no leaven

for 7 days, a complete period of time, so as to be to Him 'a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'

b). And if we go back to the verses we began with today from 1 Corinthians Chapter 5, we can see that beyond the death and shed blood of Christ, our 'Passover Lamb', we are to purge out the old leaven just as Israel was to do, so that we might 'keep the feast'.

c). And as with Israel our deliverance from the world through the Lord's death and shed blood has purpose – Mt 21:43 *"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it."*

Heb 3:1 *Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,*

We are called to receive the heavenly Kingdom taken from Israel as our inheritance, to rule over the Gentile nations of the earth with the Christ in the age to come – Heb 2:8 *You have put all things in subjection under his feet." For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him.*

But that rulership is for the age to come, it is not now – now is the time in which we are to purge out the old leaven in obedience to the Word so that we might be – 1 Pe 2:9 *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

d). And as there is a direct parallel between Israel and Christians through the blood and the leaven, so there could also be a direct parallel in the outcome for both. Which is why Israel is given to us as a type, to present a warning to that end – 1 Cor 10:5 *But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. 6 Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. 7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." 8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; 9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; 10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened to them as*

examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

The admonishment then is that we should not do as Israel did, because if we do the outcome for us would be the same as for them – Heb 3:16 *For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, was it not all who came out of Egypt, led by Moses? 17 Now with whom was He angry forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey? 19 So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*

And as we look at the beginning of Hebrews 3:16, we see, ‘for who having heard, rebelled?’ We see that Israel had heard, they had heard that which God had said, they knew they were supposed to deal with the leaven. But rather than do that they rebelled – they acted in a contrary way to that which God required of them.

e). And to jump down to v19, we see that they couldn’t enter into the rest God had prepared for them in the land ‘because of unbelief’, because of unfaithfulness, because they had not properly received that which God had given them, His Word, even though they had heard it. They had heard the audible sound, but the spiritual truth contained therein had been obstructed, because they had not dealt with the leaven as the Lord had commanded.

f). And we had seen last time, that Israel’s failure to deal with the leaven can be traced directly to their attitude to God’s Word. Failure to remove the leaven meant they had an incorrect attitude to the Word and the incorrect attitude to the word meant they failed to deal with the leaven.

g). And this incorrect attitude can be seen in – Ex 20:18 *Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off. 19 Then they said to Moses, “You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.” 20 And Moses said to the people, “Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin.” 21 So the people stood afar off, but Moses drew near the thick darkness where God was.*

That ‘the people stood afar off’ is a telling statement. And if we combine that with their assertion, ‘let God not speak to us, lest we die’, we can see where they found themselves.

h). As we have already established, God's Word is the breath of life, the Neshamah of God, and only through receiving that Word would their spiritual life be sustained. From this perspective they would not die if God spoke to them but have life.

i). But, if we then see this from the perspective of their carnal nature and the challenge to deal with the leaven, we can see that their fear was not of God, but of having to die to self if they continued to hear God speak – 'let God not speak to us lest we die'.

j). Then this whole scenario is poignantly pictured through the nation's attitude to the manna - Num 11:5 *We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; 6 but now our whole being is dried up; there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes!" 7 Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its color like the color of bdellium. 8 The people went about and gathered it, ground it on millstones or beat it in the mortar, cooked it in pans, and made cakes of it; and its taste was like the taste of pastry prepared with oil.*

Rather than accepting the manna for what it was, God's supernatural provision to sustain and nourish them on their wilderness journey to the land, they sought to change it to make it palatable to their leavened desires – They stood afar off from it. The result was that what they then had resembled the manna, but it was no longer the manna as God had given it.

k). And as God then gave them that which they lusted after, it did not bring sustenance and life, but death – Num 11:13 *Where am I to get meat to give to all these people? For they weep all over me, saying, 'Give us meat, that we may eat.'33 But while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was aroused against the people, and the Lord struck the people with a very great plague. 34 So he called the name of that place Kibroth Hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had yielded to craving.*

l). And not partaking of the manna as God had provided it could only lead the nation down the road to spiritual bankruptcy, and ultimately death as it directly impacted their attitude to the land of their inheritance and their calling within that land – Num 13:32 *And they gave the children of Israel a bad report of the land which they had spied out, saying, "The land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. 33 There we saw the giants (the*

descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight.” 14:1 So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. 2 And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, “If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! 3 Why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?” 4 So they said to one another, “Let us select a leader and return to Egypt.”

The failure to deal with the leaven corrupted the Word of God given to them and the corruption of the Word caused them to reject the land of their inheritance and their calling in that land. And instead of looking to the joy that was set before them as God’s adopted firstborn son, they looked back to Egypt; they desired to cling to that from which they had been delivered, to go back to that which the blood had separated them from, to embrace bondage rather than liberty.

h). This sets matters out pretty clearly for us, and we can find reference to this in the Lord’s words at His first advent – Lk 9:62 *But Jesus said to him, “No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”*

Lk 17:32 *Remember Lot's wife.*

And the most extraordinary blessing we have here and now is the example in the nation of Israel of what we should not do if we want to be found worthy at the Lord’s Judgment Seat.

3). Joh 6:32 *Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” 34 Then they said to Him, “Lord, give us this bread always.” 35 And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.....48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give*

for the life of the world.” 52 The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, “How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?” 53 Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. 56 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. 58 This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.”

The manna in the wilderness foreshadows the giving of the ‘Bread of Life’, ‘the living bread which came down from heaven’, ‘the Word made flesh’.

a). And just as the manna provided all that Israel needed to be nourished and sustained on their wilderness journey so eating ‘the flesh’ of the Son of Man and drinking His ‘blood’ provides all that is needed to sustain us on our journey to the land of our calling and is the only way we can have life for the age to come.

b). And we are of course talking about the Scriptures, the Word made flesh in Jesus. Again, as we have seen in past weeks, it is only by feasting on this Word, by being continually filled with the Spirit, by receiving with meekness the implanted word, that our soul can be saved. But at the time Jesus spoke the words recorded in John Chapter 6 we see that – Joh 6:66 *From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.*

Or, we could say, they stood afar off and did not want Him to speak to them anymore.

c). But, in order for the eating of His flesh and the drinking of His blood to be properly accomplished on our part, we must purge out the old leaven, continually laying aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, not conforming ourselves to the world, but being transformed by the renewing of our mind instead.

d). We have seen through the type of Israel what will happen if we don’t do this – so how is the removal of the leaven to be done? What is the process? How can we make sure we don’t follow the same path as Israel?

e). Well, firstly and most importantly, we must have the correct attitude to the Scriptures. We must understand what they are and why they are and receive them just as they have been given. We must hear the voice of God

through His Word for ourselves and not rely on someone else to tell us or stand afar off because what we hear is too challenging to our own carnality.

f). We must not, as those in the wilderness did, try to change the Scriptures and manipulate them to make them compatible with secular ideology or political correctness, and we should steer clear of anything that Man produces that does just that. Because something is labelled 'Christian' it does not automatically mean it is scripturally sound. And with that in mind let's remember what we read in 1 Corinthians, 'a little leaven leavens the whole lump'.

g). But if we have the correct relationship with the Word and we are continually filled with it then it becomes possible for us to deal with the leaven as we are transformed by the renewing of our mind.

h). And the leaven is to be dealt with in 2 ways – 1 Th 5:22 *Abstain from every form of evil.*

Firstly, we are to keep ourselves apart from 'every form of evil'. When the temptation comes to indulge our fleshly lusts we should resist it and not give in to it – 1 Cor 10:13 *No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. 14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.*

Jas 1:27 *Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.*

Jas 4:7 *Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*

And it will no doubt cross our minds that the more we correctly engage with the Word the greater will be our spiritual strength to 'abstain from every form of evil' – Eph 3:16 *that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, 17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith;*

i). But let's also keep in mind the other side of the coin here, so to speak-

Rom 7:21 *I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. 22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!*

Because we still have an ever-present sin nature, our unredeemed soul, it is inevitable that at some point we will be overcome by sin, and when we do, we come face to face with the second aspect of dealing with the leaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord – 1 Joh 1:8 *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Heb 4:14 *Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

As we go to the Lord as our High Priest, going boldly to the throne of grace, and confess our sins ‘that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need’, so He forgives us and cleanses us from all unrighteousness. And in this way the leaven is removed.

j). As we abstain from every form of evil, so we put the leaven out of the house, and if we then eat the leaven then we go to our High Priest and that leaven is removed from the house. And in this way, we keep the feast of unleavened bread from a Christian perspective. And if we keep the feast then we shall become part of the royal priesthood, part of the holy nation, part of His own special people.

k). Our soul will be saved, we will be adopted as a firstborn son and our body will be redeemed and we will become a companion of Christ as a joint heir for the age to come – Rom 8:16 *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

More next time – if the Lord is willing.