

From Unleavened Bread to Pentecost: Lessons Learned (Go To Meeting)

Russell Kemp—May 6, 2022

I did give a part of this message on the Sabbath after the last day of Unleavened Bread, and I did that because there are a lot of lessons that we have to learn when we look at Unleavened Bread and where we go from there.

When we look at ancient Israel and we see when they left Egypt and all the miracles and things they went through. They went through the Red Sea on the last day of Unleavened Bread. Then they got into the wilderness and they had a multitude of problems. All but two of those who left Egypt at 20-years-old and older, never made it to the ‘promised land.’

I want to take a look, because you and I went through that same thing at baptism, going through the Red Sea. After we went through the Red Sea and Unleavened Bread, we’re now on our path to Pentecost, the Feast of the Firstfruits.

We have to ask ourselves that question. We’re in the wilderness just like they were. Are we going to make it? Will we make it to the Feast of Firstfruits?

When we read the history of Exodus, we’re basically looking at the physical movement of a nation from Egypt to a new ‘promised land’ that God promised. When we look at Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread in the New Testament, we’re looking at a spiritual movement of people from sin to the ‘promised land,’ which is simply the Kingdom of God!

When we go back to Exodus, we learn that the blood of the sacrificial lamb was offered to protect Israel. These are all things we’re very familiar with. From the death of all the firstborn of both man and animal, and when we turn to the New Testament we learn that Christ, in like manner, was the Lamb of God offered to protect us from the death penalty. We all come under that death penalty.

In Exodus we learned that God, through many miraculous and wondrous miracles, escorted Israel out of Egypt with the promise to take them to that ‘promised land.’ This was a land full of ‘milk and honey.’

In the New Testament we’re told that through repentance and baptism—which most of us have been through—we are to receive the gift of the

Holy Spirit, and eternal life in God’s Kingdom, our ‘promised land.’

In Exodus, we learned that Israel is to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days *to test them* to see if they were to indeed *trust and follow God!* God would test them to see if they would obey His Laws in a new way of life, and to put out in both mind and attitude the life that they lived in Egypt. They had to get it out of their system!

In the New Testament we learned that Egypt was a type of sin and that Pharaoh was an example of Satan and his army of demons.

We, the same as the ancient Israelites, are to flee Egypt (sin) and like ancient Israel we will be protected by God from Pharaoh (Satan and his demons). This brings us up to the last day of Unleavened Bread.

- What lessons can we learn and extrapolate from all of this?
- Where do we go from here?

Exodus 12:14—*God tells Israel: “And **this day shall be a memorial to you.** And you shall keep it a Feast to the LORD throughout your generations. **You shall keep it a Feast as a Law forever.**”*

God wanted these days to be a memorial, a reminder for a future generation, of what He did for His people and the miracles that He performed.

Verse 17: “And you shall keep the *Feast of Unleavened Bread*, for in this very same day I have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore, **you shall keep this day in your generations as a law forever.**”

After that He went on to explain why and how to keep those days. Of course, as later generations today we do just that. We keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which we just came out of it.

LESSON #1—don’t turn back, but stand still and watch the salvation of God

As the Israelites departed Egypt it was actually a short journey to the land of Canaan. It wasn’t something that would have take 40 years. But God wanted to ensure that they understood:

- *Who* provided for them

- *Who* protected them

So, He took them on a different route!

He actually placed them in a position where they could not turn to the left or the right, and in front of them was the Red Sea. God wanted them in a position where they had to trust in Him! They were boxed in and being pursued by an the entire Egyptian army.

Exodus 14:3: “For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, ‘They *are* trapped in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.’ And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart that he will follow them. And I will be glorified through Pharaoh and all his army, **so that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD.**’ And they did so” (vs 3-4).

God had a purpose; everything He does has a purpose!

Verse 5: “And the king of Egypt was told that the people fled. And the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people. And they said, ‘Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?’ And he made his chariot ready and took his people with him. And he took six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them. And the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. And he pursued the children of Israel, and the children of Israel went out with a high hand” (vs 5-8).

We actually know the rest of this story. Israel was trapped between Pharaoh, his army and the Red Sea. They didn’t have much of a choice. Here’s the point I’m driving at; here’s where I’m going with this; the people of Israel saw the position that they were in. Here was the response to Moses:

Verse 11: “And they said to Moses, ‘Have you taken us away to die in the wilderness because *there were* no graves in Egypt? Why have you dealt this way with us to carry us forth out of Egypt? Did we not tell you this word in Egypt, saying, “Let us alone so that we may serve the Egyptians?” for it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than that we should die in the wilderness”” (vs 11-13). *These are the people who witnessed:*

- the plague of the frogs
- the plagues of turning all the water in to blood
- the plague of darkness so much that it hurt
- the plague of the flies

And finally, the plague of the killing of all the firstborn dieing in Egypt.

Then the miraculous protection of the children of Israel. But they looked back and they wanted to return to the comfort zone, where they were. Rather than trust God, they were willing to return to slavery and the culture of Egypt.

In other words, ***they looked back!*** Let give you one more example of looking back, and we’re familiar with thee things. You remember the story of how God was about to destroy Sodom. It was another extremely sinful city; yet, God promised an opportunity for Lot and his family to escape the destruction about to come.

He, his wife and daughters were explicitly told not to look back. It’s kind of interesting that the rest of Lot’s family didn’t even go, but:

Genesis 19:26: “But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.”

She couldn’t give up the things that she had had before. Like the children of Israel leaving Egypt, Lot’s wife just could not give up the life she had. She just wanted to go back.

In Luke 17, Christ explains that as we approach His return, it will be similar to Lot’s situation. In other words, destruction is about to come, no question.

Luke 17:31: “In that day, let not the one who is on the housetop, and his goods in the house, come down to take them away; and likewise, let not the one who is in the field return to the things behind. **Remember Lot’s wife** (vs 31-32)

What was she told? ***Don’t look back!***

1-Corinthians 10:1: “Now, I do not wish you to be ignorant *of this*, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea.

Verse 5: “But with many of them God was not pleased, for their dead bodies were strewn in the wilderness. Now **these things became examples for us, so that we might not lust after evil things, as they also lusted**” (vs 5-6). *They wanted to turn back!*

Galatians 4:9: “But on the other hand, after having known God—rather, **after having been known by God—how is it that you are turning again to the weak and impotent elements**, to which you again desire to be in bondage?”

That applied to Israel physically, and it applies today to us *spiritually!* You and I have given the same opportunity of a new life and God’s protection, and the promise of His Kingdom. Do you want to return to the old life and conform to this world instead of God?

I have a hard time understanding why so many people who I went to church with many, many years ago, that when tough times came they were willing to go back to the life they had prior to baptism—ministers, elders—so many of them, some who are now teaching in Baptist churches keeping Sunday and the holidays of the world.

If we are indeed nearing the end-time, we're going to be facing some very tough times ahead. Do we trust in God, or do we turn back? God gave the children of Israel no choice but to trust and follow Him as they fled the Egyptians. He put them in that position.

He sends us the same message today, to stand still and watch the salvation of God. The children of Israel passed through the Red Sea on the last day of Unleavened Bread. So, the first lesson of Unleavened bread is ***don't turn back, but stand still and watch the salvation of God!***

LESSON #2—trust and have faith in God

You would certainly think by now, after the miracles that God had performed, that Israel would trust in God and stop complaining.

Exodus 16:3: "And the children of Israel said to them, 'O that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots, when we ate bread to the full, for you have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger!'"

Of course, we know the result. Once again, the Lord listened to their complaining and provided manna to eat. He even used it to set the example of the Sabbath Day by providing the double portion on the sixth day. We're all aware of that.

Exodus 17:3—*then once again complaining:* "And the people thirsted there for water. And the people murmured against Moses and said, 'Why is this, *that* you brought us up out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?'"

- Are we like ancient Israel wandering through a desert with no faith?

or

- Do we, from this day forward in faith?

Please understand, ***we are the children of Israel, and the children of Abraham!*** If not physical descendants, but we are certainly *spiritual through baptism!*

Listen to what God has to say about His protection for us:

Isaiah 41:8: "But you, Israel... [you and me]

...*are* My servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham, My friend; whom I have taken from the ends of the earth, and called you from its uttermost parts. And I said to you, 'You *are* My servant; I have chosen you, and have not cast you away'" (vs 8-9).

- here's what's important
- here's what comes next
- here's what God's promise to us is

Verse 10: "**Do not fear; for I am with you; be not dismayed; for I am your God. I will strengthen you; yea, I will help you; yea, I will uphold you with the right hand of My righteousness.**"

Like God's promise to protect Israel, after the crossed the Red Sea, He promises to protect and provide for us. Are we paying attention.

We're not in that 'promised land.' We're like they were at the time out in the wilderness. We're still going through that wilderness.

- Will we be prepared?
- Will we be ready?

We're facing difficult times ahead!

This country and this generation has been sheltered for some of the more devastating things that have happened, and continue to happen around the world. I don't think any generation of humans has ever—at least in my country, and I've traveled through a lot countries—had the benefits that we have had.

Those days of shelter and protection are coming to an end! This country is bankrupt both physically and spiritually, and the people just don't know it, yet.

Anyone in their right mind has to understand that these trillions of dollars of deficit that they keep tossing around ***are totally unsustainable!***

The life we have known is basically over! It's changing rapidly every day. When the financial collapse finally comes is anybody's guess. But rest assured, it's coming! When our financial collapse comes, we can no longer sustain the military might that we've enjoyed for so many years, and our standing with the rest of the world will collapse. I'm just saying, ***we have trying times coming!*** It shouldn't shock us! Peter tells us:

1-Peter 4:12: "Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial among you *which is* taking place to test you, as if some strange thing *were* happening to you."

- When these things happen, will you look back and lose faith?

or

- Will you stand fast and watch the salvation of the Lord?

Speaking of Moses and the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt:

Hebrews 11:27: “By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he persevered, as if he were seeing the *One Who is invisible*.... [Christ] ...By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of the blood so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not slay them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea as through a dry *land* in which the Egyptians, while making *the attempt*, were swallowed up *by the waters*” (vs 27-29).

The Exodus from Egypt was accomplished in large part ***because of Moses’ faith!*** He trusted God! Will we have that faith and trust in God as we approach our ‘promised land’?

LESSON #3—don’t lose sight of the ‘promised land’: eternal life in the Kingdom of God

The children of Israel were instructed by God, through Moses, on His laws and expectations for Israel.

Exo. 20-31—God gave them the Ten Commandments and all the other instructions, but He said they still had to go forward to the ‘promised land.’

Exo. 32—we see once again the faithlessness of the people. No sooner did Moses go up into the mountain to receive instructions of from God, the children of Israel lost their faith once again:

Exodus 32:1: “And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, then the people gathered themselves to Aaron, and they said to him, ‘Up! Make us gods, which shall go before us, for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’”

We all know the rest of that story and how that went. But again, they didn’t have trust and faith in God. All I can say is WOW! All the miracles performed by God, *and they still lacked faith!* In spite of all that this is what the Lord said to Moses:

Exodus 33:1: “...‘Depart, go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, to the land which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, “To your seed I will give it.” And I will send an angel before you. And **I will drive out** the Canaanite, the

Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite; to a land *that is* flowing *with* milk and honey...” (vs 1-3).

Here we have people about to enter the ‘promised land’; a land of “...milk and honey...” They were promised to receive God’s protection.

- Is that what happened?
- Did they finally learn to put their trust in God? ***Absolutely not!***

Num. 13—we see that Israel sent out people to spy out the land before entering. This is the report:

Numbers 13:27: “And they told him [Moses] and said, ‘We came to the land where you sent us, and surely it flows with milk and honey. And this is the fruit of it. However, the people that dwell in the land *are* strong, and the cities *are* walled, very great. And also we saw the children of Anak there’” (vs 27-28).

Even after God promised them victory over the people of the land. This is their response:

Verse 29: “The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south, and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains. And the Canaanites dwell by the sea and by the riverside of Jordan.”

They were afraid to take the land, even though they had a good report from both Joshua and Caleb. In other words, they had no faith or trust in God, and this is the response, all the people who said that they would follow God:

Numbers 14:1: “And all the congregation lifted up their voice and cried. And the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron. And **the whole congregation said** to them, ‘Oh that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or, Oh that we had died in the wilderness! And why has the LORD brought us into this land to fall by the sword so that our wives and our children should be a prey? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?’” (vs 1-3)—***turn back!***

God always keeps His promises in spite of these unfaithful people. We know that under Joshua the children of Israel did indeed eventually enter the ‘promised land.’ We know that. Unfortunately, because of their constant complaining and rebellion, they spent 40 years in the wilderness that they didn’t have to. Then eventually, no one over the age of 20 at the time of the Exodus—with the exception of Joshua and Caleb—actually entered the ‘promised land.’ Not even Moses entered into the ‘promised land.’

We've been offered a better 'promised land.' One that is eternal, not corruptible and that is the Kingdom of God. However, like Israel we must still go forward to receive that Kingdom. We are not there.

- Are we going grumble?
- Are we going to complain along the way?
- Are we going to be afraid to enter into the 'promised land'?

We're told above all things to *seek first the Kingdom of God!* This should be our primary goal in life! Everything else, I don't care what it is, it's insignificant!

Matthew 6:31: "Therefore, do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?'.... [like they did] ...or 'What shall we drink?'.... [like they did] ...or 'With what shall we be clothed?'" *Their clothes didn't wear out for 40 years!*

Verse 32: "For the nations seek after all these things. And your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things. But *as for* you, **seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness**, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow; for tomorrow shall take care of the *things* of itself. Sufficient for the day *is* the evil of that *day*" (vs 32-34).

The Kingdom of God is our 'promised land.' Christ came preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. He instructed the apostles to go and preach the Kingdom of God. The last day of Unleavened Bread Israel passed through the Red Sea on their way to that 'promised land.'

Following that, they still had to go forward to enter that land. During their journey they were tried and tested with many, many physical trials. We today have just completed the exercise of putting all the leavening out of our homes and our lives, symbolically representing sin.

Sidebar: I actually solicited my daughter to help me get rid of 'sins' because she was vacuuming out her car and I put my car next to hers and said, 'While you're at it let's go ahead and do mine' because I figured that I took care of my car.

Well a few days ago I dropped something down by the front seat and I couldn't get to it, so I had to put the seat as far forward as I could, then had to get in the back and dig under that seat and oh if you could have seen the crumbs! I didn't do a very good job of getting them out

of the car, I trusted somebody else to do it for me.

Sincerely, I do hope we spent the week looking to see if we had hidden sins that needed to be corrected. Like ancient Israel, we are going to be tried and tested.

Acts 14:21: "And after preaching the Gospel to that city, and making many disciples, they returned to Lystra and Iconium and Antioch, *where* they established the souls of the disciples, **exhorting them to continue in the faith**, and *declaring* that **we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God**" (vs 21-22).

It's not always going to be an easy path. If we continue to give up and look back and lose faith in God; if we grumble, complain and lose sight of that Kingdom, we may end up like all the adults that left Egypt and were refused entrance into the Kingdom of God.

The last day of Unleavened Bread is *not the end, but the beginning of our journey!* Now we have to go forward to receive the promise! We have been given the same choice that ancient Israel was given:

Deuteronomy 30:15: "Behold, I have set before you this day **life and good, and death and evil**, in that I command you this day to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments so that you may live and multiply. And the LORD your God shall bless you in the land where you go to possess it" (vs 15-16).

Our goal is the promise of the Kingdom of God!

Warning!—v 17: "But **if** your heart turn away so that you will not hear, but shall be drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, I denounce to you this day that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong *your* days on the land where you pass over Jordan to go to possess it. **I call heaven and earth to record this day against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing**.... [choice] ...Therefore, **choose life, so that both you and your seed may live**, that you may love the LORD your God, *and* may obey His voice, and may cleave to Him; for He is your life and the length of your days..." (vs 17-20).

This applies to us today. Unfortunately, our nation is in great turmoil and quite frankly heading south for not heeding these words that we just read. I don't think anybody who is watching what is taking place in these nations today should not have concern as to where we're going. These words spoken by

Moses to the children of Israel are especially meaningful for us, spiritual Israel today.

We must make that choice! We have to make that choice between good and evil!

- we must prove the Truth
- we must live the Truth
- we must defend the Truth

as we continue to go forward toward the Kingdom of God! As we go forward, Paul says:

Colossians 1:12: “Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the Light; **Who has personally rescued us...** [think on that one] **...from the power of darkness and has transferred us unto the Kingdom of the Son of His love**” (vs 12-13).

Our journey just began on the last day of Unleavened Bread, just a few weeks ago. As we face the trials and tribulations ahead, let’s remember:

Romans 8:31: What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? He Who did not spare even His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how shall He not also grant us all things together with Him?” (vs 31-32).

Verse 35: “What shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? Accordingly, it is written, ‘For Your sake we are killed all the day long; we are reckoned as sheep for *the* slaughter.’ But **in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him Who loved us.** For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which *is* in Christ Jesus our Lord” (vs 35-39)

We’re currently on our journey toward the ‘promised land,’ which is God’s Kingdom. We need to keep a clear vision of where we are going and have faith and trust in God, ***and never turn back to the ways of the world!***

That’s not the end of the story! God has purpose in all the things that He does. Once again let’s go back and look at physical Israel and compare it to spiritual Israel—you and I—today.

Not too many weeks from now—we’re on that path, heading there—we will celebrate the Feast of Firstfruits, or as we refer to it today *Pentecost!* Keep in mind, we’re still on that journey to the ‘promised land’—God’s Kingdom. We’re not there,

yet. God had purpose for ancient Israel and He has a purpose for us, those who have God’s Spirit today.

Ancient Israel was to repent and to represent God to represent God to the rest of the nations of the world. They were to set an example. After the Feast of Unleavened Bread God tells the children of Israel to keep the Feast of the Harvest of the Firstfruits.

Exodus 23:16: “Also, the Feast of the Harvest of the Firstfruits of your labors, which you have sown in the field....”

After Israel passed through the Red Sea they journeyed for six weeks in the wilderness and eventually came to Mt. Sinai. Three days later God spoke to them the Ten Commandments and revealed to Moses His purpose that this nation of Israel was to be a ‘special people’ and represent Him to the rest of the world.

They were to be the firstfruit of nations, living and displaying God’s way of life. This was done on the Feast of Firstfruits/Pentecost. Let’s see what God actually intended for this people, the nation of Israel:

Exodus 19:3: “And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, ‘Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the children of Israel, “You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you unto Myself. Now, therefore, **if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant...** [an agreement, usually formal between two or more persons] **...then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people;** for all the earth *is* Mine. 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” (vs 3-6).

From reading that, it’s pretty evident that God wanted and expected that this nation of Israel to set an example to the rest of the world. He wanted all the other nations of the world to see the benefits and blessings of keeping:

- God’s commandments
- His way of life
- His judgments
- His laws

Verse 7: “And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before them all these words, which the LORD commanded him. And all the people answered together and said, **‘All that the LORD has spoken we will do.’** And Moses returned the words of the people to the LORD” (vs 7-8).

God intended for this nation of Israel to be an example to the rest of the world so that once again Moses repeats this tremendous purpose that God had for this nation. It actually becomes very clear what God's expectations were for Israel:

Deuteronomy 4:5: "Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, so that you should do so in the land where you go to possess it. And you shall keep and do *them*, for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations... [God intends for the other nations to see how Israel follows God] ...which shall hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation *is* a wise and understanding people.' For what nation is so great whose God *is* so near to them, as the LORD our God *is*, whenever we call upon Him? And what great nation has statutes and judgments that *are* so righteous as all this Law, which I set before you today?" (vs 5-8).

How clear can it be that God intended to use Israel as an example to all the people that they come into contact with? However, as we go through the Old Testament, we clearly see that the nation of Israel never lived up to God's expectations; *never!*

God had to continuously punish this nation for changing His Holy Days and worshipping false gods. They didn't not keep the covenant that they agreed to with God.

Let's look at the New Covenant, the one that we agreed to with our Creator. God chose this same day that He gave the Ten Commandments to the nation of Israel, this Feast of Firstfruits/Pentecost as another example of His great power.

Jesus spoke to His disciples in 30_{A.D.}; Acts 1:4: And while they were assembled with Him, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to 'await the promise of the Father, which,' He said, 'you have heard of Me. For John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit after not many days.' (vs 4-5).

Then He explains that just as ancient Israel was to be an example to the rest of the world, that they, as well as us today, are to be a witness to the rest of the world.

Verse 8: "But you yourselves shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you... [here's what He expects]: ...**and you shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the ends of the earth.**"

I certainly hope that we're all doing that; that's our commission and required to do; that's what we're responsible for doing.

Then on the Day of Pentecost when they were assembled together, God once again gave a might display of power as He did when He gave Israel the Ten Commandments. *A mighty display of power!* Let's actually look at that display of power:

Exodus 19:16: "And it came to pass on the third day in the morning that there *were* thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mountain. And the sound of the trumpet was exceedingly loud so that all the people in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God. And they stood at the base of the mountain. And Mount Sinai was smoking, all of it because the LORD came down upon it in fire. And the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly" (vs 16-18).

Have you ever been in an earthquake? I was in a pretty severe earthquake in Alaska, one in Japan—I ran from that one—and even in California.

Verse 19: "And when the sound of the trumpet sounded long, and became very strong, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice."

What a tremendous display of power! Do you think God wants us to know Who He is?

Let's go back to Pentecost, 30_{A.D.} and once again see how God shows His power and authority.

Acts 2:1: "And when the Day of Pentecost, the fiftieth day, was being fulfilled, they were all with one accord in the same place."

Remember how the people of Israel were all with one accord in the covenant with God?

Verse 2: "And suddenly *there* came from heaven a sound like *the* rushing of a powerful wind, and filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire, and sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with *the* Holy Spirit; and they began to speak with other languages, as the Spirit gave them *the words* to proclaim. Now, *there* were many Jews who were sojourning in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. And when word of this went out, the multitude came together and were confounded, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. And they were all amazed, and marveled, saying to one another, 'Behold, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?'" (vs 2-7).

Not as some teach today about speaking in tongues! Everyone heard what they were saying in whatever language that they spoke. It was mumbling and jumbling that no one understood.

Verse 8: "Then how is it *that* we hear each

one in our own language in which we were born?"

Then in vs 9-11 it tells of the people with different languages that were present! All the different languages; yet, they heard the apostles speak in their own language. What an amazing miracle God performed to allow the apostles to speak boldly to such a diverse audience, all speaking different languages.

We know that this was the beginning of the Church, and we, as the continuing Church today, we are to be an example and a witness to the rest of the world, as ancient Israel was to be an example as a nation.

Ancient Israel did not keep their covenant with God! They continued to break the covenant that they made, and as a result they were sent into captivity. They were not the example that God intended for them to be to the rest of the world.

We, the Church/spiritual Israel, made a covenant with God at baptism, and we've been given the gift of God's Holy Spirit to help us keep that covenant.

We're still on our journey to the 'promised land,' God's Kingdom! We will have trials and tribulations along the way, not question about that. Satan will cause temptations along the way and do every in his power to thwart God's plan!

Nevertheless, we have a responsibility to keep our promise to God and be an example and witness to the rest of the world.

We left Egypt/sin, passed through the Red Sea/baptism and we're heading toward the 'promised land'/God's Kingdom.

Pentecost, the firstfruits, is the next step in God's plan. We are the firstfruits. When we look at the lessons learned, ancient Israel failed to reach the 'promised land' because they couldn't keep God's covenant. They couldn't do it!

Let's not make the same mistake and lack faith and turn back to the world; don't turn back! There's nothing in this sinful world that we left worth returning to. ***NOTHING!***

We need to keep moving forward and focus on the 'promised land,' ***the Kingdom of God!*** We need to trust and have faith in God, His promise to guide and protect us as we travel to this 'promised land.' We made a covenant with God at baptism; ***don't be like ancient Israel that promised to do all that God required of them and then not keep His laws and commandments!***

Be faithful and God will protect you as you travel. Finally, stay focused on and do not lose sight of the 'promised land.' ***Stay on that narrow path to the Kingdom!***

2-John 8: "Watch out for yourselves in order that we may not lose the things we have accomplished, but *that* we may receive a full reward."

Revelation 22:12: "And behold, I [Jesus Christ] am coming quickly; and My reward is with Me, to render to each one according as his work shall be."

These are all promises of God! If stay the course and endure to the end, Christ tells us:

Revelation 2:17: "The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who overcomes I will give *the right* to eat of the hidden manna; and I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, which no one knows except the one who receives *it*."

These are promises! Is it worthy the journey? Jesus tells us what we can expect if we stay faithful, and we endure to the end:

Hebrews 12:22: "But you... [all who have been baptized into Christ] ...have come to Mount Zion, and to *the city of the living God*, heavenly Jerusalem... our 'promised land'] ...and to an innumerable company of angels; *to the joyous festival gathering*; and to *the Church of the Firstborn*... [the firstfruits of God's Pentecost] ...registered *in the Book of Life* in heaven; and to God, *the Judge of all*, and to *the spirits of the just* who have been perfected; and to Jesus, *the Mediator of the New Covenant*... [that's the covenant that we promised to keep] ... and to sprinkling of *the blood of ratification*, proclaiming superior things than *that of Abel*" (vs 22-24).

What a wonderful plan that God has for all of those whom He has called to be firstfruits in His Kingdom!

Revelation 20:6 "**Blessed and Holy is the one who has part in the first resurrection**... [the firstfruits] ...over these the second death has no power. But **they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.**"

We know the rest of the story, but that will take place at a later time. The only thing I can tell you is ***it ain't worth looking back! Don't look back on what we had before, trust and have faith in God, and whatever you do don't lose sight of that 'promised land,' the Kingdom of God!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Exodus 12:14, 17
- 2) Exodus 14:3-8, 11-13
- 3) Genesis 19:26
- 4) Luke 17:31-32
- 5) 1 Corinthians 10:1, 5
- 6) Galatians 4:9
- 7) Exodus 16:3
- 8) Exodus 17:3
- 9) Isaiah 41:8-10
- 10) 1 Peter 4:12
- 11) Hebrews 11:27-29
- 12) Exodus 32:1
- 13) Exodus 33:1-3
- 14) Numbers 13:27-29
- 15) Numbers 14:1-3
- 16) Matthew 6:31-34
- 17) Acts 14:21-22
- 18) Deuteronomy 30:15-20
- 19) Colossians 1:12-13
- 20) Romans 8:31-32, 35-39
- 21) Exodus 23:16
- 22) Exodus 19:3-8
- 23) Deuteronomy 4:5-8
- 24) Acts 1:4-5, 8
- 25) Exodus 19:16-19
- 26) Acts 2:1-8
- 27) 2 John 8
- 28) Revelation 22:12
- 29) Revelation 2:17
- 30) Hebrews 12:22-24
- 31) Revelation 20:6

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Exodus 20-31
- Acts 2:9-11

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