March 29

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE **Bible** LESSON 34

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

YOUR PART in God's MASTER PLAN

YOU have probably heard the saying: "Jesus Christ led a *perfect life* in *your stead*—there is *nothing at all* for you to do but *believe!*"

Most ministers say: "God's law was nailed to the cross." It is unnecessary to keep the Ten Commandments today!"

Are these commonly accepted ideas really true?

Is there *nothing* you must do to inherit eternal life?

Christ Our Passover

This world would have you think that God's plan was *completed* at the cross. In reality it only BEGAN there;

We learned in the previous lesson that IT WAS JESUS CHRIST, our Passover—not God's law —WHO WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS. That instead of Christ doing away with the law, it was the *law* which would have done away with *your* life. But God accepted the *perfect life of Jesus Christ to pay the penalty in your stead.* Jesus Christ died because YOU BROKE GOD'S LAW!

"All have sinned" said the apostle Paul, "and come short of the glory of God!" (Rom. 3:23.) Your human nature, your carnal mind, *naturally* rejects God's ways. (Rom. 8:7.)

Jesus Christ's sacrifice—his shed blood—*wipes away your past sins.* It gives you the opportunity for a fresh, clean start. But what are you going to do about it—continue to sin? —OR QUIT SINNING?

Did you realize there is something YOU MUST DO, before God will give you the gift of *eternal life?* Listen to the answer of Jesus. When one came to Jesus asking: "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Jesus said: "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: *but if thou wilt enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS.*" (Mat. 19:16-17.)

The Ten Commandments reveal God's character.

God is now creating *righteous, holy character* in those whom He is calling. Man, now only a clay model, is to be created in the *character-image* of God Almighty. Obedience is a test of that character. God will not grant eternal life to anyone He cannot rule.

But why have professing Christians lost the knowledge that we must obey God? For the same reason that the Jews lost the knowledge that Jesus was the Messiah!

In the time of Christ the Jews rejected Christ because they were not observing the Passover at the right time. They therefore had lost the knowledge of the FIRST STEP in God's plan—and put their Savior to an ignominious, painful death!

But Jesus Christ is not only the author, or beginner, He is also the *finisher* of our salvation (Heb. 12:2.) That is what the professing Christian world has forgotten! They have lost the knowledge of the SECOND STEP in God's plan—that we must *put sin out of our lives!*

To help us in the knowledge of the second step, God gave His Church a special festival—the Days of Unleavened Bread. They are to impress upon us the fact that we must *never again return* to the sins Christ paid for with His shed blood.

Let's begin to understand the true significance, the deep meaning in this SECOND ANNUAL

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
Bible
CORRESPONDENCE COURSE
LESSON 34
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Dr. C. Paul Meredith, *director*
Sent FREE to all who request it, as the Lord provides.
Address all communications to the editor,
Box 111, Pasadena, California 91109
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764

NOTICE: Be sure to notify us immediately of any change in your address. IMPORTANT!

FESTIVAL commemorating God's plan. Let's learn why keeping the Days of Unleavened Bread is so important to your salvation, and just what your part is in God's Master Plan.

LESSON 34

Commanded Forever

1. Does God instruct every reader of the New Testament to diligently study the example of Israel coming out of Egyptian slavery? Why has this particular Old Testament record been specially written and preserved? 1 Cor. 10:1, 6.

COMMENT: Lust is sin. Lust is a violation of one of the Ten Commandments. Then Israel's experience is to teach us not to sin—to teach us obedience.

2. Almighty God commanded Israel to keep the Passover in Ex. 12:1-4. But were they to stop with the Passover? Or was there *more* for them to do? Verses 15-20.

3. Were the Days of Unleavened Bread given *before* the people of Israel reached Mount Sinai—*before they even left the land of Egypt?* Ex. 12:18, 19.

COMMENT: This festival was commanded before the Old Covenant was made. *It was no part of the law of Moses given nearly a year after the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai.* (See Ex. 40:17 and Lev. 1.) What was not instituted by the Old Covenant or the law of Moses, *was not done away when they ceased.*

God did not give Israel sacrifices and burnt offerings when they came out of Egypt! Jeremiah 7:22.) What He commanded them was to obey, to keep the Feast. Later, special Mosaic sacrifices were offered on the Days of Unleavened Bread as also on every day of the year. They were *temporary* and ceased with the sacrifice of Christ.

4. How long were God's people to continue keeping this Festival? Verses 17 and 42. Forever

COMMENT: Notice verse 17 in the modern wording of the Ferrar Fenton translation, "consequently keep this period as an *everlasting institution.*"

5. Did God instruct the Israelites to explain the significance of this festival to their children so that each succeeding generation would remember its special meaning? Verse 26. What were they to tell their children? Verses 33 and 34.

6. Did Jesus keep the seven days of Unleavened Bread, leaving true Christians *His own example* to follow? Luke 2:41-43. Does the Bible show that Jesus *not only* kept the Passover, but also the Feast of Unleavened Bread which followed it? Verse 43. Was Jesus Christ *old enough* at this time to thoroughly understand whether or not God expects His people to *keep this annual Festival in New Testament times?* Verses 42, 46-47.

7. Later on when Christ came to *full maturity*, was He *still keeping* the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread? Mark 14:12-16.

8. In the year that Jesus was crucified, did His enemies expect Him to be keeping the Feast of Unleavened Bread? Mark 14:1-2.

COMMENT: Christ's enemies knew that He would surely be keeping the Feast, but they were *afraid* to try to take Him when so many of the citizens would be gathered together. Jesus was popular because of the miracles He had performed. So, the Jews captured Him during the night of the 14th, just after the *private* Passover meal He ate with the disciples.

9. After the cross—after Jesus had been crucified, buried and resurrected—did His disciples know that *they were still expected to keep* the Feast of Unleavened Bread? Acts 12:3.

COMMENT: Why should Luke, years after the crucifixion, use the Feast of Unleavened Bread to indicate the time of Peter's imprisonment? Because Christians WERE *STILL KEEPING* THIS ANNUAL FESTIVAL!

10. Didn't Paul, *the apostle to the Gentiles*, wait until after he had observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread with the Christians at Philippi before he sailed for Troas? Acts 20:6.

COMMENT: Throughout the history of the early New Testament Church of God in the book of Acts, we find faithful Christians *keeping* the Days of Unleavened Bread.

11. Does Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, COMMAND CHRISTIANS TO KEEP THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD? 1 Cor. 5:8.

COMMENT: Here is the direct command for New Testament Christians from God's apostle to the Gentiles to KEEP THE FEAST of Unleavened Bread. Notice because Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us (verse 7) we must also continue to KEEP THE FEAST of Unleavened Bread—a reminder that we are to put sin out of our lives.

Now what are *you going to do?*

Escape the Misery of Sin!

Let's return to the account of the Exodus from Egypt, and see what new lessons we can

learn about the Days of Unleavened Bread.

1. Does God show in His word that Egypt is a type of SIN? Hebrews 11:24-27.

COMMENT: Even in Revelation 11:8 *sinful* Jerusalem is called Egypt spiritually.

2. Did the people of Israel *suffer* in miserable slavery to the cruel taskmasters of Egypt? What was life in "sin" like? Ex. 1:14 and 2:23.

COMMENT: A modern example of this sort of persecution and human slavery is seen in Adolph Hitler's Nazi Germany! Slavery for Israel in sinful Egypt was very much like living in Hitler's concentration and slave-labor camps. There was one great difference however. Nazi Germany's domination lasted for only little more than one terrible decade, whereas ancient Israel served the Egyptians *for several generations!*

In the same way, the entire world has *suffered* from its own sins since the creation of Adam—*nearly 6000 years ago!* Today it is still a world of misery, frustration, discouragement and failure.

3. Did Moses have to choose between the licentious sins of Egypt and serving God? Did this mean that by so doing Moses would probably suffer along with God's people? Heb. 11:25. Why was Moses willing to make such a choice? Heb. 11:26.

COMMENT: Moses was willing to sacrifice sinful pleasures knowing that if he wanted to inherit the gift of eternal life he must *utterly forsake the ways of sin!*

4. Just as Moses was willing to forsake the practices of sin, are New Testament Christians expected to do the same? Hebrews 12:1-4. Does God command us to strive—*to expend effort and energy*—to put sin out of our lives? Verses 1 and 4.

COMMENT: God expects us—through His help—to expend every effort to *quit sinning*. We must come *totally* out of—no longer to participate in sin. If we are to become a part of His family and receive the gift of eternal life, we must PROVE OUR OBEDIENCE HERE AND NOW by getting the LEAVEN of sin out of our lives! This is OUR PART in God's plan. (See Jesus' answer to the lawyer in Luke 10:25-28.)

5. Was any leaven to be found in the Israelites' homes, or on their property? Exodus 12:15.

COMMENT: Leaven is a type of sin. Leaven puffs up—and so does sin. Unleavened bread is *flat bread* which contains *no leavening agent*, and therefore typifies putting out sin.

A leavening agent is any substance used to puff up—to produce fermentation, causing dough to rise—a type of sin. Yeast, soda, baking powder are such leavening agents. (They are, of course, proper to use at any other time of year.) Bread, crackers, some prepared cereals and most cakes contain leaven and are to be avoided during this festival.

All leaven was to be removed from the premises. God's people weren't allowed to store it in some other room, a shed or outbuilding.

But it was and is God's way of testing His people to see how much they prize obedience.

6. Does God positively command His people to eat unleavened bread—a symbol of obedience—during this festival? Verse 20.

COMMENT: They were not merely to abstain from all leavened bread during these seven days. That would have meant *only putting out* past sin. They were commanded to do something positive, to eat unleavened bread in the festival. That symbolized obedience, actively *obeying* God, *submitting* to His will.

Pharaoh a Type of the Devil

1. After Israel escaped slavery in Egypt, what was their attitude? Ex. 14:8. Were their spirits high? Same verse. However, were their troubles only just beginning? Same verse.

COMMENT: Pharaoh is a type of Satan the Devil. Satan does not want to let a sinner escape the bondage of sin (Rom. 6:16).

2. What were the physical circumstances that made escape from Egypt *impossible* for the fleeing Israelites? Ex. 14:2-3.

COMMENT: Pi-hihairoth was a mountain range that made escape from Pharaoh impossible by land to the south and east. The Red Sea to the east was *over eight miles across* at the point where Israel had encamped, and Pharoah's army of chariots were thundering down on the trapped Israelites from the north!

3. Who had brought these circumstances about? Ex. 14:4. Why had God done this? Same verse. Did God want to demonstrate that He ALONE has the *power* to deliver his servants—to deliver us—from sin? Same verse.

4. When the Israelites understood their predicament, what was their reaction? Ex. 14:10. When God tested them by not answering their prayer immediately, what was their reaction? Ex. 14:11-12. When the going really got tough, did they regret that they had escaped from the slavery and sins of Egypt? Same verse.

COMMENT: Immediately after Israel left Egypt they were pursued by Pharaoh! So today newly begotten Christians are often pursued by Satan. He will set any obstacle in your way—he will attempt to discourage you, to cause you to stumble—he will do *anything* to keep you from receiving eternal life. His favorite trick is to make you *want to return to the life of sin you should be forsaking.*

Yet some people blindly prefer to continue in sin! They don't want to rejoice before God on His annual Festivals because they don't *want to quit sinning!* Israel displayed this same *selfish attitude* as they journeyed out of Egypt through the desert to Sinai.

God does not tempt you beyond your ability to endure

5. Who did they blame? Ex. 14:11-12. Was it Moses or God Himself who was *really* responsible? Ex. 14:8. Then it was God that the people of Israel were *really* rebelling against, wasn't it? Same verse.

6. Why did Israel rebel against God? Ex. 14:10.

COMMENT: Israel was afraid that God would not save them from the terrifying situation in which they found themselves. They realized that they needed *powerful supernatural* help, and that they couldn't deliver themselves from the army of Pharaoh.

7. But did God provide a means of escape? Ex. 14:13-23. Did God even "sabotage" the Egyptian chariots when they tried to follow the Israelites into the now dry bottom of the Red Sea? Ex. 14:23-25. Who was it then that fought Pharaoh to deliver Israel? Verse 25.

COMMENT: God supernaturally delivered Israel from Satan and from the bondage of sin in Egypt.

8. Does God want His people even today always to remember that it was His POWER that delivered Israel from the harsh bondage of Egypt? Exodus 12:42. Is the Feast of Unleavened Bread an everlasting reminder of this fact? Same verse.

9. Does God promise to help any man or woman who is willing to flee the bondage of sin? 1 Cor. 10-13. How does God intend for Christians to be able to resist sin? Rom. 8:13.

COMMENT: God will provide a means of escape for anyone who really seeks to overcome sin, to mortify or kill his own selfish desires, just as God made it possible for Israel to escape from Pharaoh through the Red Sea.

Feast of Unleavened Bread Is HOLY TIME

1. Who instituted these Festivals—God? Lev. 23:1-2. Are they called "the Feasts of the Lord"? Verse 2.

COMMENT: Each Feast or Festival is a segment of time ordained by God for our spiritual and physical rejuvenation. Because God has ordained this time it is HOLY TIME! One chapter in the Bible summarizes all of the festivals God has ordained—Leviticus 23. Though they were already ordained (Ex. 12.) before Israel left Egypt, they are repeated here because they were to continue.

The first Festival occurs *weekly* (Lev. 23:2-3). It is the seventh-day Sabbath. The weekly Sabbath is a period of rest from usual business and labors, as well as our mundane pleasures. Each of the other Holy Days mentioned here are to be observed *annually*. They picture *annually* the steps in God's Master Plan.

2. What else are these Feast Days called? Verse 4. Notice the words, "holy convocation".

COMMENT: A "holy convocation" is a *commanded assembly*. It is an assembly of people where their presence is *commanded* by a higher power or authority. God Almighty Himself rules supreme over the universe. He *calls a meeting* of His people '*a convocation*' on each of the annual Sabbaths—on His Festivals. These times are "HOLY" convocations because God is Holy, and He has commanded them. A Holy convocation is a religious assembly called by God for the purpose of worship.

3. Which specific days are set apart as holy convocations in the Days of Unleavened Bread? Lev. 23:6-8.

4. Must these annual Sabbaths fall at a *specific time* of the month? Verse 6. At a specific time of *which* month? Verse 5.

COMMENT: The first month of the Hebrew calendar, which God inspired the Jews to preserve for New Testament Christians today, was called in Hebrew, Abib or Nisan. It corresponds to the months of March-April on the *pagan calendar* man has devised for common use today. Abib means, "the time of green ears of grain." The Sabbaths, or holy convocations, during the Days of Unleavened Bread are referred to in Exodus 34:21. The annual Sabbaths during the Feast of Unleavened Bread occur during the season that grain comes to mature growth—"earing time".

5. Notice the Days of Unleavened Bread begin immediately after the Passover. Lev. 23:5-6. When was the Passover Lamb killed and eaten? Ex. 12:6-9.

COMMENT: As you learned in the previous lesson, the Passover Lamb was killed just after the sun had set, at the beginning of the 14th of Abib, just before it became totally dark—at dusk. Exodus 12:9-11 describes how the Passover lamb was eaten. This was *all* done during the evening at the beginning of the 14th of Abib.

6. What else happened the night of the first Passover? Verses 29-32. Wasn't it after the death angel passed over Egypt that Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron—therefore after midnight? Same verses.

7. Were the Israelites on that first night permitted to leave their homes during the night of the 14th of Abib? Ex. 12:22. What did they do in the morning? Ex. 12:10.

8. How was the daylight part of the 14th of Abib spent? Verses 33-36.

9. Again it began to grow dark. Sunset came and the 15th of Abib commenced. The Israelites were now gathering at Rameses. As yet the Israelites *had not left Egypt*. What did they do on the night of the 15th of Abib? Numbers 33:3.

COMMENT: The Hebrews left Egypt a whole day after the Passover was celebrated. The Passover occurred the night of the 14th. The

Exodus from Rameses occurred the following night, the 15th of Abib.

Notice the additional testimony as to the date of the Passover and the first Day of Unleavened Bread: "Hebrew tradition dissociates them (the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread) by making the sacrifice (the Passover) on the 14th of Nisan, and beginning the Feast of Unleavened Bread on the 15th." (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, article: *Passover;* vol. 17, page 358b).

Josephus, authoritative Jewish historian in the first century A.D. records: "The feast of Unleavened Bread *succeeds* that of the Passover and falls on the 15th day of the month, and continues seven days." (Josephus' *The Antiquities Of The Jews*, Book III; chapter 10; section 5).

10. Does the Feast of Unleavened Bread continue for *seven days?* Compare Ex. 12:15 with Ex. 34:18 and Numb. 28:17. See also Deut. 16:3-4.

COMMENT: The Feast of Unleavened Bread begins on the 15th of Abib. It continues until the 21st of Abib. Both the 15th and 21st were especially happy "high" Sabbaths—*annual holy convocations—days of rest.* Seven is God's special number signifying *completion or perfection.* God wants His people to come completely out of sin.

3. Does God want His people to really enjoy these Holy Days? What is the principle that God teaches concerning all of His annual Festivals? Deut. 16:12 and 14, Psalm 42:4.

4. Did God actually promise to *prosper* His people nationally and materially if they would keep His Sabbaths? Read thoroughly Deut. 28:1-14. Would they be chastened with *curses* when they disobeyed? Read thoroughly Deut. 28:15-68.

Hezekiah Restores Festivals

1. Now consider the national history of Israel—preserved in the Old Testament for our admonition. Did God stand firmly behind His promises and warnings? II Chron. 29:1.

2. What conditions did Hezekiah find in Judah when he took the throne? II Chron. 29:5-9. What did Hezekiah do? Verse 10.

COMMENT: The people had neglected to follow God's laws that outline His plan for material as well as spiritual happiness. They had been suffering for their sins!

3. Did the leaders of the priesthood then clean up God's temple which had fallen into disrepair through disuse? II Chron. 29:15-19. What did Hezekiah do after the priesthood had been rededicated to the service of God? II Chron. 30:1-4.

4. Did Almighty God, who could have justly punished Israel for their national sins, mercifully forgive His people, and permit them to worship on His annual Holy Day? Verses 19 and 20.

5. Did Hezekiah know that the spring Festival season *was not complete* until the Days of Unleavened Bread were kept? Verse 21. Were the Israelites happy, and rejoicing in God's Feast Days as He had promised they would? Same verse.

6. Weren't they having such a wonderful time of fellowship (verses 25-26) that they wanted to keep a second period of seven days together in order to hear all the sermons? Verse 23. Shouldn't we who have been given the opportunity to understand God's Master Plan in this end time also rejoice as they did?

7. Did the Eternal Creator Himself also rejoice to see that His people had returned to worship Him according to the commandment—did God hear their prayers? Verse 27.

Josiah Kept the Feast

After Hezekiah's death the people of Israel again forgot God. They forgot His Festivals and they forgot His plan. They returned to idolatry under the self-willed rulership of kings Manasseh and Amon. Not until the reign of Josiah were the Feast Days again restored.

1. Was Josiah a righteous king in God's sight? I Kings 13:2.

2. What sort of condition were God's people in when Josiah took over the reins of government? Had they lost the knowledge of God's law and His Holy Days? II Kings 22:8-11.

3. How did Josiah react when he heard the words of the law? Verse 11. What else did he do? Verses 12 and 13. Why was God angry with Judah? Verse 13.

4. As soon as Josiah understood that the nation had *sinned* because they had not known to keep the law, did he punish the priests of the counterfeit religions? Read thoroughly II Kings 23:1-20. Then what was Josiah's command? II Kings 23:12.

5. Was God pleased with Josiah's works? II Kings 23:22-25; II Chron. 35:1.

6. Did Josiah keep the Passover service according to the words of the Book of the law? II Chron. 35, verses 1 and 13. After the Passover had been kept, did Josiah stop, or did he also understand that God expected His people to *continue and keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread as well?* Verse 17.

COMMENT: Notice that Judah had reverted to worshipping pagan gods and lost the knowledge of the worship of their Creator. When the understanding of the law was restored they began to serve the Eternal again. *Immediately* they restored the observance of the ANNUAL HOLY DAYS—the festivals which are the SIGN between God and His people!

7. What does God say about the important

part the keeping of His *annual* Sabbaths plays in His Master Plan? Ezek. 20:10-12. Was it by these annual Sabbaths that Israel would recognize the true God, and God Himself would recognize the people who keep these days as *His people?* Verse 20.

COMMENT: These *annual Sabbaths are a part of the Sign God's people must have!* Read this 20th chapter of Ezekiel carefully, and review Israel's history of Sabbath breaking, and what God says about it. Notice the punishment God enforces upon those who neglect to keep His annual Holy Days. Verse 25. Properly translated verse 25 reads, "Wherefore I gave them over to *statutes that are not good and judgments whereby they should not live,*" the ways that seem right to man!

This same principle is repeated in the New Testament. God rejects those who reject the knowledge of His way (Hosea 4:6). He *gives them over to serve the hopeless ways of man which end in misery and death!* Rom. 1:20-32. See also Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25.

When Josiah died Judah again lost sight of God; they ignored His Sabbaths and rejected His annual Festivals. To bring them to obedience Almighty God chastened them by sending them into *national captivity!* This *same fate awaits any nation which spurns God's laws and neglects His Holy Days!* God's methods remain eternally the same (Heb. 13:8)!

8. What was the attitude of the people who returned from Babylonian captivity? Ezra 6:21-22.

COMMENT: Because they had been chastened for not properly keeping God's Sabbaths, it was not long before they *added carnal, human restrictions* to the laws of God, making the Sabbaths a *burden* to God's people. One of these *human* restrictions was to prohibit using leavened bread during the daylight part of the Passover—the 14th of Abib. *God had never made such a restriction!* But the Jews thought they could be more righteous than God. So we find that during the time of Christ, the Passover is referred to as "a day of unleavened bread". The Jews were observing a total of eight days instead of the perfect, *symbolic* seven Days of Unleavened Bread God originally commanded. They had forgotten the spiritual lesson of obedience God intended for them to learn from these days!

The Meaning of Spiritual Leaven

The Apostle Paul, in writing to the Church of God at Corinth, explained the spiritual meaning and symbolism of the Days of Unleavened Bread to the Gentile converts there.

Notice what Paul teaches *New Testament Christians* about "leaven", and why we need to become "unleavened" *spiritually and physically!*

1. Were the Corinthians permitting a person who was openly and actively practicing sin to fellowship with God's Church? 1 Cor. 5:1.

2. Was this sin in their midst causing them to feel guilty, or was it rather causing them to *become vain*—to be puffed up? Did they think they could be more righteous, more forgiving, than God and the apostle Paul by allowing this adulterer to remain in the Church? 1 Cor. 5:2.

3. Paul, knowing that this sin was causing foolish members of the Corinthian Church to *swell with vanity* and *become puffed up*, gave them specific instructions! What were those instructions? 1 Cor. 5:3-5.

4. What *more* does Paul tell the vain church members who had *become puffed* up in God's sight? 1 Cor. 5:6. What made their glorying not good? 1 Cor. 5:6-7.

5. Does the apostle Paul compare this sinning member to a bit of leaven? Verse 6. Again what is his instruction? Verse 7.

COMMENT: The one individual who had been practicing sin in the church had been allowed to remain in their midst. Paul explains that just one bit of leaven—a sinful person—can cause the whole lump of dough—the whole church to become saturated with sin.

The whole church had become guilty of vanity —just as guilty as was the adulterer in their midst. The sin of adultery sprang from the same HUMAN NATURE which caused the other members of the Corinthian church to become *puffed* with vanity!

By putting out the one adulterer, they *put out the spiritual leaven* that had begun to permeate the church.

6. What, then, is *spiritual leaven?* 1 Cor. 5:8.

COMMENT: Here is the symbolism of leaven interpreted! Not by men, but by your own Bible! LEAVEN TYPIFIES SIN!

7. Is there any other place in God's word where He clearly shows that leaven is a type of sin? Matt. 16:6, 11-12 and Luke 12:1.

COMMENT: Now let's understand.

Paul commanded the Corinthian church members to PUT OUT the sinful, "LEAVENED" member of their congregation (verse 7), that the church might be spiritually "UNLEAVENED".

8. What does Paul mean by the last part of verse 7? Doesn't he mean they should put out this "spiritual leaven", *just as they had put out physical leaven* in preparation for the Days of Unleavened Bread? Verses 7 and 8. The Corinthians were to keep the feast without the spiritual "leaven" of sin, as well as without the physical leaven of yeast. One was a type of the other. They were to keep it not only with the symbolic flat bread of the Festival, but in spiritually "unleavened" sincerity and truth!

Remember Lot's Wife!

Few people know how to come out of sin, how to forsake the world. They are like the Corinthians—and like Lot's wife.

Turn to the vivid example of Lot and his family escaping the debauchery of Sodom in Genesis 18 and 19.

1. Had God determined to destroy Sodom because of the wickedness of the people living there? Gen. 18:20-21. Did God promise to spare the righteous people who lived there? Gen. 18:23-33.

2. When God's angels arrived in Sodom, who greeted them? Gen. 19:1-3. Does Scripture tell us Lot was righteous in God's sight even though he was living in the midst of sinful Sodom? II Pet. 2:7-8.

What was Lot's attitude toward the city of Sodom? Same verses. But wasn't Lot *still living* in a city of sin, subject to the *temptations* of it?

COMMENT: No matter how much you may *try* to obey God's laws, you will never break free from sin's grip until you *utterly forsake—flee from*—your immediate *sinful environment*—even sometimes your relatives! (I Cor. 6:17.)

3. After experiencing the degredation to which Sodom had fallen, did God's angels determine to carry out God's command to destroy it? Gen. 19:13. What was the angelic command to Lot? Verse 12.

4. When morning came, did Lot IMMEDIATELY OBEY? Gen. 19:15-16. Did the angels help Lot to *escape sin in Sodom* in much the same way that God brought the children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt? Verse 16.

COMMENT: Lot was bound to the wicked city of Sodom *by habit!* He found it difficult to leave his home and business (his past way of life). Lot hesitated because living in Sodom had *weakened his resistance to sin!*

5. What else did the angels command Lot and his family? Verse 17. But what did Lot's wife do? Verse 26. How was she punished? Same verse.

COMMENT: The Bible teaches that Lot's wife became a literal pillar of salt, which has long since washed away. But salt itself is a *symbol* of something that is lasting, or enduring. Lot's wife is a *perpetual example* of one who was *not willing to do her part*—not willing to completely forsake the leaven of sin in her life. She still desired to return to her old sinful ways!

6. Does God teach us that life in these perilous end times is very much like life in the wicked city of Sodom? Luke 17:26, 28:30.

7. What is God's instruction to us today? Verses 31-33.

COMMENT: Did Lot's wife want to perpetuate her life in sinful Sodom? Yes, and *she paid with her life!* Now what about *you?* Are you willing to give up your sinful way of life and submit to God's laws—or will you cling to the *fleeting pleasures of this present evil society only to be condemned with it?*

The decision to *forsake sin* is up to *you.* It is YOUR PART in God's Master Plan. God will not force you, but if you don't forsake sin willingly—here and now—you can *never complete* the blueprint God has laid out for you—the development of righteous, holy character. You will never receive the gift of eternal life!

Forsake Sin!

Christ's sacrifice blots out all *past sins.* Should you now *continue* in sin? This question was asked of the apostle Paul. Let's see how he answered it!

1. When Paul was asked if we should continue in sin, what did he reply? Rom. 6:15-16. What was his apostolic command? Rom. 6:12.

COMMENT: We are all, by nature, suffering the penalty of sin, which is *death!* (Rom. 6:23). But Christ's sacrifice gives us "grace"—*free unmerited pardon* from the penalty of our past sins. Christ died so that *we* would not have to die! Now God expects us to obey His law, to "unleaven" our lives! God does not want us to continue in sin—to incur the penalty of death again—for then we would have to remain dead *for all eternity!* (Heb. 10:26)

2. Does God promise to help us escape the temptations of sin, just as He helped the Israelites escape from Egypt? Won't He be as *merciful* to us as He was to Lot? II Pet. 2:9.

3. Does God remind us that He will reject anyone who has understood His Master Plan and *deliberately* returns to the sinful ways of the world as did Lot's wife? Heb. 6:4-8. Why? Verse 6.

COMMENT: Almighty God *means business!* Those who deliberately rebel, those who have rejected the sacrifice of Christ, who have forgotten that their sins were taken away (II Pet. 1:9)—they have WILLFULLY REJECTED THEIR CHANCE for salvation.

4. What does the apostle Peter tell us about people who have begun in God's way but have not done their part in "unleavening" their lives—forsaking their old ways—and are again overcome by their old sins? II Pet. 2:20-22.

5. What then was Paul's example? I Cor. 9:25-27. Did Paul understand that unless he was continually putting sin out of his life he might be *cast away*—never to receive eternal life? Same verses.

6. Does God promise to *supernaturally help* those who repent and believe—because He is merciful and understands the pressures of man's human weaknesses? I Cor. 10:13.

Christ's Answer!

1. What is it that YOU MUST DO to inherit eternal life? When Christ was asked this ques-

tion what did He reply? Matt. 16:19. Was this rich young ruler concerned about *his part*—what God expected HIM TO DO—to receive the gift of eternal life? Same verse.

COMMENT: If Almighty God expected men to do nothing at all—if the plan of salvation was *really* completed at the cross—this was Jesus Christ's *golden opportunity to say so!*

2. But what was Christ's answer? Verse 17. Did the young ruler understand immediately which commandments Jesus referred to, or was he confused by the numerous Pharisaic additions to God's Biblical laws? Verse 18. Didn't Christ quote from the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20) to indicate *which commandments* He meant? Verses 18-19.

3. Now that he understood, did the young ruler affirm that he had kept the Ten Commandments from his youth? Verse 20. What was his next question? Verse 21.

4. Did Jesus Christ know what *one thing* the rich young ruler had not yet overcome—his *greed for personal wealth*—the *leaven* of sin that was still in his life? What did Jesus say? Verse 21.

5. When the rich man heard this, was he willing to submit to God? Verse 22.

COMMENT: God knows what you are seeking first. If you value *anything* connected with the carnal, mundane society of this evil age MORE THAN your opportunity to receive the gift of eternal life and be born in His Kingdom, you will never inherit eternal life. Almighty God promises to *test* you, to see if you are *really willing to* submit yourself to Him and *do your commanded part in His Master Plan!*

One other time in his ministry Jesus was confronted with this same question. Turn to Luke 10:25, and see how Jesus answered the lawyer who tested Him.

6. What was the lawyer's question—wasn't it the *very same* one the rich young ruler asked? Luke 10:25.

COMMENT: Every faction, every religious denomination in Palestine had *their own* pet ideas on "salvation," without obedience to God. They all tried to impress their human ideas upon people in much the same way the religious denominations today obscure God's truth and *substitute their own vain traditions.* The lawyer was trying to trick Christ, but Christ asked him a question in return.

7. What did Jesus ask? Verse 26.

8. Did the lawyer know which were the greatest commandments? Verses 27 and 28 compared with Matt. 22:37-40 and Mark 12:30-31. What was Jesus Christ's teaching? Luke 10:28.

COMMENT: Notice that *upon these two commandments hang all the laws of your Bible, and all the writings of the prophets!* The expression, "the law and the prophets" actually refers to the ENTIRE OLD TESTAMENT!

These two commandments are *simple summary commands.* The first, love of God, summarizes basically the first four of the Ten Commandments which teach us *how to love God.* The second great commandment, love of neighbor, summarizes the last six of the Ten Commandments which teach us *how to love our neighbor!* (Ex. 20:1-17).

Jesus told the lawyer EXACTLY WHAT HE TOLD THE RICH MAN. He revealed to him the spirit and intent of God's law.

For examples of what Christ expects us to do—to take the Ten Commandments in their SPIRITUAL RAMIFICATIONS—read thoroughly Matthew 5:17-47.

We must dedicate our lives to continual growing—overcoming the leaven of sin in our lives. We are never to stop STRIVING with ALL OUR MIGHT to overcome. Christ's command is, "*BECOME* YE PERFECT, EVEN AS YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN IS PERFECT!" (Matt. 5:48, corrected translation).

How much does God expect us to do? To surrender 100% to Him! We must give *every ounce* of our abilities to conquering the downward pull of our human nature and learn more perfectly to obey God's commandments.

Only in this way do we partake of God's own character.

As we grow, we will become strong. The stronger we are, the *more* we can do—and the more God expects from us. Finally we will be *fully mature,* ripe fruit—ready for the first spiritual harvest!

This is the message now revealed for you in the seven perfect Days of Unleavened Bread!

The Days of Unleavened Bread remind us annually that unless we are actively working, striving with all our might to put the leaven of sin out of our lives, we are not doing *our part.* It is a *full time job!*

Yes, God expects you to do *your part* in His plan, but there is *no way* you can EARN salvation! Eternal life in God's Kingdom is a FREE GIFT—(Rom. 6:23). No one but Jesus Christ has *ever deserved it!* No matter HOW MUCH *you do, you* will fall far short, God will not OWE you salvation. He gives it to you as a free gift on condition that you accept Christ's sacrifice and strive to obey Him!

God knows that to overcome your human weaknesses, to thoroughly and PERFECTLY "UNLEAVEN" YOUR LIFE, your own *puny human powers and abilities are not enough!* You need His POWER!

Almighty God promises to give you the supernatural strength of His Holy Spirit! *This third step* in God's Master Plan for spiritual creation will be covered in your *next* Correspondence Course Lesson.

And *remember,* God's eyes are on *you today!* He *sees* what you are doing with the knowledge He has graciously revealed *to you!*