

HHoeh_Meaning_of_Unleavened_Bread-9-79

I was called to a telephone.

I would like to relay a bit of the conversation.

Mr. Ducott said that Mr. Armstrong last night, after supper, developed indigestion, which did not allow him to sleep well.

The sermon which was planned today, and everything was set up, was scheduled in a recording hall, which naturally has television lights, but without air conditioning.

Mr. Armstrong decided that he would not put himself in a situation in Arizona, in a hall under television lights, without air conditioning.

His decision was that he will have to postpone two or three weeks, and they have come to the conclusion that when Mr. Armstrong addresses us here, he will do so, if I may use my words here, from the sensible place, his home, which is air conditioned, where he is comfortable.

I am sorry to say that on this particular occasion, this one little thing was overlooked, which, at Mr. Armstrong's age, is very important.

You and I might be likely, as Mr. Armstrong would some years ago, have sweated it through.

But Mr. Armstrong is the kind of person who has learned, in the last few years, since the crisis in 77, that he should not take needless chances and risks.

I know Mr. Rader, in a conversation that he had with me, and Professor Buchelotti, and one of the members of the Department of Antiquities in Syria recently, pointed up that Mr. Armstrong is very aware of what is being done through the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation around the world.

But as much as he would like to visit on the spot, in this case, our expedition in Syria, in which we have participated, he cannot himself take the needless effort of going out and doing things that, as young men, and as he would have done some years ago, and did at our expedition in Jerusalem, in neighboring areas, to become fully acquainted.

He has to conserve his strength, and he would like to convey that, on this occasion, he's had to make that decision, which leaves me to accomplish what I asked Mr. Dikach to see would not happen.

Mr. Dikach called me to his office and said, I would like you today to discuss a topic should Mr. Armstrong decide for certain reasons that he could not go through with the occasion today.

I said, Mr. Dikach, I will take it on the premise that last time it didn't go over, but this time you succeed.

I will discuss this matter with him upon his return.

But in the meantime, I will present the topic that he asked me to discuss, which I have dealt with on other occasions.

I'm going to tailor it slightly differently for the audience today, by the nature that some few or several have thought of this topic themselves after I've discussed it, but there are other areas following what Mr. Helge said that I should like to bring up.

Before I go into the subject, I would like to say something else here.

My wife and I had the privilege of being at the faculty reception.

It was a historic reception in the sense that it brought back the feeling of what the college was in the fifties and the sixties and earliest seventies, when the spirit of the students was clearly to be felt even without words and the attitude and the responsibility of administration and faculty could be discerned.

Something else had happened and another spirit had come, and I want to thank Mr. McNair and Dr. Meredith for their past role in this last academic year and now the new year beginning.

In connection with their role and Mr. Alice Laravius, I would like to say one final thought following Mr. Helge's statements.

From the day that the administration was changed on the first Friday in January, there has never been a rumor mill on campus from the day.

That tells me a great deal of the kind of administration we have now both in church and in college, and I want to say that Dr. Meredith, in his role in assisting Mr. Armstrong in dealing with those matters in the church, set a pattern that made it possible for us to know that whenever information was to be conveyed, we would find it properly in official channels.

It is an experience to be here to work in the Hall of Administration for the first time, now eight months, where we were not bombarded with this kind of problem, which leads now to the subject that I would like to discuss with you.

We will be terminating a little early, but that is also because we have a little responsibility that we can participate in after services, as has been mentioned.

I would like to discuss today the overlooked half of the significance of the days of unleavened bread in terms of the present legal crisis.

You and I are aware, if you have been within the fellowship of the Worldwide Church of God, that the first annual festival occasion is the spring festival season of the Passover and the seven days of unleavened bread.

Unleavened bread, as you know, was a symbol of the removal of sin.

Leaven, on occasion, is a symbol of sin because it puffs up as we think of vanity.

Unleavened bread, in that sense, meant the removal of sin.

We are not unaware, therefore, of the implications of the meaning of this festival.

Our responsibility is to look at another side of it today, not what you and I as an individual would do in our home, in our family, but what we would do collectively as a church.

If you were to turn to the 12th chapter of Exodus, and we will proceed through two other books of the Bible on this subject, the first time the congregation, and I'm using the revised standard version today, I vary these from time to time, sometimes the King James, in this case I happen to have this

particular translation, and here in the 12th chapter of the book of Exodus, we are introduced for the first time to the congregation of Israel.

Previous to this, God dealt with individuals or a family, individuals before the flood, the family of Abraham, afterward, as a person Abraham, as a person Isaac, as a person Jacob, and sometimes wives.

But here was a very large group, a family that had grown great, and in which there had been also intermarriage, because as we shall see a mixed multitude accompanied them.

For the first time a church is introduced, and if you please, the first thing to which the church is given special insight and knowledge, is the calendar, which is the basis for the determination of the holy days, that should reveal, if we have spiritual ears to hear and eyes to see, the plan of God.

Now in this plan, we will skip the story of the Passover, we will skip the significance that we normally have emphasized, the putting away of sin on the seven days of unleavened bread, by putting out physical leaven, and we will look now at the events that occurred collectively, which is what I should like to address today.

The implication for the church today, just as we have the example for the conduct of the church then.

When the church was assembled in this particular month, the first month of the year, this was the beginning of spring, the children of Israel were given certain commands, and we now will drop to verse 17.

You shall observe the festival of unleavened bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt.

Now how do you bring a multitude of people, which included no less than 600,000 mature men? Therefore we may add the equivalent number of mature women.

Normally in a population such as this, we could double the adult population to arrive at the number of children.

So we should have here approximately two to two and a half million people.

In other words, 600,000 times four.

You cannot say to a group such as that to do your own thing.

You have to have some kind of discipline and organization if the people here to foreign slavery are going to be delivered all in one night.

And now we will look a little bit further in this same chapter.

In verse 37, the children of Israel journeyed from Ramesses to Sukkot, about 600,000 men on foot besides women and children.

And a mixed multitude also went up with them and very many cattle, both flocks and herds.

Here we have, if you please, an army.

Now an army that normally would not be a discipline because you have men, women and children, and you have to consider the speed with which you move.

You have to consider the personal needs of children and cattle, especially in the spring of the year.

Therefore, there was the necessity on this occasion of moving in an orderly fashion and under leadership that would not allow for division and confusion.

If you had been in the land of Egypt in this year, you might have said to yourself, now God wants us, point one, to observe the festival of unleavened bread.

We will put out sin in our private lives.

But beyond that, I'm not sure I agree with point number two, that we all have to go out together to the same place.

Some might have said, I think we ought to go to Libya.

Some might have thought, well, Sinai does sound interesting, or you might have said, why not get on board ship and go to Cyprus? Somebody said, let's head straight to the land of the Philistines and the land of Canaan.

Why should we go some other route? Now we're going to take note of some interesting things that happened and what God allowed.

Here we have simple statements of history that we have never focused on in my estimation as we should.

And it was the events of this year that led me to consider the implication of why so much is historic as distinct from doctrinal exposition on the meaning of unleavened bread.

Because in reality, as a church, we have to move together.

As a group, we cannot be divided in gold.

Now we shall move along to chapter 13.

We will pick the story up in verse 5.

Now when the Lord brings you to the land of the Canaanites, and other tribes among them are listed next, which He swore to your fathers to give you a land flowing with milk and honey, you shall keep this service in this month.

We're not concerned with the doctrine, we're concerned with the fact that here a goal is set.

Today we shall look on this part of the story only.

When God brings you into the land, Moses is here pointing up the question of leadership.

In reality, Moses certainly thought at first that he was going to be used of God to lead the children of Israel to the Promised Land.

Later he learned this was not to be the case.

But in any instance, there was no question of the goal.

Now to achieve a goal, we don't always go the most direct route.

When the Lord brings you to the land of the Canaanites, is the goal that was set before that particular generation to occupy a land that had been promised nearly 400 years before.

Now we will move along to the 17th verse.

Now when Pharaoh lets the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines.

If you know a little bit of the modern map, you would know that the land of Egypt lies southwest of what we call Palestine, or modern Israel, or in this case the Promised Land of the Land of Canaan.

And in the southwest corner of that land, the Canaanites had been dispossessed by an Egyptian subtribed Philistines.

So that in reality the land of the Philistines was settled by a very military people.

These people, the Arabs, called Berbers.

And they are known as the Berbers who live in West Africa today, Northwest Africa, who were later subdued by the Arabs.

One of the late Philistines in the Biblical account was Goliath, an Arab literature he's called Goliath the Berber.

The Berbers were one of the last people in West Africa to be subdued by the French, and they put up a fight till after the First World War, before the French were able wholly to subdue Northwest Africa.

These people were very strong militarily, so since the children of Israel had not been trained militarily while in Egypt, and knowing that they were emotionally moved individuals, God decided not to lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, although it was near for the following reason.

Lest the people regret the decision, change their mind when they see the potential for war suddenly looming before them, and wish to return to Egypt.

As human beings, there is always the tendency to be moved by emotional decisions, and it was much easier to lead the children of Israel a circuitous route around the Philistines and come into the land of Canaan from the east, or the south rather than the southwest.

So God led the people round by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea, moving eastward toward the region that we call the Suez rather than northeast, toward the land of Canaan.

Now, can you imagine that there were some people who might have said, why do we have to go this route? Well, of course you can, because there have always been people in the history of this church.

There were individuals in Oregon who could not see why Mr. Armstrong should move to Pasadena.

Those individuals are not in this work anymore.

There were individuals who undoubtedly began to think these thoughts from the start, or they did not yet express them, but it didn't take long.

God leads the children of Israel, as we shall see, eastward.

The people went up out of the land of Egypt, equipped for battle physically, but not emotionally, verse 18.

So Moses now also makes preparation with the bones of Joseph, just the passing thought.

Now the Lord goes before them by day in a pillar of cloud, which meant that they had some cooling effect by a cloud, a shadow in the desert heat.

And there is desert heat when you are already into the spring in this area.

And by night there was a light that shined through, which gave them the opportunity to see what they were doing so they could take care of those personal things that were essential, especially with so many children and cattle.

And this enabled them to rest from time to time and also to travel by night when necessary, which is the coolest time to travel in the desert.

Chapter 14.

Then the Lord said to Moses, Tell the people of Israel to turn back now that they have gone eastward far enough.

You see they had gone in verse 20 from Sukkot to the border of Egypt, called Itam, which was the edge of the wilderness that is essentially the new wilderness of Sinai.

And we are dealing here with an area in which there was, anciently a wall which would keep the nomads from the Sinai from incursion into lower Egypt proper.

Having got to the border of what would be today, the traditional Egypt, instead of moving further into the Sinai, God now directs the leadership, Moses, by himself moving as a pillar in the cloud, and he moves southward, and he commands Moses to command the people.

They are to move in an area so that they now lie slightly to the west of the northern end of the Gulf of Suez, to their west will be a mountain chain, to their south will be a mountain chain, to the east will be the sea, and to the north the area where they came from.

Logically, you or I might have said, Moses, do you realize that this is not quite the thing to do? Because when you get down here, you have no other place to go, we'll only have to backtrack.

Undoubtedly some began to think that, and Pharaoh also began to take note of the implication, for Pharaoh will say of the people of Israel, as he did, they're entangled in the land, the wilderness has shut them in.

God, of course, purposing to harden Pharaoh's heart in order that he could do something that he had not yet done.

Now, when the king of Egypt, who was immediately notified that the children of Israel instead of moving further eastward had suddenly gone southward, it occurred to him that something could be done to redeem himself, and he now set out his army.

The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, verse 8, king of Egypt, and he pursued the people of Israel as they went forth defiantly.

They were really impressed by the victory that they had as a result of what God did.

Now the Egyptians pursued them, and all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and his horsemen in his army, verse 9, and he overtook them while they were in camp at the sea.

Now, when Pharaoh drew near the children of Israel who had just marched defiantly from the region of Old Cairo to the shores of the Red Sea, they looked up and suddenly they discovered the Egyptians were there and what had Moses done, but only to predict the inevitable that they'd have to go back into slavery.

The Egyptians were marching after them and they were in great fear.

The people of Israel cried out to the Lord and they said to Moses, Is it because there were no graves in Egypt? They were not in Egypt that long and the older generation was long lived and the younger generation represented the bulk of the population apart from the children.

Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away now to die in the wilderness? And we have here suddenly an attitude problem.

What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? Is not this that we said to you in Egypt and now they're rehearsing what they had been saying before, Let us alone and let us serve the Egyptians for it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians and to die here in the wilderness.

Now Moses said to the people, Fear not and stand firm and see the salvation of the Lord which He will work for you today for the Egyptians whom you see today, you in this life will never see again.

But take note of the implication of this conversation.

Here is the situation in which the children of Israel caught sight on occasion of God with quickly lost sight of His leadership despite the reality of their eyes and they began to blame Moses for what was occurring.

The importance of this is to realize how easy it is to forget that Jesus Christ today, the Lord L-O-R-D of the Old Testament whenever you find it in capital letters it is the same personality, the same person that He led the children of Israel then and He leads the church today.

And not everything will you or I necessarily agree with right away.

Logically, why shouldn't God have defended the children of Israel and took them through the short route of the land of the Philistines? Was God not powerful enough in reality to have protected the children of Israel against the Philistines? Of course He was.

But He chose something else.

He told the children of Israel, look we don't want to get into a war right away but He had a lot more in mind that He didn't tell them.

And so now He leads them to this lovely area where they can bathe and enjoy the warm waters and the Gulf of Suez but He didn't tell them that they might get into trouble and that He was also going to do something very special that they had never seen and that has never happened to any nation before or since.

Sometimes God keeps His counsel and you have to learn to rely on Him and don't assume that every time a man through whom He works makes a decision that it is necessarily wrong.

It may not be necessarily why according to the explanation God may have much more in mind.

When we first became acquainted with King Leopold of Belgium and then became acquainted in Israel we didn't dream what God really had in mind.

What started, let's say, as a foot in the door in the state of Israel became a relationship with leaders around the world of such immense proportions that Mr. Armstrong is now privileged to have ultimately this opportunity to visit the leadership of the most populous nation in the world and to reach them at a level and in a manner that is appropriate for His office and theirs with respect to the gospel.

The children of Israel were caught in a situation emotionally that they were not prepared for.

It was Moses who had to tell them to keep calm.

The Lord will fight for you.

You have only to be still.

That's verse 14.

Now the Lord said to Moses, Why do you cry to me? So Moses must have asked, Look, this is warm water, but we're really in hot water.

Now tell the people of Israel to go forward.

Let's not have any further complaints.

We're just going to get right along with what I've had in mind and haven't told you all together.

Moses, I want you to lift up that rod, that staff in your hand, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it.

Now Moses here before had thrown down the rod and it did some unique things with respect to the rods of the Egyptians.

Moses had never done anything like this.

He had stretched his rod over the land of Egypt and the waters returned to blood, but nothing like this.

Sometimes even Mr. Armstrong does not know what he's being asked to do and why, but he knows that he's required to do certain things and the explanations may follow.

Lift up your rod, stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it so that the people of Israel may go over the dry ground through the sea and I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his hosts and of course you should know the rest of the story if you have read it.

At that time of course God dealt a great military blow to Egypt which meant it would be possible later for the children of Israel to occupy the land of Canaan which then was militarily under Egyptian suzerainty.

So at this point we have a question.

Would you decide in a situation like this to put your reliance on the man to whom God directly speaks and the staff in his hand? If I were to use these terms, the staff or the rod, I have drawn analogy here to the administration at headquarters here and our legal department.

Mr. Armstrong has given a commission to certain individuals in different capacities to protect the work.

Now there are those who just simply wouldn't prefer to have these individuals protect the work.

That staff was what God told Moses to you.

He didn't say, Moses, I want you just to speak to the water.

He said, I want you to lift up that rod in your hand and stretch out your hand with that rod in your hand over the sea and divide it.

And that is in a sense what we're going to have to do.

We are going to have to divide our enemies as the waters were divided.

There were children of Israel undoubtedly who might have thought it would have been better to return to Pharaoh who ever saw a stick do anything like this.

So we shall move along.

Moses did stretch out his hand over the sea, verse 21, and noted it wasn't the stick that did it, it was the Lord who drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea land dry and the waters were divided.

And the people went into the midst of the sea by dry ground, waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

This picture was so miraculous that you would have thought the children of Israel would never again have had any question about Moses or the Lord or whatever staff God told Moses to you.

But it wasn't very long, in fact, three days' journey out into the wilderness they were complaining again about the failure of God to give them sufficient water.

What is needed here is the implication of what one man told me years ago in my home, an elder in another church, a very close friend, and I was describing to him the government and the church of God.

I was telling him what the leadership was, and I finally convinced him that the head of the church was Jesus Christ.

And he believed me.

And he said something to me that I myself had never thought of in terms of church government.

He said, then your church's government is based on faith.

John Weidner told me that in the seventh day Adventist elder who saw with spiritual eyes that the government of this church is based on faith sees as its head the invisible God and under him Jesus Christ.

You may visibly see, Mr. Armstrong, but it is faith in the invisible leadership that makes the reality so that we can have confidence that what we cannot always clearly see at the beginning comes out clearly at the end.

The children of Israel not having this faith really didn't perceive it, but they were asked to move as a group.

They were asked to go through the Red Sea, not to hike across the mountains to the west or the south.

They were asked to move as a group from the city of Ramses, eastward.

They were now asked to move further eastward as a group, not divided, but as one.

And when they got to the other side, God delivered them.

We can go on with a story.

We will skip the events at Sinai.

I want to move to the 14th chapter of the Book of Numbers so that we learn that whether or not we always agree with every decision there is a reason why certain decisions are made and sometimes we may have to wait to see why.

In the 13th chapter of Numbers, we have the background of the searching of the land.

There were a number of administrators, 12, if you please, who had been sent to search out the land.

Moses stayed with the children of Israel.

Forty days, the administrators under Moses searched out the land.

They are called spies in some translations.

When these administrators came back, two brought the proper report and ten conspired to bring an evil report and to upset the people.

Now you might draw some analogies.

But before we do, let us see what happened.

Then all the congregation having heard the evil report from administrators who had not properly evaluated the situation, who did not see by faith what Joshua and Caleb did, these others saw only the problems.

Or if you please, today they would have only seen the bills that come back from Mr. Armstrong's trip since this is the big issue that was raised.

They would not see the results.

Joshua and Caleb saw the results and knew that the bills would be paid.

There are people who became upset in that day with the possibility that things might not go right.

Then all the congregation of Israel raised a loud cry and the people wept that night.

And all the people of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron.

They only saw the physical leadership.

God had to remind them of himself or otherwise the children of Israel seemingly would have forgotten what was in that cloud, the invisible Creator.

And all the people of Israel murmured, the whole congregation of Israel was upset and said to them, Would that we had died in the land of Egypt or that we had died already in this wilderness? Why does the Lord, now you know they want to bring God into it, why does the Lord bring us into this land to fall by the sword? Now why should they have said this unless there weren't even reasoning correctly? How is it that they would think that God could bring them into the land but couldn't keep them from falling by the sword? But people when they get emotional do not reason correctly.

The God who could bring them to the land through the events of the Passover, through the Red Sea, at the foot of Sinai which we have already passed by, could He not bring them into the land and deliver them from the sword, of course? Our wives and our little ones will become a prey.

Would it not be better for us now to go back to Egypt? They began to reason, began to find justification why in modern terms here the work will fold up.

So they said one to another, let us choose a captain and go back to Egypt.

They had come to the place where they decided to have another leader than the one whom God chose.

Now God chose Moses and gave him as a very special assistant, his brother Aaron.

And these two fell on their faces before all the congregation.

And Joshua, the son of Nun and Caleb, the son of Japhana, who were among those who had spied out the land, they tore their clothes and said to all the congregation of the people of Israel, trying to still them, the land which we pass through is an exceedingly good land.

They kept their eyes on the goal.

If the Lord delight in us, that's our responsibility to see that He does.

He will bring us into this land and give it to us, a land which flows with milk and honey.

Our responsibility is not to question God's ability, but whether we please Him.

Only do not rebel, they said, against the eternal.

Do not fear the people of the land.

Fear God, in other words.

For they are bread for us.

They're the ones who planted.

They're the ones who will have reaped the spring harvest, in a sense the people of the land will have prepared the land and put food in storage for us.

Their protection is removed from them.

The other ten decided that their sword was greater than God.

Joshua and Caleb decided very clearly on examination of the evidence that they really had no protection, because the Lord is with us and they had no such protection on their side.

Do not fear them.

But all the congregation said to stone them with stones and the crisis was here.

Happily we didn't get that far.

Then the glory of the Lord appeared at the tent of meeting to all the people of Israel.

And the Lord said to Moses, How long will this people despise me? And how long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs which I have wrought among them? I will strike them with a pestilence and disinherit them, and will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they, which Moses asked not to be done.

Now, happily in our day, instead of ten to two, it was much nearer eleven to one in the reverse order, that the real difference is that the children of Israel were not converted, except for the very few, whereas the Church of God is made up of a converted people, and the ministry as a whole converted people.

And when you're converted, you know it, and when you're not, you don't know what the other person knows.

Let me tell you that again.

When you're converted, you know it, and the other person who's not doesn't really know what you know about yourself, and about the other person who is converted.

Anyone who said what Mr. Helge quoted could not have understood what it means, truly, to be a converted mind.

You might now assume that God would have tried to resolve the problem in the logical way, and that is why not dispose of the ten and get on with the business of occupying the land.

And I want you to look at the story briefly.

The Lord said in verse 20, I have pardoned this people.

I've skipped Moses' prayer.

We won't take the time for all of it.

And I have done this according to your word, but truly, as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, which is still to come, none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs, which I wrought in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the proof these ten times and have not hearkened to my voice, none of them shall see the land which I swore to give to their fathers, and none of those who despise me shall see it.

But my servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit, he was converted.

And as followed me, I will bring him into the land into which he went, and his descendants shall possess it.

And now since the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwell in the valleys, turn tomorrow and set out for the wilderness, by the way, to the Red Sea southward.

Now, I've skipped the fact that from Sinai they moved slightly to the northeast, came to the borders of Canaan, searched the land out.

Now God says, now listen carefully what the implication of this means.

He says now, instead of going on into the land, instead of my dealing directly with those administrators who prove to be unreliable, but will take all the rest of you in, God said no such thing.

He said all the rest of you as a whole, who were adults and responsible, fell into the same category, decided that those ten were right, and the testimony of Joshua and Caleb was not right.

And all of you are going to stay out of the Promised Land.

The Lord said to Moses and to Aaron, how long shall this wicked congregation or church murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the people of Israel, which they murmur against me.

So he said, as I live, what you have said in my hearing, I will do to you.

You said that your dead bodies are going to lie in this wilderness.

Indeed, then that's what is going to happen.

Your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness, and all of your number numbered from twenty years old and upward, who have murmured against me, not one shall come into the land, for I swore that I would make you dwell, except Caleb, the son of Japhana, and Joshua, the son of Nun.

But your little ones, who you said would become a prey and be sold into slavery, I'll bring them in, and they shall know the land which you have despised.

Your children shall be shepherds in the wilderness, verse 33, forty years, and shall suffer for your faithlessness, until the last of your dead of this generation will lie in the wilderness.

God made an interesting decision.

There were those administrators who abused their responsibility.

God did not do what you or I might have thought to do, replace them, and everything will be right.

In fact, in that congregation it was not the case, because as a whole they were all unconverted.

God hadn't promised them the Holy Spirit, which is a major doctrine that most people know nothing about.

When God chose not at first to deal directly with the tent, but to deal with the congregation as a whole, he made an interesting decision.

They all had to go through forty long years, instead of merely the one year that they would have gone through between the time of the days of Unleavened Bread when they first left Egypt, Sinai, and the rest of that year.

They would have been in the land of promise sometime in the second year if there had not been this fiasco under Moses' leadership.

There's power, but sometimes there is a reason why he takes us the longer route.

You may not know, I may not fully know, but I wouldn't want to be in the category of the tent who brought the false accusation here in the days of Moses.

Verse 36, The men who Moses sent to spy out the land, and who returned and made all the congregation to murmur against Moses by bringing up an evil report against the land.

The men who brought up an evil report of the land died by plague before the Lord.

But Joshua, the son of Nun and Caleb, the son of Jefonunna, remained alive of those men who went to spy out the land.

God dealt with them.

Moses did not have to.

But the whole congregation had to walk one generation in the wilderness that they had not anticipated.

40 long years instead of entering it the second year after the accident.

We are probably going to have to go through a period, not only of this year but into the next while we go through the trial of resolving a problem brought on by evil reports which climaxed only a few days before the beginning of this year with such statements that an average of \$25 million disappears every year that is never accounted for, which when I heard the statement I said, fellows, you don't know Bob Sealy.

I'm sorry, Mr. Sealy, to have to mention your name.

But anyone who knows you knows that the money never disappeared there.

And that's why he's been in charge to see that the monies that are received are also deposited.

And not a penny is lost.

We are, however, going to have to pay financially through time and stress and concern because there were mistakes that administrators did make in bringing up an evil accusation to the ears of the Attorney General.

Let us face the reality and the parallels.

We are not going to get out of this and see the promised land just like we thought.

We're going to have to go through some trials here to four that we never anticipated before the tribulation.

Now, God was able, at the Red Sea, to make historic events so significant for that generation that no nation ever forgot what happened to the armies of Pharaoh because any army could have the place and die off.

But no army had ever ventured against God into the waters of a sea and were totally overwhelmed.

In the same way, we are in a situation where no church has been dealt with in this generation in the land of the free as we have been dealt with presently.

And probably the results will be what we ourselves do not anticipate or could not have devised in terms of getting the gospel out any other way.

More recognition will be coming to us through the crisis that we have than we could have gotten by the purchase of ads in the publication of magazines or speaking on radio or television.

There are people throughout the religious world in this country in particular who might have taken no note, who are suddenly aware of us in a manner that we could not have devised through the employment of media as we used to do in the 1950s and 60s.

In the meantime, we are asked to march as a group just as the children of Israel did.

One other event I want us to take note of in the book of Joshua will quickly look through the story here in the third chapter of Joshua.

There were spies who were again sent out by Joshua to check on the matters around Jericho.

Early in the morning, Joshua rose up after the spies had returned and sent out from Shittim, which is on the east side of the Jordan with all the people of Israel.

They came to the Jordan and lodged there before they passed over.

At the end of three days, the officers went through the camp and gave commands to the people.

Now, this must have been a Sabbath day.

They came to lodge there.

Sabbath and Sunday and Monday.

There will be obvious reasons for this as we go through the story.

That particular Sabbath is the time, like any other Sabbath, when you gather together and three days had elapsed.

At the end of three days, the officers went through the camp and gave commands to the people.

Now, the people might have said, well, I think we should go further north.

Somebody might have said, why don't we go around the southern shore of the Dead Sea? Somebody might have said, why don't we stay east of Jordan? This isn't bad over here.

Now, when you see the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, the command goes forth, being carried by the Levitical priest, then you shall set out from your place and follow it.

That you may know the way you should go, for you have not passed this way before, so you're going to have to follow those who are in the lead.

Yet there shall be a space between you and that Ark, a distance of about 2,000 cubits.

Do not come near it.

And Joshua said to the people, sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.

And Joshua said to the priest, take up the Ark of the Covenant, pass on before the people, and they did so.

And the tomorrow, of course, when they crossed the Jordan westward, when the water stood up to the north as a wall and disappeared south into the Dead Sea, that turns out to be, as we will note, the tenth day of the month.

Now, this becomes a doctrinal matter, which I won't go into, because I wanted to see the setting here briefly.

The tenth day of the month this year was a Tuesday, so the three previous days must have been Sabbath, Sunday, and Monday.

So they camped and rested that Sabbath in two more days elapsed.

And then on the tenth day of the month, which is a Tuesday, that year, we shall see it proved momentarily, they had crossed the Jordan.

The people passed over in haste at the end of verse 10, all the people had finished passing over the Ark of the Lord, and the priests finally did too.

That's in verse 11 of this same fourth chapter.

The children of Israel all had to go together.

Those who decided they didn't want to go to the east of Jordan would never have passed over.

We have to realize there comes a time when the way to do a thing is defined, whether it is logical or not.

The way we are handling the matter today is a legal way.

This has been decided.

The way to cross over the Jordan was to stop the waters and walk on dry land rather than building a palm-tuned bridge.

But people reason, and they can reason that there are any number of solutions.

It is not how many possible ones there are, but which God has chosen to use.

Now, the children of Israel were then the males, circumcised, as they were encamped there, and they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month, at evening, in the plains of Jericho.

And on the morrow, and that fourteenth must have been the seventh day of the week.

And therefore the tenths would have been a Tuesday.

We know this because on the morrow after the Passover, which was the fifteenth, on that very day they began to eat the produce of the land, which implies that the cutting of the wave sheaf, a little symbol defined in Leviticus 23, which must precede the eating of the produce of the land, must have occurred at the beginning hours of the fifteenth, which was the custom, the beginning of that day, not the morning.

We used to think it was the morning, but that was not the case.

In any instance, the point is, it should be borne in mind that on the fifteenth, which was a Sunday, let us correct this statement Sunday didn't exist then, was the first day of the week.

On the first day of the week, they ate of the new produce of the land for the simple reason that now the wave sheaf had been cut and that would have been on the morrow after the Sabbath, so that Sabbath must have been also the fourteenth.

And this is why the church today recognizes that on occasion that we have a situation when determining the day of Pentecost, that that day is to be figured on the premise that the Sabbath and the fourteenth may coincide, and the first of the seven weeks that follow, forty-nine days in all, begin on Sunday with the fifteenth.

And the fifteenth or the first day of the week, in a case like that, that's happened in 1974 and 1977, that also happened in this year when they crossed the Jordan, which is a historically verifiable fact.

Now, the children of Israel worked as a group.

They had to cross the Red Sea at Suez, they had to cross the Jordan, and now they were asked after they had observed the Passover on the fourteenth, they were, in fact, if you rely on the information that is both here and in Josephus, they were asked this very next day to begin to do something unique.

Joshua was by Jericho at this moment on this holy day, the first day of the week, the fifteenth day of the month, and an individual stood in front of him with a drawn sword, and a conversation follows at the end of chapter five.

And now a message is given.

Joshua is told that Jericho is to be surrounded, and for a certain number of days you're to march around the city all the men of war.

Thus you're to do for six days, and seven priests shall bear seven trumpets, and on the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, the priests blowing the trumpet.

And that was the next Sabbath, the last day of unleavened bread.

And when they made a long blast with a ram's horn, as soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people will shout with a great shout on that last day, and the wall of the city will fall down flat, and the people shall go up every man straight before him.

Now my point is not to prove that this is verified, which you may examine if you want to look at archaeological evidence.

What we want to look at today is that the children of Israel were asked as a group to do a particular thing.

They were told in fact to keep quiet for six days as they marched around the city, and they were told when to shout and make a sound which would frighten the inhabitants at the point that the trumpets would also be blowing, and the walls of the city except one part would come tumbling down, falling flat so they could march right into the city with no defenses.

Now there were people who undoubtedly reasoned that this shouldn't happen during the days of unleavened bread.

There are people who reasoned that certain things shouldn't happen legally.

I can only tell you that sometimes God asked you to do what you might not have expected, because after all, He determined both what should be done and in this case what should be done with holy time.

They first left Egypt on a holy day.

They crossed, as far as all implications of Scripture, the Gulf of Suez on the last holy day of unleavened bread.

Those were events on holy time.

And it was commanded by the leadership in the church.

On this occasion, putting together Josephus with our account here, the fact that you are introduced to the first day of unleavened bread, and Joshua meets the one who is in fact the Lord, and he tells what to do, and the whole implication of course could hardly be other than the fact that these were also the seven days of unleavened bread, and the events occur in such a manner that the people are tested as to whether they are willing to work together and do it as a group.

That is our responsibility.

Not merely to put out sin privately in our own personal lives, in our family, in the job, but we also have a responsibility collectively.

And sometimes in that collective leadership, we have administrators as under Moses who make mistakes, who make mistakes, sufficient and so serious as to have jeopardized a whole generation from entering the promised land.

We in the church today, with a tiny minority instead of the majority who made the mistakes, are having to defend and to protect the institution which is the basis for making the gospel known to the world.

Because individuals brought testimony that was not valid.

And we have to work out the problem.

That can happen in our own midst, just as it happened in the church in the days of Moses and Joshua.

I think we have to realize how realistic a description this story is.

And I think we need to realize that God who looks down, knows that sometimes the long way, not the short way, is impact.