

Sunday August 12<sup>th</sup> 2012  
The Letter to the Hebrews  
Part Fifty Five

1). Heb 11:28 *By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them. 29 By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, whereas the Egyptians, attempting to do so, were drowned. 30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days.*

a). We had seen last week that not just Moses, but the whole of the nation of Israel, kept the Passover 'by faith' – they had believed that which God had said concerning this and then acted accordingly - Ex 12:28 *Then the children of Israel went away and did so; just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did. 29 ¶ And it came to pass at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock.*

b). And we had also seen that it was the whole nation of Israel, including Moses of course, that passed through the Red Sea, 'by faith'.

c). And that which we have to conclude from this is that this faith that the nation of Israel exhibited in these examples that are given to us, is the same faith as that which we witnessed with regards to Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Jacob and Joseph – it is the kind of faith that at its completion, when brought to its goal, brings forth the salvation of the soul, the very faith that is referenced in Hebrews Chapter 10 which gives us the context for the examples of faith we see in Chapter 11 – Heb 10:36 *For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.*

d). Yet, despite exhibiting the faith equated with the salvation of the soul, the very same faith that we would walk in, we see in the historical account that none of this generation to come out of Egypt led by Moses – except Caleb and Joshua and those under 20 years of age – entered the land to receive their inheritance, but rather, as a result of their unbelief, perished in

the wilderness; eternally saved, but not achieving the purpose for their salvation.

e). They had then failed to remain steadfast in the faith, and instead had drawn back to perdition; God's soul having no pleasure in them for the very reason we see in - Heb 11:6 *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

2). And all of this is of the most serious importance to us for 2 reasons – firstly because Christ is described as 'our Passover' in - 1Co 5:7b *.....For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.*

a). It is the Passover that provides the picture of the way and the means by which a person may be eternally saved and all of us have experienced this so as to pass from death unto life.

b). And then, inextricably connected to Passover is the passage of Israel through the Red Sea and the destruction of the Egyptians picturing for us our being raised to newness of life through the waters of baptism and the death of our old man, the man of sin - Ro 6:5 *For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.*

c). And just as with Israel, this sequence of events has to do with firstborn sons and rulership – and just as Israel was delivered from Egypt and brought through the Red Sea for the purpose of being led by the Spirit, through faith, in order to rule over the earth from the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as we see in - Ex 19:5 *'Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. 6 'And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'* *These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."* 7 *So Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before them all these words which the LORD commanded him. 8 Then all the people answered together and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do."* *So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD.*

In exactly the same way we have been delivered from this world and raised to newness of life so that we might be led by the Spirit, through faith, in order to rule over the earth from the heavenly land, the Kingdom of the heavens - Ro 8:14 *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you*

*received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 ¶ and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

d). What we see then is an exact correlation between God's purpose for Israel and God's purpose for Christians with the fulfillment of this purpose being absolutely contingent on faith for both groups.

3). And this brings us to the second reason why the events surrounding Israel are of incredible importance to us - 1Co 10:1 ¶ *Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, 2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, 3 all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. 5 But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. 6 ¶ Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. 7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." 8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; 9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; 10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*

a). Once we have grasped the reality that the first generation of Israel to come out of Egypt exercised exactly the same faith to the saving of the soul that we confess to be ours, and once we realize that these people were human beings with a sin nature just like ours and that God had provided for them everything that they needed that pertains to life and godliness – once we have grasped this, we must come to the shocking realization that their experience could also be ours.

b). And this is why God in His great love for us has provided their experience as an example, as a type, for us 'that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted'.

c). This being the case let's look at some of the things given to us as examples here in 1 Corinthians Chapter 10 to see what we might learn from them.

4). 6 ¶ *Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.*

a). Look at what we find in - Nu 11:4 ¶ *Now the mixed multitude who were among them yielded to intense craving; so the children of Israel also wept again and said: "Who will give us meat to eat? 5 "We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic; 6 "but now our whole being is dried up; there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes!".....*

*32 And the people stayed up all that day, all night, and all the next day, and gathered the quail (he who gathered least gathered ten homers); and they spread them out for themselves all around the camp. 33 But while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was aroused against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very great plague. 34 So he called the name of that place Kibroth Hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had yielded to craving.*

b). Now this 'mixed multitude' are not a group of people outside of the nation of Israel, but Jews within the nation. The word translated 'mixed multitude' means - gathered up together, i.e. a promiscuous assemblage (of people).

c). So within the camp of Israel there was a group that gathered themselves up together, who were of a like mind concerning the manna who then influenced those around them.

d). We might understand this in the same way that we would see the work of the tares that were sown amongst the wheat in the Matthew 13 parables.

e). That which they complained against is obvious to see – that which God had provided for their sustenance on the journey, the manna, was in their eyes insufficient – this is the spiritual food spoken of in v3.

f). Please hear very clearly what they were saying – 'God's Word is not enough for us, we need something to go with it' – to just rely on God's word they claim had caused their whole being to dry up.

g). Here is the example for us to take note of – that which we need for the completion of our journey is contained in God's Word and it is more than sufficient in itself and of itself – to claim otherwise is to deny the power of Christ as He is the word made flesh.

h). Anything that purports to be spiritual truth that does not have the scriptures as God has given them to be understood, as its foundation with the 7<sup>th</sup> Day as its focus is no more than the wisdom of man, it's a leek and an onion and we don't need to eat it.

i). Let's also note that those who desire leeks and onions will gather themselves together and the focus of their gathering will be to complain and we would also see from our example that God allowed them to eat the meat they craved for, but struck them with 'a very great plague' 'while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed'.

5). *7 And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."*

a). This verse of course takes us to the golden calf incident –  
Ex 32:1 ¶ *Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." 2 And Aaron said to them, "Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." 3 "So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. 4 And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, "This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!" 5 So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD." 6 Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.*

a). While Moses was on the mountain the people needed to patiently endure and stay focused on God's purpose for them as they waited for Moses return. Instead however they became impatient and through their impatience they reconstructed God in an image that was more pleasing to them.

b). They called the golden calf 'God', using the word 'Elohiym', but this was not God, it was a man made image – and the worship of this image the scriptures call idolatry - Ac 7:41 *"And they made a calf in those days, offered sacrifices to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands.*

c). Now Christ has been on the mountain for what seems to be a long time and until He returns Christians need to patiently endure and stay focused on God's purpose for them – but what we see throughout much of Christendom is a reconstruction of God in a more pleasing image – a false image that is then worshipped in idolatry.

d). It would be good for us to realize that idolatry is not the sole province of pagans, but is practiced week in, week out in many churches throughout the world – hence the reason why there are so many different

flavors of Christianity and you can just shop around until you find the flavor you like the most.

e). And probably with all sincerity there is a declaration made in each of these places that would parallel that made by Israel – “This is your god O Israel that brought you out of the land of Egypt” – but it isn’t.

6). *8 Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell;*

a). This next example takes us to the work of Balaam –  
Nu 25:1 ¶ *Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. 2 They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. 3 So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel. 4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Take all the leaders of the people and hang the offenders before the LORD, out in the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may turn away from Israel." 5 So Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Every one of you kill his men who were joined to Baal of Peor." 6 ¶ And indeed, one of the children of Israel came and presented to his brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 7 Now when Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand; 8 and he went after the man of Israel into the tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her body. So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel.*

b). Balaam, we will remember from the scriptural account was hired by Balak to curse Israel, but he was not able to pronounce the curse against Israel, instead when he opened his mouth he spoke nothing but blessing –  
Nu 23:11 *Then Balak said to Balaam, "What have you done to me? I took you to curse my enemies, and look, you have blessed them bountifully!"*

c). However, although Balaam was not able to curse those whom God had blessed, this was not the end of the matter.

d). Unable to curse Israel Balaam seeks another way to bring about their downfall and this we find recorded in - Nu 31:16 *"Look, these women caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the incident of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.*

e). What we have here is yet another attack upon the Word of God. Israel was and still is God’s covenant people and nothing could change their

status with respect to this, but the fulfillment of the covenant was conditional upon faithful obedience.

f). The 'counsel of Balaam' was to the effect that as a covenant people they could transgress with impunity the commands of God because the covenant was their protection. And needless to say there were those who believed that lie because it was what they wanted to hear.

g). And this whole incident is of particular importance to us because of what we find recorded in the Revelation - Re 2:14 *"But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.*

h). Clearly then 'the doctrine of Balaam' is a doctrine that is to be found in the church and is promulgated by false teaching, probably for financial gain. It is a doctrine that we find warnings about both in - 2Pe 2:15 *They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;* and - Jude 1:11 *Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.*

i). And you can find this teaching over and over in the false teaching surrounding the grace and the love of God.

j). One last thing to say about this, which would apply to our previous examples as well, which is that within the congregation of Israel there were those who did not want to believe that which God had said and then gathered themselves together to pursue their own lusts finding someone, in this instance Balaam, who would legitimize those lusts.

k). You see, these things that we read about concerning Israel and the example they give to Christians could not take place unless those who take part in them choose to do so. There has to be a choice made not to believe that which God has said so that the lie can be embraced instead. David records this about Israel in - Ps 106:24 *Then they despised the pleasant land; They did not believe His word, 25 But complained in their tents, And did not heed the voice of the LORD.*

l). And remember as we read this that these are those who 'by faith kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood' and 'by faith passed through the Red Sea' - who at one time had faith to the saving of the soul.

7). *9 nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents;*

a). This we find in - Nu 21:4 ¶ *Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on [because of] the way. 5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread." 6 So the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died.*

b). Contextually this incident within the historical record comes after the Lord has given Israel a great victory over the Canaanite king, Arad, and his people.

c). Following their victory Israel is 'to go by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom'. The word translated 'way' is a Hebrew word that figuratively means 'a course of life', 'a mode of action'.

d). The Red Sea would bring to mind resurrection and therefore the way of the Red Sea would picture walking in newness of life, walking according to the Spirit – and this must be done to 'go around the land of Edom'.

e). Edom is of course Esau, the man of the flesh who despised his birthright. So the land of Edom would be indicative of this very thing. In other words to avoid despising the birthright it is necessary to consistently walk according to the Spirit and not according to the flesh.

f). With our example of Israel we see that they became 'very discouraged on the way' – the word translated 'very discouraged' has the idea of impatience, bringing about discouragement.

g). So once again, we see the inability to continue in patient endurance leading to the people speaking against God and against Moses. And their complaining follows the same line as previously seen – 'no water', 'no food', just 'this worthless bread'.

h). That which they said demonstrating yet again their choice to unbelief; God had provided all that they needed to sustain them on this journey; they were His firstborn son destined for rulership – all they had to do was to remain steadfast in the faith and patiently endure.

i). The example for us would be clear – in order to enter the heavenly land we must go by the way of the Red Sea, we must walk in resurrection and this journey must confront the choice to despise our birthright, [which apparently we could do by lusting for food we have no business eating rather than trusting God] a choice that can be circumnavigated by our remaining steadfast in the faith.

j). The Rock, the Lord Jesus Christ has already been struck at Calvary and the Spirit of God has been given as our spiritual drink – all we have to do

is ask - Joh 4:13 *Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."*

Joh 7:38 *"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." 39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

k). Jesus also said - Mt 6:31 *"Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 "For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

l). Mt 5:6 *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.*

m). Israel rejected the spiritual food and drink that would have brought them righteousness, instead longing for that which would satisfy their flesh – despising that which God had made possible in favor of a present gratification.

n). And here again the lesson for us is an obvious one - Heb 12:3 *For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. 4 ¶ You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.*

8). We will continue with this next time – if the Lord is willing.