

Four valuable lessons

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Many of my friends are in the process of observing the Days of Unleavened Bread. We hope to be removing the leaven of malice and wickedness and eating the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Corinthians 5:8).

We find the history of these days back in the book of Exodus. When the children of Israel were finally able to flee Egypt, they had to go with unleavened bread. Why? Because they had to leave in haste.

Exodus 12:33-34—"And the Egyptians urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, 'We shall all be dead.' So the people took their dough before it was leavened, having their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders."

Exodus 12:39—"And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves."

At this time I would like to mention four valuable lessons that we can identify at this time of the year.

■ One lesson is analyzing the proper reaction to grace (to deliverance).

The Israelites were saved by the blood of the lamb on the door (Exodus 12:7, 23).

Although we are saved by grace (Ephesians 2:8-9), we were created for good works (verse 10).

Although we are justified by His grace (Titus 3:4-7), we should be mindful to do good works (verse 8).

Our keeping rituals during the Days of Unleavened Bread is designed to help us focus upon the powerful message of our godly responsibilities—because of God's grace.

■ One lesson is viewing leaven as sin.

At one point in His ministry, Jesus Christ made the analogy of leaven being the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matthew 16:6, 11-12).

In a letter from the apostle Paul to the congregation in Corinth, he made the analogy of sin being like leaven (1 Corinthians 5:1-8). The specific sins mentioned were both immoral sexual behavior and excessive tolerance.

In a letter from Paul to the congregations in the area of Galatia, he made the analogy of sin being like leaven (Galatians 5:1-9). The sin mentioned here was the overemphasis on circumcision, which Paul likened to bondage.

■ One lesson is applying the concept of being "in haste" to leave Egypt as being a citizen of the Kingdom of God.

Jesus prepared His disciples during His earthly ministry for the coming calamity of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. (Luke 17:31-36).

Many of today's believers are using those same verses in Luke to give them focus for dealing with the current troubles in the world.

Many believers are seeking to remember that they are "strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Hebrews 11:13-16).

■ One lesson is to remember Christ's resurrection.

Many believers recently partook of the symbols of the bread and the wine in an evening picturing the night that Jesus was betrayed.

They considered that Jesus died at 3:00 p.m. on the following day.

Then, they figured that Jesus was raised three days and three nights later.

It is common for a believer to read the biblical account of Jesus' death and His resurrection.

It is common for a believer to consider how the power of Christ's resurrection affects his life today.