

Coming All the Way Out of Sin

March 2010

Dear Brethren:

This is going to be a letter of meat in due season for the spring Holy Days. Just what is our part in God's Master Plan following Passover? Christ's sacrifice (His scourging and shed blood), His death pictured by the Passover, made it possible for the forgiveness of our past sins—the first step in that Plan. The Feast of Unleavened Bread pictures the next step in God's Plan of salvation for mankind.

The theme of all the spring Holy Days is: Escape from Egypt! Just as ancient Israel came all the way out of Egypt (a symbol of sin—Hebrews 11:25–26), so we must be striving to come completely, *all the way*, out of *all* sin.

The story of Moses leading Israel out of Egypt is one of the most telling and inspiring in the entire Bible. Why? It provides an unforgettable picture of miracle after miracle, and is an exact type of our coming out of Satan's world today—Babylon.

Ancient Israel came completely out of Egypt passing through "the wilderness of the Red Sea" (Galatians 4:25).

Mr. Armstrong taught that the departure of ancient Israel from Egypt is clearly a physical type of our spiritual departure from sin today—our spiritual journey from self (what we are by nature), Satan and society. Ancient Israel escaped completely from Egypt (sin) through the mighty hand of God's guidance. God wants us to do the same.

What should we do once our past sins (both physical and spiritual) have been paid by Christ's dual sacrifice (His broken body and shed blood)? "Shall we continue in sin, that grace [unmerited pardon for sins that are past] may abound? God forbid [perish the thought]. How shall we, that are dead to sin [called of God to put away sin], live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:1–2).

Sin No More

Sin [the transgression of God's laws, statutes, judgments, and the principles of healthful living] shall not have dominion [rule or control] over you: for ye are not under the law [its penalty], but under grace [meaning the dual sacrifice that

waived the death penalty including sickness and disease]. What then? shall we sin [breaking God's physical and spiritual laws], because we are not under the law [its penalty], but under grace [unmerited pardon for sins that are past]? God forbid [perish the thought] (Romans 6:14–15).

We are saved by grace through faith. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8). Grace is a free gift. It means benefits, mercy, unmerited pardon, or forgiveness that God extends toward those who accept Christ's dual sacrifice with the determination to establish the law (Romans 3:31). ". . . for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). An abolished law could never define sin (Romans 3:20). Those who willfully and continually transgress God's spiritual and physical laws *do* fall from grace. Most falsely assume that grace means "saved." We are saved by grace through faith—faith in living the doctrine that Jesus Christ preached. Grace does not mean "saved." We are saved by the faith that establishes the physical and spiritual laws of God. By faith in obedience to God's laws is faith made perfect (James 2:22).

The Word, the God of the Old Testament, came in the flesh for the very purpose of death so that His dual sacrifice might erase the penalty for our past physical and spiritual sins (Romans 5:8).

In [Christ] whom we have redemption [from past sins and damnation] through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace [meaning God's willingness to forgive us of our past sins, not His willingness for us to continue to transgress His laws] (Ephesians 1:7).

Brethren, how do we view these spring Holy Days? Is it just a ritual? Is it something we do by taking God's name in vain, by professing to be christlike and yet not walking as He walked? To what extent did Christ tell us to put away sin? Was not it completely? What was Christ's command in John 5:14 and John 8:11? Was not it to "sin no more"? Are we putting away the physical and spiritual sin for which Jesus Christ had to suffer scourging and die, or are we continually scourging and piercing Christ anew? What exactly is our part in God's Master Plan once we have partaken of the Passover? Does not it all have to do with Christ's command to "sin no more"?

The seven Days of Unleavened Bread following the Passover picture to us the complete putting away of sin (both physical and spiritual), meaning obedience to the principles of healthful living and obedience to God's Laws—His Commandments, His statutes and judgments—after past sins are forgiven through the gift of grace. These days picture our exercise of true godly obedience.

John 5:14 is a scripture we need to remember and review throughout the year to remind us of our part in God's Master Plan. It clearly indicates that sickness and disease was

the punishment for not practicing preventative maintenance against behavioral-driven diseases. It reminds us that the misery of this man, who had been diseased for thirty-eight years, was due to physical sin. His affliction gives us caution and warning of the danger of not practicing the principles of healthful living.

Afterward [meaning after Christ had healed this invalid at the pool of Bethesda] Jesus finds him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, you are made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto you (John 5:14).

Jesus Christ was expressing God's standard of good health. Notice, Christ did not say we could sin in moderation or compromise His command because we are under grace. God will not condone physical sin to any degree because physically it defiles the body. Here is a quote from Mr. Armstrong's early writings regarding John 5:14:

Jesus continually HEALED THE SICK. When He healed, He said, 'Go and SIN NO MORE.' He was speaking of violating the physical laws of health. Just as the repentant sinner who is converted through Christ is commanded to turn away from sin and quit sinning (transgressing God's law), so if we look to God for healing we should try to learn in what manner we have been violating God's physical health laws, and CORRECT OUR LIVING! It is BECAUSE men for untold generations have been living incorrectly, violating these precious health laws, and increasingly so these past four or five generations, that we are a degenerate generation today—so much so WE DON'T REALIZE IT! (*Co-Worker Letter*, 1948)

It may not be spiritual sin to eat Biblically unclean foods. Yet, if one deliberately does it out of lust of appetite, that breaks the tenth commandment and becomes sin. But in all cases wrong food injures the body, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit. It defiles the body, if not the man, and if we continue to defile our bodies God will destroy us (1 Corinthians 3:17).

The requirements for healing are obedience and faith. And faith establishes the laws of health—the principles of healthful living. But fools mock at sin (Proverbs 14:9) and are afflicted (Psalm 107:17). Healing and good health are greatly hindered today because most have a "no limits" philosophy toward physical sin. Yet, Christ wants us to put away the sin that brings upon us the penalty of sickness, disease and premature death. Only action on what we know to be true qualifies us for God's forgiveness—God's healing.

Now let us go to John 8:11. This is a companion scripture to John 5:14. It is a scripture we need to remember and review throughout the year as well, to remind us of our part in God's Master Plan. It clearly indicates that spiritual sin (the breaking of God's Ten Commandments) is to be put away. In John 8:1–4, Christ is talking to the scribes and

Pharisees about a woman caught in adultery. In verse 5 we read: "Now Moses in the law [the book of the law] commanded us, that such should be stoned." The law being spoken of here within the Book of the Covenant was the ministration of death. It was a set of judgments that called for the application of the death penalty (through stoning) of commandment transgressors by human judges. This was the law that the Pharisees and scribes were referring to when they asked the teacher here, "But what sayest thou?" Christ tells them in verse 7, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." And in verse 9: "And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last."

Was Christ telling us here that He was condoning sin? Of course not! Scripture tells us that Christ is not the minister of sin (Galatians 2:17). Christ had come to remove the ministration of death and extend mercy to this woman, which is a gap in time (one's lifetime) between sin and repentance that God allows for us to change inwardly or ultimately perish. Christ had also come to establish grace (a two-phase process) by which we could all put away sin.

Phase one was unmerited pardon for sins that are past. Phase two was a window of opportunity to establish God's standard of holiness—obedience to His laws, statutes and judgments. That is why Christ said in verse 11 unto the woman caught in adultery, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." Jesus Christ was expressing God's standard of righteousness—obedience to His law, His Ten Commandments (Psalm 119:172). Christ had come to do away with the ministration of death, because it could only bring death to those who had transgressed God's commandments and were worthy of death under that old administration. They had no chance to repent and change inwardly. But now, mercy and grace could extend that opportunity.

Our part in God's Master Plan today is to forsake sin. If we have truly repented, we can be under the free gift of grace, unmerited pardon for our sinful past, but with the extension of mercy—space in time to forsake sin. God is not interested in extending grace to those who continually live in sin. Endless repentance for the same sins does not please God. Christ came to extend mercy and grace to us for the purpose of putting away sin.

God Desires Obedience

First Samuel 15:22 is one of the classic scriptures in the Word of God that is a watchword to those who would properly serve and please God. In the times of ancient Israel the slaying of animals only foreshadowed the time when the Lamb of God would come and be offered for the sins of the world. Since the dual sacrifice of Christ, we no longer need the offering of animal sacrifices as a part of our religious worship. Even under the Old Covenant, animal sacrifices were only a much-abused substitute for what God really wanted.

Here Samuel puts his finger on what God really wants. "And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice [the continual shedding of an animal's blood], and to hearken [to hear and heed what God says] than the fat of rams."

Religious ceremony becomes a senseless ritual when it is devoid of spiritual understanding in our obedience to God. Saul had no strength of obedience. He was constantly redefining God's commands, doing what seemed right in his own eyes. He was allowing himself to be ruled by his own sinful, carnal nature.

David was able to see beyond the sacrificial system. Sacrifice and offering was not what God wanted because of Israel's unending disobedience. Continuous disobedience to God's law, along with unending repentance and atonement for the same sins, was not providing a final solution to the sin problem. David, speaking in Psalm 40:6 and 8 says: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened [to an attitude of willing and ready obedience to God's will and purpose]: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." David knew that when the law of God was in his mind, obedience to it would not require religious, sacrificial offerings. It was endless transgression to His law that required the sacrificial system to teach ancient Israel the habit of obedience. These verses in Psalm 40:6–10 also became the words of the God of the Old Testament who came in the weakness of sinful flesh (Hebrews 5:5–9). Although God had instituted the sacrificial system for the nation of Israel to teach them the habit of obedience, they were designed as types and shadows of something better to come. All the offerings and sacrifices which were considered to be of an atoning or cleansing nature could not make adequate payment or propitiation for our sins. It took the blood of a God who came in the likeness of sinful flesh to cleanse us from sin.

God had Moses institute the sacrificial system as a schoolmaster to teach ancient Israel the habit of obedience when they failed to obey God's voice. God was not pleased with Israel's sacrifices when not followed up with commitment to obey him. Jeremiah 7:21 says, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Put [add] your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh [eat meat]." Jeremiah was urging the people to get their priorities right. There is no sanctity or sacredness in offerings brought by unrepentant men. Jeremiah was not denying the sacrifices, because God had instituted them (Leviticus chapters 1–7). Rather, he opposed the empty ritualism the people had given to the sacrifices, and contrasted it with the obedience God demands—obedience to His laws, statutes and judgments. If the sacrifices were not going to teach them the habit of obedience to the voice of the Eternal, then they might just as well eat the burnt offerings which were wholly offered to God, as well as the other offerings that they were accustomed to eating. Why? It was not sacrifices and offerings that God really required of ancient Israel in the wilderness. It was obedience.

"For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices" (Jeremiah 7:22). That came some two years later because they were transgressing God's Law—His Ten Commandments. Paul said that the sacrificial system was added as a schoolmaster because of transgression to help them achieve obedience.

Wherefore then serveth the law [the sacrificial law]? It was added because of transgressions [to God's Law—His Ten Commandments], till the seed [Christ] should come [to replace the sacrificial system with His dual sacrifice] to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator [Moses]. . . . Wherefore the law [the sacrificial law] was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith [in Christ's dual sacrifice]. But after that faith is come [in Christ's dual sacrifice], we are no longer under a schoolmaster [the sacrificial system to help us achieve obedience] (Galatians 3:19, 24–25).

The sacrificial system was also known as the works of the law—the sacrificial law. Not only was it hard work, but it was expensive to offer an animal. It was indeed *a sacrifice*. Obeying God had a price when unrepentant men transgressed God's laws. They were to learn obedience by paying a price. What God wanted was repentant, changed men, in obedience to His laws, statutes and judgments.

These verses in Jeremiah do not minimize the Old Testament sacrifices, but call attention to the necessity of God's people to live a life of total unquestioning obedience and devotion to God. "But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well [both physically and spiritually] unto you" (Jeremiah 7:23). What God wanted His people to do was to put away sin—to obey His voice. What God desired was obedience to His law, not rituals.

Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He [the Eternal] hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly [by seeking God's righteousness through His laws, statutes and judgments], and to love mercy [the gap in time God has given you to change inwardly], and to walk humbly with thy God [in obedience and godly sorrow]? (Micah 7:6–8)

Psalms 51 was written some time after David's sin with Bathsheba. This Psalm gives expression to why David was a man after God's own heart. He was not perfect. He was a

work in progress and had a sensitivity to sin that God wants us all to have. He was pardoned because of his changing nature.

For thou desirest not sacrifice [with an unending sinful lifestyle]; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering [without inward change]. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit [in our desire to repudiate sin]: a broken and a contrite heart [completely repentant and pliable to God's Word], O God, thou wilt not despise (Psalm 51:16–17).

The sacrifices that truly pleased God involved genuine repentance and inward change, and the heartbroken desire to be righteous. God wanted a broken spirit, an obedient spirit pliable to His Word. ". . . to this man will I look, even to him that is poor [meek and humble] and of a contrite [completely repentant] spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Isaiah 66:2).

If we all truly trembled at God's Word, we would have the necessary conviction to live up to it, as it was originally revealed to us by God's end-time servant. Those who have turned away from God's call to live the doctrine as it was originally revealed will find to their sorrow that unless they repent and get back to the doctrine once delivered, they will all likewise perish. God's purpose for mankind was to create within him a mind change from carnal to divine. God wants us to think as He thinks by making the words that He spoke active and operative in our lives. The problem was that without God's Holy Spirit, carnal human beings could not fulfill the requirements to make that mind change. So the physical, Levitical, sacrificial system was set up by God by which sin was acknowledged, but not paid for, by various sacrifices. Physical substitutions and profound ceremonial symbols were used to foreshadow the coming spiritual administration under the New Testament. Then the God who instituted the sacrificial system through Moses would come in the likeness of sinful flesh, to condemn sin (its penalty through obedience to God's law) and to offer Himself as a dual sacrifice once and for all to pay the penalty for physical and spiritual sin. The Holy Spirit would then be given to those God would call with fruits of repentance and obedience to fulfill the long-term conversion process of mind change. Without the Holy Spirit ancient Israel could not receive the mind to obey God, and abused the sacrificial system. They lived in transgression of God's laws, statutes and judgments, making atonement through endless sacrifices without learning the habit of obedience, which did not please God. The Eternal was not pleased with Israel's burnt offerings and sacrifices, but with obedience to His voice. The same is true today. God is not pleased with us when we continually scourge and pierce Christ anew by failing to put away our sin. When we transgress God's health laws, we scourge Christ. When we transgress His spiritual laws, we pierce Him through. God is not pleased with us when we continually scourge and pierce Christ anew for our same sins. God is not pleased with us when we continually abuse Christ's dual sacrifice.

"To do justice and judgment [God's spiritual and natural laws] is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice [ritual]" (Proverbs 21:3). Abusing the sacrifice by continual repenting of the same sins does not please God. Endless repentance by not learning the habit of obedience only establishes a meaningless ritual. "The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination [when we fail to learn the habit of obedience]: how much more, when he bringeth it with a wicked mind [intent, a thought process that is not of God]" (verse 27). Many of God's called think they can live in transgression of God's spiritual and physical health laws and still be forgiven. That is absolutely not possible. Mercy and grace are only extended to those who are fulfilling their long-term conversion process. Mercy and grace were not intended to become a license for lawlessness, denying the Lord Jesus Christ through doctrinal corruption (Jude 4).

There is a lesson we need to learn from what Christ said in Matthew 9:13. The Pharisees' trouble was that although they followed the rituals of the sacrificial system with great precision, their hearts were hard, cold and merciless—giving no space in time for people to learn the habit of obedience. So Jesus dismissed them with a challenge to learn the meaning of His words (quoted from Hosea 6:6), "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice." What Christ wanted us to understand is this: Although God (the Word made flesh) instituted the sacrificial system, He did not want the rituals to become a substitute for inward righteousness—obedience to God's righteous law. God is not a ritualist, and He is not pleased with rituals divorced from personal commitment to seek His righteousness which is bound up in His laws, statutes and judgments.

Grace Is Not a Substitute for Obedience

The same is true about grace. God did not give unmerited pardon as a substitute for the learning of inward righteousness. Christ said, "I will have mercy." I will extend to you a gap in time (your lifetime) between sin and repentance, for you to learn the habit of inward righteousness or else ultimately perish. Endless confession of sins which are not overcome is not genuine repentance and inward change. God has given to those He calls the free gift of grace to overcome their sinful flesh. Endless repentance for the same old sins over and over with the promise to obey God is not what He wanted. God is not pleased with our abusing the dual sacrifice of Christ by our continual scourging and piercing of Christ anew, and neither is Christ. Christ did not offer Himself as a dual sacrifice to pay the penalty for our physical and spiritual sins so that we could exploit and flaunt His sacrifice so that we could continue to practice sin. Grace is not to be waved proudly so we can continue the habit of transgression. Christ's command both physically and spiritually was to "sin no more." When we fail to obey that dual command, we can separate ourselves from healing in this life and the opportunity to become a God-Family member in the next. Practicing the habit of obedience to God is the most important factor.

"Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened [weakened], that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy [dull of hearing], that it cannot hear: But your iniquities [your transgressions] have separated [established barriers] between you and your God, and your sins [both physical and spiritual] have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:1–2). David knew this. "If I regard [justify] iniquity [transgression] in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psalm 66:18). "Iniquity" in the Hebrew literally means: to see transgressions of lawlessness with pleasure. David was saying that if we have favorable thoughts toward transgressions after the inward man, God does not even hear us.

"Now we know that God heareth not sinners [those who lack a sensitivity to sin and practice it in a state of rebellion]" (John 9:31). If we are doing that after we have received the knowledge of the truth as it was originally revealed, the dual sacrifice of Christ does not even apply to us. "For if we sin [physically or spiritually] wilfully [deliberately and continually because we have no genuine desire to practice the habit of obedience] after that we have received the knowledge of the truth [once delivered], there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins" (Hebrews 10:26). Christ's dual sacrifice does not apply to those who willfully and continually refuse to learn the habit of obedience. God is just not going to apply Christ's stripes for healing or His shed blood for cleansing while we willfully indulge in sin. The Word did not come in the likeness of sinful flesh to condemn sin's penalty so we could exploit and abuse Christ's dual sacrifice. That sacrifice only applies to those who are going to practice preventative maintenance against behavioral-driven diseases, and those who are going to practice obedience to God's laws, statutes and judgments.

Mr. Armstrong taught that when there is too much physical sin in the church, healing is greatly hindered. When there is too much spiritual sin in the church, God's work is also greatly hindered. Brethren, is there too much physical and spiritual sin in the church today? What is your personal role? That is a question you are going to have to answer for yourself and then make the proper changes. Grace without obedience to God's way of life is dead. It is only license to allow our carnal nature to rule. We commit physical sin when we allow a faulty diet, inactivity and a lack of proper rest and sunshine to consume our health. We commit spiritual sin when we fail in our obedience to God's law and by not making every word of God active and operative in our lives. The greatest sin that we can commit (as Mr. Armstrong taught) was to allow another god to come before the one and only true God. Certainly the sin of continued neglect can permit that to happen—neglect of proper daily personal Bible study and meditation to complete the learning process, neglect of proper daily prayer time, neglect of proper fasting, neglect of properly living God's truth as it was once originally revealed and delivered by God's end-time servant. Our sonship in the God Family is dependent upon grace and our willingness to keep ourselves physically and spiritually fit. That is our part and price to pay in God's Master Plan following Passover. God wants our outward man (what we are by nature) to be perishing and our inward man (our new divine nature) to be renewed day by day (2 Corinthians 4:16). Our inward man is renewed only as we act on the words that Jesus Christ spoke, which are Spirit and life (John 6:63). That is how we increase the earnest of our inheritance.

One of the sobering lessons of the spring Holy Day season is that God holds each individual responsible for his own long-term conversion process. Only grace and one's own adherence to the law of God, His statutes and judgments, can deliver one from eternal death.

"Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it [overwhelming calamities], they should deliver but [they would deliver only] their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God" (Ezekiel 14:14). It was so important that God had Ezekiel repeat this statement again in verse 20. Notice, Noah, Daniel and Job delivered their own souls (their own mortal lives) by their own righteousness, which we know was obedience to God's laws, statutes and judgments. God has given us grace to overcome and to be righteous. He wants to know what we individually will do with Christ's command to "sin no more." He wants to know if we are going to keep ourselves in good physical and spiritual condition. He wants us to work out our salvation (through obedience to His every word) with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12).

We Are Each Accountable for Our Own Actions

God requires us to take responsibility for our own actions. Everyone is the captain of his own ship. Even though Christ's dual sacrifice opens salvation and healing to all of us, we, through obedience, must work out the details of those promises. And we cannot be blaming our faults and sins on others to justify the way we live today. "What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?" (Ezekiel 18:2-4). Evidently this parable of the sour grapes was a well-known proverb that was being used as a lame excuse for one's own sinful condition. God's people were blaming their sins on the failure of their ancestors. The use of this proverb was ascribing injustice to God. So God refutes the proverb by saying, "As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel" (verse 3). God wanted the use of this proverb to stop at once, because they were using it to justify and excuse their own sinful condition. God says, "Behold, all souls [mortal human beings] are mine; as the soul [or mortal life] of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it [he] shall die" (verse 4). What God is telling us here is that each individual is held responsible for his own sins. They can no longer throw on God and on their fathers the blame which was their own. A man who forsakes sin and lives righteously shall surely live. A righteous man's wicked son shall surely die. An unrighteous man's righteous son shall surely live, but the unrighteous father shall die for his iniquities. A wicked man who repents and turns from his sins shall live, but a righteous man who turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity shall die.

"Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel [God's church today], every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your

transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezekiel 18:30–31). Many of God's people blame their parents, or what happened in the parent church of God, for their defective weaknesses and shortcomings. But God does not allow us to use this fact (the defective characteristic weaknesses of our parents or former priesthood) as an excuse not to have sought God's righteousness. Our parents, or any other human beings, are not responsible for our sin—we are! Every time we sin physically, we scourge Christ anew. Every time we sin spiritually, we pierce Christ anew. Every time we sin, we should be ashamed and embarrassed of our unrighteous behavior. Our part following the Passover in these Days of Unleavened Bread is to forsake sin.

"If we confess our sins [meaning assent to God's way of thinking about our sins], he is faithful and just [true to His word] to forgive us our sins [our sinful past], and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). That is provided we are seeking God's righteousness. "He that covereth his sins [with the shame of hypocrisy, justification or scholarly reasoning] shall not prosper [neither physically nor spiritually]: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy [forgiveness and a lifetime to learn the art of obedience]" (Proverbs 28:13). Confession, when accompanied by forsaking, brings health and righteousness into the life of the called of God. Therefore, let us come all the way out of Egypt (sin) and keep the Feast.

Therefore let us keep the feast [because understanding and God's Holy Spirit come through obedience], not with old leaven [not in a carnal, sinful condition], neither with the leaven [sin] of malice and wickedness [with the intent to do evil]; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth [with the words that Jesus Christ spoke as they were once originally revealed and delivered, which are Spirit and life] (1 Corinthians 5:8).

The theme of our purpose in keeping the Days of Unleavened Bread is to come all the way out of unrighteousness. God deals with us according to our learned habit of obedience. We are a positive work in progress if we are not continually scourging and piercing Christ anew—if we are not using Christ's dual sacrifice as a substitute for inward change. Our sonship in the God Family revolves around: a calling, grace, mercy, faith and obedience in order to receive God's Holy Spirit (Acts 5:32). It revolves around unmerited pardon for sins that are past and a window of opportunity to overcome Satan, self and society. It revolves around faith in the doctrine which was once delivered. It revolves around mercy which is a gap in time (our lifetime) between sin and repentance that God allows for us to learn the habit of obedience so we can receive more of the gift of God's Holy Spirit to change inwardly.

So, brethren, let us honor the sacrifice of Jesus Christ by not using it as a substitute for inward change. Let us walk worthy of our calling, demonstrating the fruits of obedience

so that God will give us His Holy Spirit to perfect our long-term conversion process. Let us increase the earnest of our inheritance while we still have mercy and grace to do so, so we do not have to live through the weeping and gnashing of teeth.

May God bless you as you work out the details of your obedience with fear and trembling.

Sincerely, your servant,
who is striving hard himself not to be a castaway,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert J. Litz". The signature is written in black ink and is centered on the page.

Robert J. Litz