

Pre-Passover – DEFEAT Satan’s distractions!



March 20, 2021

Philip Shields

www.LightontheRock.org

All scriptures are NKJV unless noted otherwise.

KEY WORDS: *Passover, examine, distractions and trials.*

Summary: *Many experience problems, trials, distractions and discouragements just before Passover. In this message hear how we must go on the attack against our Adversary, especially at this time, and be sure to come to Passover with the right frame of mind, with solemn joy and eager to partake of the bread and wine of our Lord.*

*** *** ***

This will be a shorter than usual message – but very, very important for all of us, myself included. Passover will be here very, very soon. What will your mindset be like? Brethren find that pre-Passover and pre-FOT, Satan does his best to send distractions, problems, health issues and trials to take your focus off of what it should be. I’m hoping all God’s children will unite and DEFEAT Satan’s distractions.

Hello everyone, I’m Philip Shields, founder and host of Light on the Rock.

I’ve taken Passover every year for 49 years now -- since 1972, a few months after my baptism in late 1971.

And every single year, it seems we find ourselves, or hearing of others, having all kinds of trials, troubles, distractions, health issues, marital issues, temptation issues, some even falling into horrible sins sometimes just before Passover. This time of year, I promise you, Satan and his demons are doing everything in their power to tempt you to sin. To sin so badly that you might not even come take the Passover.

On top of all that, distractions galore pop up – things that insist on our attention, which means less attention to the Passover and all that it means.

Some of you are distracted by what is happening to our country. And upset by the mask mandates. The lockdowns.

So as a result, many come to Passover – which should be one of the most uplifting and even joyous days of the year – but many come dejected, feeling unworthy, feeling unready, unprepared – and yes, some even come feeling defeated. **Sound familiar!?**

WHY this sermon? Because this year let's attack and defeat the gates of hell, and they won't stand against the assault from God's children. This year let's come JOYFUL of our victory. Let's come fully accepting the cleansing of the blood of Christ. This year let's have the proper kind of Passover.

Well, this year, let's beat the Adversary. This year let's come to Passover and this time, not feel like we're at a funeral. Sure, I know, I know – Christ DIED the following afternoon after we take Passover bread and wine. But let's focus on what his death DID:

- He took upon himself and his perfect life your and my faults, your sins, your failures – for you! All that was put on HIM. You should no longer feel the weight of ANY of your sins. You no longer should feel unclean, guilty, cut off from God – for Christ took care of all of that.

Might be good to listen to the sermon that explains the DEPTH and TOTALITY of Christ's sacrifice, how it was MUCH, MUCH more than just taking away our sins.

<https://lightontherock.org/message/depth-and-totality-of-christ-s-sacrifice?highlight=WyJOaGUiLCIndGhlliwidG90YWxp dHkiXQ==>

- So THIS should be a joyous time because in that death, he crushed the head of the Serpent! ALL the things our sins did were DEALT with, fixed, nullified by Yeshua. No more guilt. No more wrath of God on us because of our sins. No more death penalty. No more separation from God. The sermon above goes into depth into that.

So we were CRUCIFIED with Christ – and we were BURIED with him in our baptism – and guess what? We weren't left under the water, but we came back up. We were RAISED with Christ and now are a part of HIS very BODY. (Romans 6:3-6).

What does all that mean? It means something few people want to accept!

1 John 4:17-19

“Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have **boldness in the day of judgment; because AS HE IS, SO ARE WE in this world.** 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19 We love Him because He first loved us.

I have a whole sermon on “as he is, so are we” as well. People just aren't willing to accept that. But either you are in Christ, and Christ is in us – or not. If you are in Christ, not a single part of Christ's body is unholy or filthy or sinful. His entire body is pure and holy. Re-read 1 John 4:17. *Our leavened life was thrown out and replaced with his unleavened life.*

Because of Passover and the resurrection – our lives are no longer our old selves – but Christ himself is now my life, now your life. We find it hard to see or accept that because we still flub up, we still sin as even Paul admitted he still sinned from time to time.

So watch these scriptures:

Colossians 3:2-4

“Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For YOU died, and YOUR life ***is HIDDEN with Christ in God***. 4 When ***Christ who is our life*** appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”

PLEASE read and re-read vs 3-4. But we know we still sin. So that stops our joy right in our tracks. So NOW what? Watch carefully what PAUL says about who is sinning when we sin.

Romans 7:14-25

“For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. 15 For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. 16 If then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good.

17 But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. 19 For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.

20 Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.

21 I find then a law, that **evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.**

22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! **Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 I thank God — through Jesus Christ our Lord!**

So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.”

So WHO is the one sinning? Paul? He says no. He says it is still the discarded, buried old nature that still dwells in him, but the NEW CREATION Paul, is NOT the one sinning.

That is so hard for people to accept. [Be sure to read the blog I wrote after this – “Have we misunderstood Unleavened Bread?”]

Paul goes on to explain that these must be stumbles, lapses – not a continuing way of life. WE feel – when we sin – that “Oh no, I’m *still* that horrible person”... and, if this is your way of life, yes – you or I would be in trouble. In chapter 8 Paul makes it clear that if we LIVE for the FLESH, yes – we’re still in trouble. But if those are stumbles, and our HEART is to live for spirit, and life, and GOD– then God has made us NEW.

But if you really do love God and his Torah, his law, his teachings – then something different is happening. Let’s read it, continuing in Chapter 8. Verses 3, 4 are verses seldom preached on in some circles!

Romans 8:1-4

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

2 For the law of the **Spirit of life in Christ Jesus** has made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, GOD DID by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: **He condemned sin in the flesh,**

4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

This has EVERYTHING to do with understanding that we are saved by grace and FAITH in God, who gifts us with HIS righteousness by faith (Rom.5:17; 1 Cor. 1:30-31; Phil. 3:8-11). The righteousness of God by faith is a CRUCIAL piece of understanding to come to Passover in confidence!

When we come under the blood of Passover, the blood cleanses us from all sin. But that is not just a one-time event. **The TENSE in the verse I'm about to read, says "Continues to cleanse us..."**.

Think of sin as a CUT on your body. Your blood rushes out white soldier blood cells to fight the intrusion and infection. Many of them die in the battle – which is what the PUS is. But even after the cut, the body continues to fight in the intrusion, the infection – just like the blood of Christ CONTINUES to cleanse us from our sins.

It's not just a one-time event!

1 John 1:7

“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, **and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from ALL sin.**”

From ALL sin. We of course, have to repent each time – as even shown in the Lord's Prayer. “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors”.

Here's how the Amplified version puts the last part of 1 John 1:7.

“...and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin [by erasing the stain of sin, **keeping us cleansed from sin in all its forms** and manifestations].

So since we are now IN Christ, WE HAVE THE VICTORY OVER SATAN and should not let him sidetrack us. We are, as Paul puts it – SEATED WITH HIM IN the heavenlies.

Ephesians 2:4-7

“But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, **made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),** 6 and raised us up together, **and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,** 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”

But we're in a war. The problem is, too many believers aren't living like they realize they are in a REAL WAR. We don't start the day like we're in a war. What do I mean by that?

How many of you MAKE SURE when starting each day and its ferocious battles in the spirit realm – where our fight really is – how many of us make sure we have the armor of God on? Or do we go out (spiritually speaking) just in our underwear and nothing else?

And are we in the absolute HABIT of daily prayer – on our **knees first thing! Or if you have bad painful knees, bow your head at your bedside or chair.**

Ephesians 6:10-13

“Finally, my brethren, **be strong in the Lord and in the power of HIS might.**

11 Put **on the whole armor of God**, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 **For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood**, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 **Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.**

Ephesians 6:14-19

“Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints —

IF the very son of God said HE couldn't do ANYTHING without his Father, why do ANY of us EVER think we start the day and go thru the day without PRAYER and God's word – which make up our sword. How much prayer and Bible study do we fill our minds with?

Yeshua says “YOU CANNOT DO ANYTHING of yourselves.” John 15:5

John 15:4-5

“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. **He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.**

DO whatever you have to do to find the time to do that! Less FB, less news, more God time.

So you want to have a wonderful Passover and defeat Satan's attempts to sidetrack you?

- SPEND MUCH MORE TIME IN PRAYER AND MEDITATION
- **RECOGNIZE** distractions. Reschedule things that draw you away – til after Passover.

- Even deaths, illnesses – commit them to God, but stay in the BATTLE against Satan's depressions and discouragements.
- IN the NEW COVENANT, our Passovers and Night to be observed – is not as much about Ex 12, Moses and the Red Sea, and the little lambs... no, over and over Yeshua said "do this in remembrance of ME". In the New Covenant, our discussions are much more on Christ, much less on Moses and the Exodus.
- Yeshua has FREED US from what Pharaoh represented – SATAN's claim on us. Yeshua's blood FREES US from captivity of SIN. Paul quotes Psalms in Eph 4:8 – that Yeshua has LED CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE! We ARE THE VICTORS IN HIM.

So focus on Christ this Passover and days of UB.

Focus on Messiah, the TRUE UNLEAVENED BREAD as you deleaven. Think of those LEAVENED pieces of bread you have to get rid of AS OUR OLD SELF – we can't deleaven ourselves. WE CANNOT, any more than you can deleaven a piece of bread.

So what do we do with that old self pictured by leavened bread? We have to THROW IT OUT. We have to bring in new unleavened bread which pictures our Messiah, our new life in him.

And YES, examine yourself. I will too. REPENT of the parts of our lives that still reflect old leavened bread still not really thrown out. REPENT of all that. COMMIT to a stronger dedication in the coming year to become more and more like our Savior, as we let HIM speak, Let HIM live in us, and BE our new lives.

And once more – let's ATTACK the Adversary.

You know what else:

- **Get your sleep. "Fatigue makes cowards of us all"** as the saying goes. You just don't have the energy to fight when you're worn out.
- **MAKE time, FIND time, for priorities with God.** Postpone what you can postpone prior to Passover til after days of Unleavened Bread to allow more time for spiritual strength preparation. I have stopped leads from work even, which allow me to make money. Put GOD FIRST. Seek you FIRST the kingdom of God and his righteousness – Matthew 6:33.
- **Play spiritual hymns** in the background. For me, that helps me a lot to keep my thoughts focused on the spiritual and not to be lured into sin or discouragement.
- **Do what you need to do to minimize areas of weakness?**
 - Alcohol? If you're alcoholic, throw out or give away the alcohol you have in your home.
 - **Sexual sins... be focused on marital fulfillment if you're married.** Thank God for your wife or husband. Don't let yourself be

weakened. If you don't know what I mean, **read 1 Cor. 7:1-8**. Render affection due to your wife, and vice versa. Don't deprive one another of sexual responsibilities – lest you lead your spouse to be more easily tempted by others or even by porn.

- Focus on being expression of LOVE in all your relationships.
- Don't get lured into sin by your computer. Jesus said take decisive action. If your right hand offends you.... Well, he means be decisive! Too many men – and even women – still look at porn on computer. Stop! Satan knows it's a weakness for so many men who want to cave in to the flesh. Fight him on this by prayer, study and focusing on Christ.
- If there are people that WEAKEN you and help lead you into sin – stay away from those places and those people.

So when I examine myself before Passover, MY conclusions are ...

- “Wow, thank you Yeshua, thank you Abba. The blood of your Lamb, Abba – cleanses us from all our sin. Thank each of you for your love.”
- “Father, I'm imperfect, and repent again of all my sins – but I'm not going to look back. I'm not going to live in regrets, but in what lies ahead. I look forward and with great anticipation to seeing your Son, our king, come in glory!

Hebrews 9:28

To those who **eagerly wait for Him** He will appear a second time, **apart from sin, for salvation**.

- I've examined myself, and BOY, do I ever need the Passover. I hope you're getting there too! After self-examination, we are not to decide NOT to take the Passover, but decide we really need it. And remember, at the old Passover, the priests examined the LAMBS – not the person offering it. Our Lamb is perfect.

1 Corinthians 11:28

“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.”

SO as you come up to Passover, go on the attack against Satan's attempts to tempt you, to discourage you, to lead you into sin, or bring such horrible trials into your life – that you get distracted. Don't let that happen to you.

(Added notes below after Passover)

For me, for example, I'm dealing with severe health issues with my brother and sister. My brother can barely move (2 strokes and a heart attack, and severe painful sciatica on the non-stroke side!). His wife died just before Passover, so of course I had to fly into California to be with him and help him. Was there a week. Of course I couldn't work or earn any money. But you try to do the right thing.

Then suddenly when I got back my daughter and their family of 7 and a large black lab needed to come stay with us over Passover, suddenly and unexpectedly, due to what appeared a dangerous crisis in their home. That was resolved – but after Passover. So we found ourselves with 9 people in our home plus 2 dogs as we were finishing up delevaning.

Then 2 crowns on my teeth broke just before hand. Another couple thousand dollars and time and distractions.

Plus I found myself facing temptations out of the blue, just before Passover. I could go on and on. Satan was testing me, that's for sure.

In the end, yes, we took Passover. And our family of 9 here all praised and thanked God in and for all the trials and distractions and made our commitment to keep focused on him.

THIS Passover, we're coming with solemn JOY, gratitude and READY to drink of his cup and eat the unleavened bread, picturing partaking of him.

Have a wonderful, wonderful Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread.

Closing prayer.