

Seven Weeks

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Recorded on May 6, 2023

Right now, we are in a very unique time of year. It only happens once a year. We are passed the 2023 wave sheaf Passover and Unleavened Bread and we are not yet to Pentecost 2023. We are in this time period of seven weeks, to count from the wave sheaf during Unleavened Bread to the wave offering on Pentecost. We focus a lot on Pentecost and on Unleavened Bread but maybe we don't focus as much as we could and learn the lessons from this seven-week journey. Every week in the seven weeks bears important lessons that have to do with our conversion just as much as any of the other spring Holy Days. So, let's turn to 1 Corinthians 10 first of all. Paul is referencing back to the spring Holy Days.

1 Corinthians 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. (NKJV)*

So, all these things happened and it was all recorded just for us right now; for us to extract the lessons. Let's begin at the wave sheaf offering, Leviticus 23:15, where we get some instructions.

Leviticus 23:15 *And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. 16) Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.*

17) You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD. (NKJV)

Most Holy Days are tied to a calendar day of the year. Here's the month, here's the day of the year, but Pentecost is not. For the wave loaf offering, we have to count to get there. Why do we count? I wondered that. Why isn't it just pegged to a calendar day. There's a reason why and I think we will discover that as we get into the story.

The year of the Exodus, the wave sheaf was on a Sunday. So, they left on Aviv 15 and then they went three days before the Red Sea. We know the time of year and that's important because as we go through this, you're going to read several times where it says *on the very same day* and it's talking about the day of the week. But to tell this story, to really tell the story well, we have to start with the back story. This story really started way back in the time of Abraham. In Genesis 15:13.

Genesis 15:13 *Then He said to Abram: "Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years.*

14) And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

15) Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age.

16) But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete." (NKJV)

Most of you, like me, have seen the movie, "The Ten Commandments", and we see desert and sand, we see where the Israelites were and what they were doing. We might just get a complete backwards impression of where they were and what it looked like where they lived. Let's go back to where Jacob's twelve sons and ten of those sons got really mad at one of those sons and sold him to some people who took him to Egypt. That was Joseph and he went through some trials, ended up in prison, got out of prison and ended up running the whole country of Egypt and saving them from famine. Then the stories of his brothers coming up from Canaan and getting bread. But God told Abraham that Israel was going to end up in Egypt. He had a plan, a step-by-step plan. We could step back and say Yehovah is really good at predicting the future. That's not true, He doesn't predict it, He makes it happen step by step. He has it all planned out, He knows exactly what He is doing, He knows exactly when it's going to happen and how it's going to happen, and he makes it happen just that way.

Joseph ended up running Egypt and then the brothers came up and then his father and other brother and with Pharaoh's blessing, everybody is moved to Egypt. Where do they move to? They get the land of Goshen; the most fertile land in all of Egypt. It's the delta, where the Nile splits off into numerous tributaries which go into the ocean. It is the land that is "flowing with milk and with honey". It was perfect for shepherds. Whenever a land is flowing with milk, it means it has a lot of grazing land and the herd animals that

produce milk are going to be very, very prolific, really blessed there. Honey refers to bees. For bees to be active and to make honey, there has to be a lot of plants growing, a lot of good things. Israel ended up with the very, very best part of Egypt. It was the only part, other than the part, just along the Nile that was really fertile. It was a land *flowing with milk and honey*. It was where they could raise families and flocks and grow into a large, prosperous people. That's the way Genesis closes; they are there and starting to grow. Exodus opens up with—now there's a new king in town.

The Israelites began to become so prosperous that they became a threat. Pretty soon, Pharaoh says:

“They are going to outnumber us. We need to practice some population control or we're going to lose control over this thing”.

They then tried population control but that didn't work either. They just enslaved them and put the children of Israel under hard bondage. They didn't take them out of the land of Goshen, that's still where they were and where the Exodus began—from that land. But we have to get that back story and correct the misconceptions. Because, as the story lays out, you ask “Why they would want to go back to that *desert land* where all they did was make bricks? Why did they describe it as a wonderful place to be?” The fact is, it was a wonderful place to be, it was the best land in Egypt.

Now God has to do two things. He has to make them uncomfortable enough to want to leave. God caused them to go into slavery; He put it into Pharaoh's heart that these people are a threat and you have to do something about this. So, then He put Israel into hard labor. If He hadn't done that, why would they want to leave? They were already in the land *flowing with milk and honey*, why would they want to leave? All of this was planned out. They have to get out of Egypt if they want to get out of slavery. God calls Moses and that's a whole different story and a whole sermon could be done on that. He gets Aaron to help him. They come back and have an inner dialogue with the elders of Israel, show them a few miracles with the rod, then they have inner dialogue with Pharaoh. Moses and Aaron are used to giving warnings and pronouncement of condemnation on all the gods of Egypt, throughout all the plagues. At the very last plague was the death of the firstborn. That's where we learn all about the Passover.

In Egypt all the firstborn are dead. But all of the firstborn in Israel are not only alive, they know “I'm a firstborn and I'm alive and all the other firstborn are dead. I've been protected and have been the recipient of a miracle” and through that they are all delivered. Just keep in mind, God is orchestrating all of this. He channels them as they leave the land of Goshen, the land of Ramses. He channels them through a route where they end up trapped before the Red Sea. They are boxed in and can't get out. Then he inspires Pharaoh to go after them. If Pharaoh hadn't gone after them, He couldn't have destroyed Pharaoh and his army. Then He opens up the Red Sea and they go across.

We read back in 1 Corinthians that Paul is associating their going through the Red Sea

as being *under the cloud* and *being baptized* in the sea. We can see that these aren't parallels that we have to make up, this is just what Paul wrote. We know that's true.

Now I want to look at something that I didn't really realize. We can come down and pretty well nail down what happened during the seven weeks, week by week. When we nail down what happened week by week, God is opening up the window to know Him. To know what His intent is. But not all at once, it's not by fiat, it's step by step. There's a reason why and we're going to see what that reason is. He reveals Himself.

In **week one** we can nail down what happened because they crossed the Red Sea. We know they crossed the Red Sea in the very first week. The first week was just a partial week. It was Thursday, Friday and then Sabbath. Then Sunday, wave sheaf Sunday started and this is going to be the first full week. During the first week there were a lot of miracles that happened. We know the crossing of the Red Sea, it's right there, their escape and the destruction of the army. We know that once they got to the other side, the army was destroyed—the enemies they were so afraid of. I'm really not taking the time to do the story justice because you really need to connect with how the Israelites felt. How afraid they were. Why would they be afraid? What was their emotional state? Here the most powerful army in the world is coming after them—a bunch of slaves. How did they feel? What was their frame of mind? You really have to connect with that to understand the story of what happens in the seven weeks. If you don't get the background right and you don't look at their emotional state, then in a lot of what you read, we would just look down on the Israelites. "They just weren't good folks." Had we been in their shoes, we probably would have done the same thing. Been just like they were and made the same mistakes.

After they got across the Red Sea and the army was destroyed, they had a little celebration. How many of us had a little celebration after our baptism? We had some snacks, maybe we had pats on the back and congratulations from some people. We were slaves to sin; they were slaves in Egypt. They didn't choose their circumstances. They didn't really even realize how badly off they were and we didn't realize how badly off we were, until we were released, until we started experiencing going down that same road spiritually that they did physically. We didn't know what we didn't know. We didn't know Yehovah. At one time we didn't know His laws, His rules, or His purpose. We didn't know His love and they didn't either. But they had a guide, they had the cloud so they could follow the cloud.

Let's turn over to Exodus 15 and we can start tracking through this story. The first part of Exodus 15 is when they are having their little post baptism party. Their enemy has been defeated, you see Miriam's doing a victory dance—"spiking the football" so to speak—and in the song they are going through all the things that God did, all the miracles. They are "in tune" because they have been delivered and they have been delivered through a powerful Hand that did impossible things and they are celebrating that. Let's go to verse 22.

Exodus 15:22 *So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. (NKJV)*

You remember when Moses was going to Pharaoh and said, “You need to let us go three days journey into the wilderness” and Pharaoh said “No”. At times he said “You can go, but just the males.” Then he said “You can go, but just a short distance.” There was all this negotiation with Pharaoh. But Moses was constant that they had to go three days journey. So, they went three days journey. I am supposing that would have been all during the first week because that was the goal. Get out of Egypt and get three days journey into the wilderness. But verse 23.

23) Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. [The word for “bitter” is mar] Therefore the name of it was called Marah. (NKJV)

They are about a week out and all their potable water is gone. Now they come upon a body of water—don’t think of a little skunk pond—think of something that has enough water in it to satisfy the thirst of a million plus animals and as many Israelites as there were. It’s not just a little pond, it’s a big bunch of water but when they get to it and exclaimed that they have water, but when they get there it’s smelly, it’s stinky, it’s awful and horrible. “We’re out of water and we’re going to die.” This is an abused people who are celebrating release, but after they continue the journey, they run into something that they can’t fix. When they said they were all going to die, really, they were right. If God didn’t intervene at that point, they were going to die because they didn’t have any water. The water there was smelly and that would make you sick. So, we can relate to that.

Then the people complained against Moses.

*24) And the people complained against Moses, saying, “What shall we drink?”
25) So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them. (NKJV)*

The word *tested* is the word *nasah* and it means “to prove, to try, to test”. It’s a word that you are going to find over and over again. It’s a test—God is going to find out where they are in their heads and minds and hearts and then He’s going to show them where they are in their heads, minds and hearts. They are going to see themselves and this is something that we go through too. God brings us into situations where we get to see ourselves and He gets to see us. He has a goal of wanting to get to the point of “now I know”. That’s where we are headed but that’s not where they are and that’s not where we are. That’s where we are headed. We’re going to be tried, we’re going to be tested.

Continuing in verse 26)

26) and said, "If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you." (NKJV)

Let's go to Exodus 23:22.

Exodus 23:22 *But if you indeed obey His voice and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.*

23) *For My Angel will go before you and bring you in to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites and the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will cut them off.*

24) *You shall not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their works; but you shall utterly overthrow them and completely break down their sacred pillars.*

25) *So you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water. And I will take sickness away from the midst of you.*

26) *No one shall suffer miscarriage or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days. (NKJV)*

What God is promising them is sustenance, provision, prosperity. He's promising them family, relationships. He's promising them, "If you obey Me, I'm going to give you the good life". *Nasah*—that's what we have to endure; we're going to be "tested", we are going to be "proven". This word *nasah* in 1 Kings 18, the queen of Sheba "tested" Solomon. That's that word *nasah*—she "tested" him with hard questions. In Judges Gideon "tested" God throughout the fleece. Make the fleece wet and the ground dry. "How do I believe you? How do I know you're going to do these things?" He "proved" them. 2 Chronicles 32, it says that Yehovah withdrew from Hezekiah in order to *nasah*—to "test"—what was in his heart. Psalms 26, David said "test" my heart, "test" my mind because it's only through this process that we can really get in touch with ourselves.

Week two, verse 27, they came to Elim.

Exodus 15:27 *Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters. (NKJV)*

That's really all it says about Elim. If you think about it, there's a lot to that. The word that is translated as *wells*, if you look at Young's Literal Translation or look up the word, it actually means "fountains". It doesn't mean somebody had dug wells there, it means there was water coming up out of the ground—it was a fountain. The word comes from the word for eye but it means "bubbling up water". There are twelve fountains of water and seventy palm trees. How did they get there? That's the miracle; the miracle is God led them by them following the cloud there. They didn't know where the water was. If they had just wandered around in circles out there, they would have ceased to exist. The miracle in Elim is that God led them there from a lake of poisoned water. In this trip

they have to go from watering hole to watering hole and at each watering hole they have to stop and rehydrate their flocks and themselves and replenish the water they are going to carry with them on the next part of the journey. So, they came to Elim.

First, they get away from Pharaoh, then they are traveling, then they run out of water and then see water and when they get there, they can't drink it and then God works a miracle for them and cleans up the water—absorbs all the poison through the tree that was thrown in and so creates a miracle. God could have just made that water clean to begin with, but instead He tested them by making them run out of water and coming up to water that is not drinkable. Then He heals the water and then He establishes the fact that, "I can, not only heal the water, but I can heal you too. If you obey Me, I'll heal you too. I'll bless your families." He made lesson for them, to *nasah* them. He "proved" them there.

So, **week three**—week one they left Egypt, week two was the test at Marah, week three they get to Elim, fountains of water and rest and recovery time. The words there—*they camped*—that word is *encamped*. Keep in mind they stopped every night. They had to feed their families, they had to drink, the flocks can't just go non-stop 24/7, so they were stopping every night for quick sleep, quick eat and then get up and go again. At this point, they *encamped* which means they settled in for rest and recovery. They are in Elim for about a week. If we go to Chapter 16:

Exodus 16:1 *And they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt. (NKJV)*

The 15th day. Let's think about this; they left on the 15th and the Sabbath that followed was the 17th—the wave sheaf was on the 18th—so the first full week on the Sabbath would have been the 24th. Seven days later, the Sabbath would have been the 1st and then the 8th would have been the third week and then the 15th would have been **the fourth week**. That verifies this would have been the fourth week. We don't have to guess; we do have to count our way up there. But this is definitely the fourth week.

Every time I've read that term, *Wilderness of Sin*, I always think of the English word sin—transgression of God's law. They are in the *Wilderness of Sin*, but actually that word *Sin* in Hebrew is pronounced "seen" and the word means "clay". They were traveling along the coast along salt water. Over here and there were marshes and wilderness—if you know anything about the areas around salt water, you know it's just gunk. This is called clay, so the *Wilderness of Sin* (seen) is the wilderness of clay. It's between Elim and Sinai and they arrived there.

Continuing in verse 2) ...

2) Then the whole congregation of the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.

3) *And the children of Israel said to them, "Oh, that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat and when we ate bread to the full! For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."* (NKJV)

So now—they ran out of water and got the water—they ran out of food. There is no food. They are there in this clay part of marshy wilderness wherein there is no food. So, God tells them, verse 4.

4) *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them [nasah], whether they will walk in My law or not.*

5) *And it shall be on the sixth day that they shall prepare what they bring in, and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily."*

6) *Then Moses and Aaron said to all the children of Israel, "At evening you shall know that the LORD has brought you out of the land of Egypt. (NKJV)*

Continuing in verse 8) ...

8) *Also Moses said, "This shall be seen when the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening, and in the morning bread to the full; for the LORD hears your complaints which you make against Him. And what are we? Your complaints are not against us but against the LORD."*

9) *Then Moses spoke to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the children of Israel, Come near before the LORD, for He has heard your complaints." '*

10) *Now it came to pass, as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. (NKJV)*

The glory of Yehovah—what did they see? Let's go forward—what does *the glory of Yehovah* look like? Exodus 24 tells us exactly what it is. I didn't realize this, but it says it.

Exodus 24:15 *Then Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain.*

16) *Now the glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud.*

17) *The sight of the glory of the LORD was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel. (NKJV)*

What does a consuming fire look like? It's kind of like a volcano. It's enormous power; we're going to read more about that. Unbelievable power they are witnessing. They are out of food and they are given instruction in Exodus 16 about what's going to happen. The instruction is given in this week, but in **week five** is when the manna actually happens. We know that is in week five because the instructions are in verse 13.

Exodus 16:13 *So it was that quail came up at evening and covered the camp, and in the morning the dew lay all around the camp.*

14) And when the layer of dew lifted, there, on the surface of the wilderness, was a small round substance, as fine as frost on the ground. (NKJV)

The quails came in the evening and then the next morning, which was the day after the Sabbath—this would be the first day of the fifth week—they found manna. Then they get more instructions. Here's the deal,

“I'm going to give you your bread every day—daily bread. Make sure you don't save any of it up for the next day because I'm going to give it to you every day.”

But the first day, the Israelites didn't believe it. Think about it from their standpoint. There's no food, doesn't it just make sense that I should save a little for tomorrow, just in case something happens? It just makes sense. It doesn't make any sense to take all the food you have and eat it all and then what happens if there isn't any tomorrow. So, they did the prudent, logical thing and saved some back. Then it stank and it was full of worms and it made Moses angry. He said, “Can't you guys just do what you're told? Don't you know where this comes from?”. So then, he retells them—explains that when it gets to Friday, gather twice as much and it's not going to stink, then don't go out on Saturday—this is the Sabbath, it's for you to rest”. On Friday they gather twice as much and they are wondering if tomorrow it's going to stink and be full of worms. On Sabbath morning, some of them go out and check. I know He said there's not going to be any, but let's go see, because seeing is believing. Wouldn't you be curious too? They had the miracle of manna but here's another miracle—the miracle of no manna. When you go out on the Sabbath and see it's not there—“good thing we got twice as much yesterday”. If it's not there on the Sabbath, is it going to be there the next day? In this, they are learning to trust God. They are learning that there is a God Who has power and that God will take care of them. They are learning it step by step, miracle by miracle. It's not understood by fiat. We don't understand everything by fiat; learning is a process, developing a relationship is a process.

They get through this. Let's go to Exodus 17:1. This is **week six**. By week four they had run out of food, but had been told about the manna. Week five they experienced manna and learned some lessons; they learned on the Sabbath of week five there was none so now we are at week six.

Exodus 17:1 *Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped in Rephidim; but there was no water for the people to drink.*

2) Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, “Give us water, that we may drink.” So Moses said to them, “Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD?” (NKJV)

Tempt is that word *nasah*. You're not supposed to test God. He is going to "prove" us but we're not supposed to "test" Him. Actually, many centuries later, Christ quotes this when He was in temptation with Satan. *It is written, you shall not test Yehovah.*

3) And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, "Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" (NKJV)

If you can't fix the problem, you can fix the blame. Now they are looking to Moses and are blaming Moses. They are remembering the land of Goshen. "We had to work hard and were mistreated but we had a lot of groceries and water, we were in the land of Goshen and now you've brought us out to this wilderness of clay and now we come to Rephidim which is like a desert and we're out of water. There's no big pool of water where you can throw a magic tree into it and make it turn into usable water, there is just this desert, just rock; "We're toast and we are going to die". The logical, prudent mind would agree—you're going to die because you don't have any water, you don't have a way to get water, there's no water to get. You're in the desert, it's not raining. But God is going to intervene. He intervenes, but when? He comes in at the last second.

4) So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me!"

5) And the LORD said to Moses, "Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go.

6) Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

7) So he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?" (NKJV)

He struck a rock and the rock produced water, but think about how much water. Millions of animals, millions of people. There's got to be a natural cistern of some sort to hold all this water. Then he hits the rock and it's like opening a half dozen fire hydrants. It's not just dripping, drizzling or a slight stream—that wouldn't satisfy millions of people and animals. It's a gusher—it is a sight. He hit the rock and it's coming out—enough for everybody. Nobody is complaining about water anymore. Now they are probably feeling pretty good about this. Then verse 8.

8) Now Amalek came and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

9) And Moses said to Joshua, "Choose us some men and go out, fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand."

10) So Joshua did as Moses said to him, and fought with Amalek. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

11) *And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.*

12) *But Moses' hands became heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. (NKJV)*

Hands up and Israel is winning, *hands down* and Amalek is winning. Why did God do that? Because He says:

“You’re not winning this of your own might. It’s not because you are strong and trained warriors and highly equipped and have everything. No, if the symbol is not up there, showing that God is doing the fighting, you’re all going to die. But, when the symbol—the rod of God—is up there and God is doing the fighting, then your enemies are defeated.”

Continuing in verse 13)

13) *So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. (NKJV)*

So “Whew! they got through that one”. They got water, they stock up on their water, they overcome an enemy—God fights a battle for them—and they are learning, *yes stuff happens*. Enemies come, but when God is fighting the battles for us, when we are trusting in Yehovah, if we are looking to Him and keep His rules and doing everything we are supposed to do, He is going to bail us out. It may not be on our timing, it may not be the easy ride that we want, but He is there for us.

So now we come to chapter 18. I’m going to be skipping chapter 18 because it has some sequencing problems and I don’t want to spend a lot of time. When the Bible was written, originally it wasn’t on one single long scroll. It was written on pieces and those pieces were sewn together. Some of those things were not sewn in time line sequence. I’m going to give you a couple of examples of this because I want you to know why I’m leaving chapter 18 out. In Numbers 1:1:

Numbers 1:1 *Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying: (NKJV)*

So that is Numbers 1:1 and now if you go to Numbers 9:1-3.

Numbers 9:1 *Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt, saying: (NKJV)*

Therefore chapter 9 came before chapter 1 in Numbers and it's kind of the same thing with Exodus 18. Exodus 18 has Jethro leading them at the base of Mount Sinai but then in chapter 19 it opens up saying that they arrived at Mount Sinai. We're just going to skip over chapter 18. It has its own purpose and if I do a little confession, I didn't know that. After I recorded this last week—which is a whole other story—James pointed that out to me. That's why we're not recording the same thing this week—that's another story. Let's go to chapter 19:1. Some of this is really, really interesting. I learned some things that I did not know here.

Exodus 19:1 *n the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on the same day, they came to the Wilderness of Sinai. [This means they arrived on a Thursday because they left on a Thursday. This is in week seven.]*

2) For they had departed from Rephidim, had come to the Wilderness of Sinai, and camped in the wilderness [this isn't an overnight stop]. So Israel camped there before the mountain.

3) And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel:

4) You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. (NKJV)

I've always wondered what it means when Yehovah says, *I bore you on eagles' wings*. I think in Revelation where we thought that we were going to be born on *eagles' wings* to go to the place of safety. We thought that *eagles' wings* had to be a 747 because that's the only thing that would hold all of us. Therefore, it had to be a 747. It was going to be first class, right? An easy ride. Well, we all know that the children of Israel walked. We can look at this and say, "They didn't have an easy ride." So then, what does this mean? I learned a little bit about eagles that I didn't know.

First of all, eagles are big, strong, ferocious, terrifying birds. They are very, very strong. They nest up in cliffs—high, high cliffs. They are also very family oriented. Even though they can tear other animals up they take care of their young—both the mom and the dad feed the young. They have a family up there on a high, high cliff. The cliff is very important because when the little eaglets get to a certain age, the parents knock out part of the nest and then they take these little eaglets, no more than two at a time, and push them out. That cliff is important because those eaglets are just headed for a crash. They are fluttering and trying but they are toast. But then one of the parents comes down and swoops under them and the eaglet holds on to their back and they fly. They fly circling up very high and then they get dumped and they are in free fall again and they're flying. Before they hit the ground, a parent comes under them and lifts them up. Then they go back and they do that again. They do that over and over until the eagle learns how to fly.

Being born on eagles' wings is the most terrifying ride you'll ever have in your life but you're always saved at the last second. Go back up and then you're dumped again, over and over again. So, He brought them out of Egypt and He bore them on eagles'

wings. Now when you take that and apply that to Revelation 12 and it says He is going to bear us on eagles' wings, that has a whole new meaning that doesn't look like a 747 in first class anymore.

Now they are at Mount Sinai and Moses is preparing them to meet with Yehovah. Let's look at verse 5.

- 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.*
- 9) *And the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I come to you in the thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever." So Moses told the words of the people to the LORD.*
- 10) *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today [on Thursday] and tomorrow [Friday], and let them wash their clothes.*
- 11) *And let them be ready for the third day [which would be the Sabbath]. For on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.*
- 12) *You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Take heed to yourselves that you do not go up to the mountain or touch its base. Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death.*
- 13) *Not a hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot with an arrow; whether man or beast, he shall not live. When the trumpet sounds long, they shall come near the mountain."*
- 14) *So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and sanctified the people, and they washed their clothes.*
- 15) *And he said to the people, "Be ready for the third day; do not come near your wives."*
- 16) *Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.*
- 17) *And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain.*
- 18) *Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. (NKJV)*

If we look up this word *quaked*, we can see that it's actually the mountain moving. It's a literal quake that shook. I have scriptures to prove that but I'm running out of time. The ground is shaking, the mountain is moving, it is a sight.

20) Then the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.
21) And the LORD said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to gaze at the LORD, and many of them perish.
22) Also let the priests who come near the LORD consecrate themselves, lest the LORD break out against them."
23) But Moses said to the LORD, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai; for You warned us, saying, Set bounds around the mountain and consecrate it."'
24) Then the LORD said to him, "Away! Get down and then come up, you and Aaron with you. But do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, lest He break out against them." (NKJV)

Then you have in chapter 20, God giving the Ten Commandments. After the Ten Commandments, in chapter 21, 22, and 23, you have these Statutes and the Judgments. I just want to point out that all of these things were a part of the Covenant. In chapter 24:1.

Exodus 24:1 Now He said to Moses, "Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship from afar.
2) And Moses alone shall come near the LORD, but they shall not come near; nor shall the people go up with him."
3) So Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which the LORD has said we will do." (NKJV)

So that's the agreement. The Ten Commandments, Judgments, and Statutes are all written down.

Continuing in verse 4)...

4) And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning ... (NKJV)

Which would have been Pentecost and they ratified the Covenant and entered into the Covenant. We know that we started off the sermon knowing this was written for our benefit. This applies to us—we are counting. Let's go through some of the New Testament scriptures that apply to this. Start with Luke 14, I think when you think about baptism you think of Luke 14. You see the parallel between counting and counting the cost. To count the cost, you have to know what you're buying into, what you're agreeing to and that's what we saw during this seven-week period of reaching Mount Sinai. They are learning to trust God, they are learning the power of God and they get to know God enough and are bailed out enough—He bore them on eagle's wings, it's been a wild ride, but now they are here—so now they trust Him enough to enter into Covenant.

Luke 14:26 *"If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.*

27) And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

28) For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it—

29) lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him ... (NKJV)

What's the sense in doing all that we do if we're not going to finish the race? If we're not going to hang in there? We agreed to the wild ride.

Continuing in verse 31) ...

31) Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? [We're going up against overwhelming odds. We are outmanned and outgunned. We just have to look at that.]

32) Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. (NKJV)

Do I really want to start this battle? Or do I just want to go downstream—go with the flow.

Continuing in verse 33) ...

33) So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.

34) "Salt is good; but if the salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned?

35) It is neither fit for the land nor for the dunghill, but men throw it out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (NKJV)

Let's go to Hebrews 13; we have a tough road; we have a wild ride. It's not going to be easy.

Hebrews 13:5 *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (NKJV)*

I won't leave you; I won't forsake you. Those words are quoted in Deuteronomy 31:6 *I will never leave you or forsake you.* And again, in verse 8 and again in Joshua 1:5 and 6;

I will never leave you or forsake you. It's going to be a wild ride but you can count on Me.

Philippians 1:6 *being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; (NKJV)*

We're on a journey that we can't complete but Yehovah can complete it in us. 2 Timothy 4:8.

2 Timothy 4:8 *Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing. (NKJV)*

We're looking forward to something; we started out on this; we are headed to something. But we have to hang in there. We're not promised that things are going to be easy. Romans 8:18.

Romans 8:18 *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. (NKJV)*

We have no idea what it would be like to be born into Yehovah's family. We are like a fetus in a womb and cannot understand what life is outside of the womb. We can't even begin to grasp that. We don't know but we know it's going to be good. We know it's worth the battle. It's worth the fight. Let's look at Luke 9:62. It's a really long chapter.

Luke 9:62 *But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (NKJV)*

We can't look back. One of the things about an eagle that I found interesting is they destroy the nest. At first, they kick out the sides but then they go and destroy the whole nest. That is actually referenced in Deuteronomy when Moses is talking about being born by an eagle, that they destroy the nest. You can't go back. Once you get kicked out of the nest, once you are on the ride, there is no going back. You can't go back to Egypt, it's gone. Hebrews 2:1-4.

Hebrews 2:1 *Therefore we must give the more earnest heed [we have to pay attention] to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.*

2) For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward,

3) how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

4) God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will? (NKJV)

What does it cost? What's the price of entry? Matthew 19:16. This says, that the rich young ruler comes and asks Christ, "What do I do to gain salvation?" Christ says "Keep the commandments." He says, "I already do that, I've done that my whole life. What else do I have to do?"

Matthew 19:16 Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"

17) So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

18) He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, "'You shall not murder, ' You shall not commit adultery, ' You shall not steal, ' You shall not bear false witness, ' (NKJV)

Continuing in verse 20) ...

20) Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

21) Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

22) But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. (NKJV)

He had things he didn't want to give up. He had things that were more important to him than following Christ.

Continuing in verse 23) ...

23) Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

24) And again, I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." (NKJV)

We can't have attachments that are more important than the Kingdom of heaven. We have to be willing to give it all up. James says to count it all joy when we find ourselves in various trials. Peter says, don't be surprised at the fiery trials. We've seen this walking through these seven weeks. Seven weeks of God revealing Himself. Seven weeks of supernatural miracles, taking care of people, taking people from where they are and moving them a step closer. Getting out of Egypt, three days journey into the wilderness—keep going—Marah, run out of water, Elim—Wildernesses of Sin, clay, run out of food. All of this and God intervenes time and time again. When does He intervene? Right before they are ready to hit the ground. "We're going to die." Over and over, "We're going to die." Seven weeks of *nasah*, seven weeks of "proving", deliverance, counting the weeks, counting the miracles, counting the trials. Preparing to meet Yehovah, cleaning ourselves up, agreeing to His laws, His rules, entering into the covenant, entering into a journey only after we've counted the cost. After we know, after we've been tried and proven. Knowing that the way will be difficult, knowing that we don't know the way. God has to lead us. Confident that Yehovah will never leave us or forsake us. Preparing us to make the most important commitment of our lives. That's what the seven weeks are about.