

1Tim 24-03-31b

Let's pick up our study here. We are looking at the days of the month. We're looking at the 17th of Nissan, normally spelled with one S. You can spell it with two, but people might think you're going to drive off in it.

And this is a signal time in the calendar. We're approaching the end of the age of the church and the spring feasts that deal with the first advent are followed by a gap in the Jewish calendar and then the fall feasts. So the spring feasts follow the religious new year.

The fall feasts are Rosh Hashanah, Feast of Trumpets, Day of Atonement, the Feast of Booths or Sukkot, those fall feasts are in the first month of the civil year, seven months later. But we've already seen that God has chosen to cause certain things to take place on this date. We've seen, and I just want to try to remember one or two things about each of these.

So when you think about the ark coming to rest on Ararat, we think about a return to steadfastness, to a foundation, to a new start, to new life and the need for patience because everything doesn't happen all at once. You know, that's the definition of time. Time is what keeps everything from happening all at once.

But it takes time for us to enter into, to develop, to grow and to exploit our deliverance from God's judgment on sin. The flood, if it is nothing else, it is God's judgment on sin and on a sinful world and making the opportunity for there to be a new world and a new creation. And it begins, there is no hope of that taking place until you contact solid ground.

And that took place with Noah and the ark on 17 Nisan. The second occasion tied to this date is in the following book from Genesis, go to Exodus chapter 12. And this of course follows beginning with chapter 10.

You have the Passover, the original first Passover, the last of the plagues on Egypt. I think of them as three times three plus one. You have the nine plagues and then you have the death of the firstborn, which is unique in chapter 11.

And then in chapter 12, the Lord said, this month shall be your beginning of months. This is what changes the seventh month of Genesis chapter eight to the first month. This seventh month is now gonna be your first month.

And then he gives the instructions for the observance of Passover. Then in verse 29, you have the accomplishment of the death of the firstborn. What date is this? That the firstborn die.

What date is this that the angel passes through, the angel of death, God himself passes

through with the angel and any house that doesn't have the blood on the lintel and the doorposts, the firstborn inside dies. What is the date? That is 15th Nisan. They slew the lamb and got the blood on the 14th.

They are in the early hours of that darkness of the 15th, they are eating the Passover meal with the unleavened bread baked in haste, didn't have time to let it rise because they are leaving that night. So they have their staff in their hand and their shoes, sandals on their feet. And at the same time that they are preparing to leave, the firstborn in Egypt are dying.

So Pharaoh calls for Moses in verse 31, it says, rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel, go and serve the Lord as you have said, take your flocks, your herds. The Egyptians urged the people, give them treasure. Verse 40, now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt and Canaan, and Canaan should be there.

I don't know how it dropped out. It is in the Samaritan Pentateuch, it is attested. And this explains the difference between 400 years and 430 years.

We saw this when we did Genesis, but the total sojourn when Abraham first came into the land of Canaan, and then the Joseph story, he goes down to Egypt, the total sojourn is 430 years. And verse 41, it came to pass at the end of the 430 years, on that self same day, it came to pass that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. It says, army, this is the word for hosts.

It is a night of solemn observance to the Lord for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. And you've tracked their passage through the wilderness at the end of chapter 13, and count the days. The Lord spoke to Moses, speak to the children of Israel that they turn and camp before Pi-Hahiroth between Migdal and the sea opposite Baal Zephon, you shall camp before it by the sea.

I will harden Pharaoh's heart and so on. And so without going into great detail here, they travel for a day and camp after the 14th. So they camp on the night of the 16th.

Then they travel for a day and they camp on the night of the 17th. And then they travel for a day and are up against the sea and can go no further. And it is on the 17th Nisan that the children of Israel cross the Red Sea.

If you go back to Exodus chapter three, verse 18, 18, you shall come out and the elders of Israel to the King of Egypt, you shall say to him, the Lord God of the Hebrews has met with us. And now please let us go three days journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God. That three days journey gets them to the Red Sea.

That is as far as they can go without leaving Egypt entirely. Numbers 33, one through eight gives you the details of this. You can write it in the margin if you like.

Moses is rehearsing the history of their departure. These are the journeys that the children of Israel when they went out of the land of Egypt by their hosts under the hand of Moses and Aaron. Moses wrote down the starting points of their journeys at the command of the Lord.

God wanted Moses to make these notes that we are looking at this morning. 3,400 years ago, God instructed Moses to write down what we are looking at. They departed from Ramses in the first month on the 15th day of the first month, 15 Nisan.

It's now the first month. On the day after the Passover, the children of Israel went out with boldness in the sight of all the Egyptians. And in verse five, then the children of Israel, they moved from Ramses and camped at Sukkot.

That accounts for the 15th of Nisan. They departed from Sukkot and camped at Etham, which is on the edge of the wilderness. That accounts for the 16th Nisan.

They moved from Etham and turned back to Pi-hi-haroth, which is east of Baal Zephon and they camped near Migdal. They parted from Pi-hi-haroth and passed through the midst of the sea. So what day would this be? 17 Nisan.

The same day that the ark touches Ararat. What are the common elements that you see here? What's common to Noah's deliverance in the flood and the children of Israel's deliverance from Egypt? You got a lot of water and you've got the desire to be on terra firma, right? Dry ground. So this is significant.

Now, if you were going to attach a couple of concepts to this, like we did the ark, we talked about needing to have constancy and predictability. This is the difference between dwelling on land and dwelling on the sea, floating on the sea. If you've ever been at sea, away from land, there is no way to know where you are without sophisticated astronomical computations because all the sea looks the same.

You can't see where you are. Land has got features. You've got topography.

You have landmarks. So in retrospect, Noah will find out that what the ark has lodged upon are the mountains of Ararat. He doesn't know it when it quits moving, but it stops moving.

It has contacted the ground. So this is the very beginning. Now, and then we saw the need for patience.

The need for patience. Now we look at this episode. We've still got water.

We still have the water being a problem and a potential source of death because it is going to hem them in and the Egyptian army is going to be able to slay them in huge numbers. But the parting of the sea, God's control over the sea here is similar to his

control over the sea and the flood waters in Genesis 7 and 8. God has established his throne upon the flood. He is greater than the chaotic forces represented by the sea and the waters that cast up mire and dirt.

So God parts the water using the same great wind that he uses to dispel the flood waters. God caused a great wind to move and to dry up the waters. And of course, wind and ruach, the spirit of God is often symbolized, represented and indicated by the wind.

John chapter three, Jesus talking to Nicodemus, a similar case. So what would you associate with this? What are the new elements? Why are they able to leave Egypt and reach the water and pass through the water? Now you have the blood of the Passover lamb. This is what has secured life.

And so there is the associated element. Not only do we need stability, not only do we need patience, but we need faith. When God says travel toward the sea, anybody can figure, well, there's the equivalent of a brick wall there.

And if Pharaoh decides to pursue, we are trapped. But it takes faith. Can't see what the means of deliverance is gonna be.

You can see what the means of deliverance was from God's wrath. What is gonna be the means of deliverance from the wrath of man? So deliverance from God's judgment, Genesis chapter eight, deliverance from man's wrath. You see it in the crossing of the Red Sea, in Exodus and here in Numbers.

So it is no accident, it is no coincidence that these things take place on the same day. And this passing over the sea in Exodus chapter 14, gives us fresh ideas to think about on this celebration of the Lord Jesus' resurrection, deliverance from death. And this is deliverance.

When you think about the Lord Jesus, God judged sin on the cross. Jesus bore our sins in his body on the tree. But you have these two ideas of the wrath of God and the wrath of man combined.

Pharaoh is angry. He is wroth at the death of his firstborn son. He is enraged against Moses and the Israelites and pursues them, sends his armies to destroy them.

Much as the Jews were so embittered and so angry at the Lord Jesus, that the cross is a symbol both of God's judgment on sin and man's wrongful judgment on someone who belongs to God. The Israelites belong to God, Pharaoh wants to kill him. The Lord Jesus is the son of God and the Jews with the complicity of the Romans want to kill him.

So when we consider our lives and the new life we have in Christ, and we think about this day, we have been reconciled to God, delivered from judgment, not just delivered from judgment, we're not just moved to neutral or the deficit has been removed, but we

have a positive relationship with God. We are entered into union with Christ and become children of God. In the same way, if God be for us, who can be against us? Why should I fear what man can do unto me? And our security in Christ, our patience of hope, our work of faith gives us peace when it comes to the opposition, the condemnation of man.

So in looking at the crossing of the Red Sea on this 17th Nisan day, you have God, instead of being the agent of sending the flood, he is now the agent of deliverance. You've got the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire. And during the night, it is the pillar of fire that stands between the Egyptians and the Israelites so that they can cross the sea on dry ground.

God has both stopped the forces of darkness, if you will, the angry Egyptians, and he has made a supernatural way of deliverance through the waters on this day. So that is the second of six episodes in the Old Testament. There's so much more you could say about this.

When you read numbers, they left and went out with a high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians. The third thing, if you go to Exodus chapter 12, verse 37 through 39, you have the time of departure of journeying from Ramses to Sukkot, baking the unleavened bread and cakes of dough that they had brought from Egypt. And as you continue on there with baking the unleavened bread they could not wait because they not prepared provisions.

This is what they ate when they left, these dry cakes of unleavened bread. If you turn forward to Joshua chapter five, after they have once again, supernaturally crossed water, gathered the memorial stones in chapter three. In chapter five, you start at verse 13, Joshua 5, 13.

It came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, he lifted his eyes and looked and behold, a man stood opposite him with his sword drawn in his hand, went to him and said to him, are you for us or for our adversaries? He said, no, but as commander of the army of the Lord, I have now come. Joshua fell on his face, worshiped and said, what does my Lord say to his servant? The commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, take your sandal off your foot. The place where you stand is holy.

And Joshua did so. And so then in chapter six, you have the marching around the city and it shall come to pass in verse five, when they make a long blast, you hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout and the wall of the city will fall down flat. The people shall go up, every man straight before him.

So the question is, when did this take place? In chapter five, verses 10 through 12, the children of Israel camped in Gilgal and kept the Passover on the 14th day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho. Remember, they couldn't, there are very strict requirements on who can celebrate Passover. And you can look this up, but servants in

Israel, if they were gonna keep Passover, they had to be circumcised.

No uncircumcised person was allowed to keep Passover because circumcision is the sign of the covenant and Passover is only good for those who are in covenant relationship with God. No uncircumcised individual could celebrate household servants, even if they were foreigners, if they were circumcised, they could keep Passover. So when Joshua and the people entered the land, they're not circumcised.

It's been 40 years since they left Egypt. And you read chapter five, and the Lord said to Joshua in verse two, make flint knives for yourself, circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time. So Joshua made flint knives for himself and circumcised the sons of Israel at the Hill of the Foreskins.

This is Gibeoth Ha-Araloth. This is the reason Joshua circumcised them. All the people who came out of Egypt were males.

Men of war had died in the wilderness on the way. The people who came out had been circumcised. All the people born in the wilderness on the way as they came out of Egypt had not been circumcised.

For the children of Israel walked 40 years in the wilderness till all the people who were men of war who came out of Egypt were consumed because they did not obey the voice of the Lord to whom the Lord swore that he would not show them the land which the Lord had sworn to their fathers that he would give us a land flowing with milk and honey. So Joshua circumcised their sons, verse seven of chapter five whom he raised up in their place for they were uncircumcised because they had not been circumcised on the way. This is significant.

The circumcised men that came out of Egypt were disobedient and therefore died in the wilderness. Their uncircumcised children were faithful and have entered the land and crossed the Jordan. Do you see any resonance there between Israel themselves as the first generation of God's people? They were unfaithful.

They have been set aside. There is a new generation of God's people specifically the church, the body of Christ who are uncircumcised after the flesh but are circumcised in the heart having the faith of Abraham that accomplishes circumcision so that we can enter into covenant relationship with God and celebrate these feasts. Notice that the physical ritual of the past has been replaced in our church age with a spiritual ritual.

Physical circumcision in this age has pros and cons if you talk to doctors and scientists and the World Health Organization and the different ones that support or don't support it but it has no religious significance in this age unless you are holding to some religion other than Christianity. But for Christians, it's neither here nor there. Spiritual circumcision is all important.

Circumcision of the heart. It is a spiritual ritual. It is a spiritual reality that was foreshadowed by a physical ritual.

Entering into covenant relationship with God. This I believe holds true for all of the physical rituals of the previous age. Going through the mikvot, the mikvah, going through baptisms, even celebrating the Lord's table, people wanna make a physical ritual have spiritual significance.

All of the shadows and the pictures that were given in physical form are spiritual in this age to my eye, to my understanding. I have no quarrel with people that wanna get physically baptized. I think if you're gonna be baptized in water, it should be immersion.

That's how John did it in the Jordan. That's how Jesus was baptized. And if you wanna do water baptism, it needs to be immersion.

I don't think effusion or sprinkling or whatever is adequate, but it's really what's going on in your heart that matters. And in the same way, partaking of the body and the blood of the Lord, the new covenant in his body and in his blood, this is a spiritual covenant. And the upper room physical ritual shared with the 12 is of the Old Testament age.

You don't get to this age till Pentecost. It is the last of the Old Testament rituals that we see. So this circumcision takes place and they stayed in the place of the camp until they were healed.

Then the Lord said, this day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you. And this circular idea we've revisited here recently, but the whole idea of Gilgal and of that which is circular and that which is represented here is a wordplay in Hebrew. So the children of Israel camped in Gilgal and kept the Passover on the 14th day of the month at twilight on the plains of Jericho.

They ate of the produce of the land on the day after the Passover, unleavened bread and parched grain on the very same day. The manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year. 15th Nisan, day after Passover.

That is why the day after Passover is the feast of first fruits, not just the first fruits of the harvest, but they ate of the first fruits after circumcision and after Passover in the land under Jericho. Then if you move forward and count the days, the walls of Jericho fall on the 17th. That is the fourth Israel entering and eating of the first fruits of the land.

That continues, you know, the feast of first fruits lasts a week. You have an eight day festival beginning with Passover and the feast of unleavened bread, feast of first fruits. That goes forward for that whole oncoming week.

The next Old Testament anniversary, if you will, on the 17th is 2 Chronicles chapter 29.

Samuel, Kings and Chronicles, each are one book in the Hebrew Bible. They're divided in hours.

Chapter 29 of 2 Chronicles. It's pretty much the whole chapter here. These are in the days of Hezekiah.

He became king when he was 25. He reigned 29 years in Jerusalem. In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened doors to the house of the Lord and repaired them, brought the priests and the Levites, gathered in the East square.

Levites, sanctify yourselves. Our fathers have trespassed and done evil. Do you see a similarity of pattern with the days of Joshua in Joshua chapter five? The fathers have transgressed and trespassed.

They haven't done what they're supposed to. We're going to fix that. Our fathers have trespassed and done evil in the eyes of the Lord.

They forsaken him, turned their faces away from the dwelling place of the Lord, have turned their backs on him. They shut up the doors of the vestibule. Verse eight, therefore the wrath of the Lord fell upon Judah and Jerusalem.

He has given them up to trouble, desolation, and to jeering as you see with your eyes. Verse 10, now it is in my heart to make a covenant with the Lord God of Israel that his fierce wrath may turn away from us. There has been judgment on the world in Genesis.

There has been judgment on Egypt in Exodus through whom God's people have been delivered each time. There is deliverance of Joshua and the people of God from the Canaanites beginning with Jericho. The very first confrontation in the land after crossing the Jordan is Jericho and there is deliverance from opposition from those who are resistant and disinterested in God.

Remember they've had the law written on the cliffs. They've had plenty of time to respond. This is how Rahab and the others knew to respond.

Verse 11, my sons do not be negligent now. The Lord has chosen you to stand before him to serve him and that you should minister to him and burn incense. You have a list of those who gather themselves in verse 15, you pick up, they gather their brethren, sanctify themselves according to the commandment of the King at the words of the Lord to cleanse the house of the Lord.

They went to the inner part and they cleansed it. Notice verse 17, they began to sanctify on the first day of the first month. On the eighth day of the month, they came to the vestibule of the Lord.

They sanctified the house of the Lord in eight days. And on the 16th day of the first

month, they finished. If it is the 16th day, what day is that? That is 16 Nisan, that is the second day after Passover.

Notice there's no mention of them celebrating Passover. So in this same day, 800 years after entering the promised land, the temple is cleansed. You see a progress from the type of deliverance reflected in Genesis chapter eight, in Exodus chapter 12 through 14, in Joshua chapter five.

Now the cleansing of the temple. We move from grounding and having patience and waiting for time to pass and for God to do the work of restoration. Noah does precisely nothing, restoring dry ground.

He simply waits in the ark. And many times we need patience to simply wait. Sometimes we don't know what the Lord is doing.

It seems like nothing is going on. And I mentioned to someone the other day, in fact, this has come up twice in the past week, where people say it doesn't seem that the Lord is doing anything with me. I'm just kind of marking time.

When you think about our opportunity to let our light so shine before men that they see our good life, our good works and glorify our father who is in heaven, how much work does a lamp do? How much moving around and walking does a lamp do? You set a lamp on a lamp stand, it's on secure footing. It's on a solid base. And with that solidity, all the lamp has to do is just stand fast.

The lamp doesn't have to do any work. It just has to hold together and let its light shine. God will place the lamp.

God will work in and through the light for the benefit of others who are responsive. All we have to do is stand fast. You have need of patience.

It says in Hebrews that after you have suffered a while, you receive the promise. So that is our task. Then you move to Joshua.

Having sanctified ourselves, enemies fall before us. God knocks down walls. We achieve a victory.

God didn't kill all of the inhabitants of Jericho. God knocked their protection away, knocked their defense down so that Joshua and the armies of Israel could attack and defeat them. Old Testament nation of Israel reflects realities in individuals in the New Testament.

We have enemies. We have opposition. We have resistance in our lives.

And by first sanctifying ourselves and ensuring that our covenanted relationship with God through the blood of Jesus Christ is a priority, now we have power from God. God

will pave the way. God will clear the path and remove the defenses and that which keeps these things from going away.

If we've got difficulties getting over past bad patterns, if we've got rocks in the soil of our soul, if we've got other things that are preventing our progress and preventing our fulfillment of God's purpose for our life, God will make it possible for us to go in and defeat them. It has always been a puzzle. When I was a little kid, I used to wonder, well, if God's got all this power, he can part the seas, he can knock down walls, he can bring hail and fire from heaven.

Why did he use the armies of Israel at all? Why didn't they go in without swords and without shields and simply march forward and God would slay all of their enemies? He certainly got that power. God chose to make it possible for them to win their own battles. And I think that is a very important principle.

God wants us to learn by doing. You don't learn anything if every obstacle is cleared from your path. If it requires no faith, if it requires no patience, if it requires no self-sanctification, all I've got to do is walk forward and God just is like a force field just moving everything out of my path.

God removes enough out of our path that we can win our own battles in his strength and for his glory. But we have to work out our own deliverance, our own salvation. Like Noah, leaving the ark and planting a vineyard.

Not that that turned out so well, but like Israel, baking bread, taking provisions, gathering treasure from the Egyptians, marching out, crossing the sea by faith, and then living in the wilderness, pretty soon they're gonna have to gather manna. Why didn't they just have a cruise of oil and a pot of bread like the widow in later days of Elijah and Elisha? Why didn't they just have replenishable food show up in their tents? They had to go and gather it and they had to follow rules on when to gather and when not to, to observe God's Sabbath, to keep themselves sanctified and holy. We have to keep ourselves pure.

We have to win our own battles by God's grace in the Lord's strength, recognizing that He is knocking down the gates of hell. He is destroying the battlements of what opposes us, but we still have to work out our own salvation, just like Israel did, just like Noah did. So that takes care of number one, the ark.

Number two, entering the land of Egypt because on the self-same day, this is Abraham entering the land of Canaan and then the land of Egypt. It says the self-same day twice in Exodus chapter 12, that 430 years later on the self-same day that they entered the land, they left the land. So that one is kind of by implication.

The third is leading the Israelites through the Red Sea. The fourth is eating the first fruits

of the promised land, having sanctified themselves and eating of the first fruits. The fifth is the cleansing of the temple by Hezekiah, 800 years after entering the promised land.

We just saw that in 2 Chronicles 29. And the sixth is in Esther chapter three, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Esther chapter three. Verse 12, this one is so interesting.

You could spend a lot of time looking at this. 312 of Esther, if you read this story and understand Haman's conspiracy to destroy the Jews by subterfuge, look at chapter three, verse 12. The king's scribes were called on the 13th day of the first month.

13th day, this is when the decree for the destruction takes place. When is it that the arrest and death of the Lord Jesus was decreed in the month Nisan? If he's crucified on 14 Nisan that afternoon, when is he arrested? And when was that arrest decided and arranged? The day before, 13 Nisan. On the 13th of Nisan, this decree is written according to all that Haman commanded.

The king's satraps, the governors who were each province, governors, all the people, every province according to its script, every people in their language. In the name of King Ahasuerus, it was written and sealed with the king's signet ring. And this is gonna be confirmed in the trials that begin at sundown when 14 Nisan begins.

That evening is the upper room meal, the trip to the garden, the arrest in the garden, the betrayal by Judas, the denial by Peter, and so on. All of that is gonna take place. But this was decided and arranged the preceding day, and that's the 13th.

And that is the day that Haman's decree is formalized with the king's signet. Just quickly skip forward to chapter five. It happened on the third day.

On the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, and the king sees her, he extends the scepter. What do you wish, Queen Esther, in verse three? What is your request? It shall be given to you up to half the kingdom. If it pleases the king, let the king and Haman come to a banquet that I have prepared.

Bring Haman, that he may do as Esther has said. And so Haman goes out joyful. And you remember that the king and Haman went to dine with Queen Esther.

Look at chapter seven. On the second day at the banquet of wine, you remember there are two banquets, they come to the first, and Esther says, will you please come back? So what is the date of the second banquet? 17 Nisan. The second banquet, Esther's second dinner with Ahasuerus slash Xerxes and Haman is 17 Nisan.

This is when Esther reveals herself. This is when the plot of Haman is foiled. He is so joyful all the way up until that moment.

But God's deliverance and the subsequent destruction of their tormentors in my New King James chapter nine of Esther is titled, the Jews destroy their tormentors. The deliverance from God through Esther. And you think about Easter, Esther, this is the last one before number seven.

This is number six, which is right before number seven, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus on 17 Nisan. So there are seven signal events in scripture tied to this date. All of them deal with judgment, with deliverance, with sanctification, with having faith and patience to be qualified to receive the fullness of God's protection, His provision, and His promise.

Something to think about in the coming weeks as Passover approaches. I think 17th is gonna be a Thursday in April, the week of the 21st of April. That Thursday is gonna be 17 Nisan.

But what a wonderful spiritual encouragement it is for us who are the inheritors and the recipients and the beneficiaries of all of these wonderful principles of provision and deliverance and blessing that are symbolized and foreshadowed on these seven occasions. Well, I hope you have a blessed resurrection Sunday afternoon. We'll close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for its consistency and its power. Thank you for the presence of your Holy Spirit as our true mentor, as our counselor, as our comforter, as the one who leads us into all truth, into these truths, so that through the patience and encouragement of the scriptures, we have hope.

We pray that these things will resonate and be a source of challenge and motivation in the days ahead. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.