

In My Distress I Called upon the Lord

(Sermon Notes) By Warren Zehring – April 25, 2011

Today is the Last Day of Unleavened Bread.

Let's begin in **Exodus 2**

The Children of Israel came out of Egypt on this Last Day of Unleavened Bread ... led by, and delivered by, God.

Egypt had been to them a land of great **distress**... Israel was in slavery and bondage there.

Israel plight was so grievous that 'Egypt' has become a synonym for sin. **Come out of sin** is synonymous with come out of Egypt.

God tells us to give "Meat in due season" meaning that we are to speak about the significance of God's Holy Days.

Let's ask ourselves, "What does this Last Day of Unleavened Bread mean?"

We have been privileged to observe Passover – with its tremendous meaning as the memorial of Jesus Christ's death – and all that signifies for us.

Passover was followed by the First Day of Unleavened Bread – and so we have been eating unleavened bread these seven days.

Just as God **saved** the Israelites from Egyptian slavery and anguish – leading them through the **Red Sea** – God through the Power of His Holy Spirit saves and delivers us – His People, today, from **Slavery to Sin** and the difficult problems we face – even the insurmountable obstacles that we think stand in the way of our Christian lives.

If you study out the chronology of the events when Israel left Egypt – you will find that more than likely – they came out this "Morning" – the Last Day of Unleavened Bread – They came completely out of Egypt, crossing through the Red Sea – they came **completely** out of sin.

Both the chronology and the meaning of the day would indicate that events unfolded just like that.

**** Exodus 2:**

23 And it came to pass in process of time, that the king of Egypt died: and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, **and they cried**, [a petition to God] and their **cry** came up **unto** God by reason of the bondage. [distress and anguish]

These Israelites were our ancestors in many cases.

God says:

Exodus 3:

9 Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel **is come unto Me**: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

Today's sermon title is, "In My Distress I Called upon the Lord," and that is what we see children of Israel doing here.

In His mercy and compassion, God hears and answers our cries unto Him.

Psalm 18 Place your marker in Psalms

The Children of Israel were unable to escape from Egypt by their own power – then needed God's help – God's deliverance.

This Last Day of Unleavened Bread Pictures coming completely out of sin – but let's understand this: **we desperately need God's help** because we cannot overcome sin – we cannot conquer sin, without God's help.

**** We must cry out to God – we must plead with Him to help us. We need the power of God's Holy Spirit.**

The title of today's sermon comes from this verse:

**** Psalm 18:**

6 In my distress I called upon the LORD, and I cried unto my God: He heard my voice out of His temple, and **my cry came before Him, even** into His ears.

God knows that to overcome sin and obey Him we need His Spiritual help – therefore – He wants us to know that He is there for us in times of need.

Brethren, let's understand that we are in "**distress**" because we are sinners. Again, this Holy Day pictures our coming completely out of sin.

Genesis 27

Brethren, have you ever been in a **hopeless** situation?

God is the one who rescues us from distress.

Sometimes it seems to us that no matter which way we turn – there is no solution, no help?

We break into the thought here: There's a terrible family dispute raging...

Genesis 27:

41 And Esau **hated** Jacob [these are twin brothers] because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will **I slay my brother Jacob.**

When Isaac is dead and gone, Esau plans revenge to even the score by killing Jacob.

Rebecca finds out about the plot [verse 42] and passed the knowledge of this threat on to Jacob – who then fled the country – running for his life.

Genesis 32

I like these instances of **God's personal intervention** in the lives of His people. These examples show us that God hears us when we cry out to Him in our distress.

Genesis 32:

1 And Jacob went on his way [he was leaving Laban's country after 20 years service], and the angels of God met him.

God is intimately involved in Jacob's situation.

Genesis 32:

- 2 And when Jacob saw them [the angels], he said, This *is* God's host [Two hosts]: and he called the name of that place Mahanaim [meaning - two hosts].
- 3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

After all those years, Jacob still feared what Esau would do to him for usurping Esau's birthright.

Genesis 32:

- 4 And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now:

Notice the blessings Jacob has accumulated as a result of supplanting Esau's blessing.

Genesis 32:

- 5 And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and men servants, and women servants: and I have sent to tell my lord [Esau], that I may find grace in thy sight. [Jacob is trying to appease Esau – so that Esau does not take everything and kill Jacob.]
- 6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. [uh-oh – a virtual army – that's bad news]
- ** 7 Then Jacob was greatly **afraid and distressed**: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands;

** Now, that was a good time to **cry out to God** in fervent prayer for help and deliverance.

Genesis 32:

- 8 And said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

(A parenthetical inset can be seen in the King James Version at verse:9 – showing a difference in the timing of these events.)

Jacob is **crying out to God in his distress** to save him – to deliver him from Esau – who had promised to kill Jacob.

Genesis 32:

- 9 And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD which said unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:

Jacob is reminding God that He is the one who told Jacob to return home to his people.

Genesis 32:

- 10 I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

Jacob is greatly **afraid and distressed** – and he cries out to God to **Deliver him – to save him** and his family from the hand of Esau.

Genesis 32:

11 Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, *and* the mother with the children.

And Jacob reasons – “It won’t hurt to remind God of His promise to deal well with him.”

Genesis 32:

12 And thou [Lord] said, I will surely do thee good, and make thy [children] as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

God First made this promise to Abraham – Jacob’s grandfather... and then Isaac, his father.

Genesis 22:

17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

18 And in thy **seed** shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Paul will point out that “seed” here is singular – indicating that Jesus Christ the Messiah would be the seed of Jacob – and bless all nations.

Galatians 3:

16 Now to Abraham and his **seed** were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.

We see a pattern of blessings AND a pattern of rescue and intervention and deliverance developing...

Genesis 35:

1 And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fled from the face of Esau thy brother.

2 Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that *were* with him, Put away the strange gods that *are* among you, and be clean, and change your garments:

Jacob was aware that there was some idolatry within his family.

Genesis 31:

34 Now Rachel had taken the images [*traphiyim*’ family idols], and put them in the camel’s furniture, and sat upon them. And Laban searched all the tent, but found them not.

Jacob understands that in order to cry out to God effectively – he and his household had to be clean of idolatry.

Exodus 20:3 and Deuteronomy 5:7

Thou shalt have none other gods before me.

Faith is built in Jacob – because God answered him:

Genesis 35:

3 And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went.

Galatians

These are eternal spiritual principles – they are sure and positive when **we put sin completely out** of our lives.

Galatians 1:

3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,
4 Who gave himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present **evil world**, according to the will of God and our Father:

And deliver us from Satan – as Jesus taught us to pray.

Matthew 6

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: [the evil one.]

We have put ourselves in jeopardy through our sins.

I have put myself in jeopardy through my sins.

People can use it against us – as in them saying... You call yourself a Christian – when you have done “so- and-so.”

** America has not yet come to the point of crying out to God to rescue us from **distress** – but as sure as the Sun came up this morning – great unimaginable **distress is coming** on our people.

Brethren, this is coming upon us soon:

Deuteronomy 28:

53 And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith **thine enemies shall distress thee**:

We in America have not yet called out to God in our distress. Will men even know to cry out to God when the trouble comes?

Brethren, let us cry out to God – even now, in our distress – knowing that it is coming upon our nation.

Luke 21:

23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! For there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

The enemy is coming upon our land – here, inside of America.

Luke 21:

24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations [all around the world]: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. [Gentiles vs Israelites]

There will be a remnant spared by God – who will cry out to God in their distress.
(Isaiah 37:4, 15-20)

Luke 21:

25 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth **distress of nations**, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; [the entire earth in distress]

Nehemiah 9

We American Israelites think that we will rule forever – but we will soon see differently – that day is at hand.

How terrible would it be to see this American soil **being blessed** under Gentile rulership?

After Israel and Judah went into captivity – the land of Israel blossomed in blessings of grain and fat cattle – while the children of Israel were gone – laboring in distress.

Speaking to God:

Nehemiah 9:

34 Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, **kept thy law**, nor hearkened unto thy commandments and thy testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them.

It is the same for us: Our leaders are not keeping God's Law – not a one of them even knows that today is the Last Day of Unleavened Bread.

Nehemiah 9:

35 For they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness that thou gave them, and in the large and fat land which thou gave before them, neither turned they from their wicked works. [it is the same today – our nation will not turn from its wicked works.]

36 Behold, we *are* servants this day, and *for* the land that thou gavest unto our fathers to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we *are* servants in it:

37 And it yielded much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of our sins: also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we **are in great distress**.

They do cry out to God in their distress!

** Let's understand clearly – there is a time when we can **cry out to God** and have our prayers answered – But never take that Great Blessing **for granted** – because the time is coming soon when God will no longer respond to the cries of His people.

The time is soon coming when God will not respond any more.

Proverbs 1

Our Country today has rejected God, His laws and His counsel.

God says:

Proverbs 1:

- 25** But ye have set at naught all My counsel, and would none of my reproof:
26 I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;
27 When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind;
when distress and anguish comes upon you.
28 Then shall they call upon me, but **I will not answer**; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:
29 For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:
30 They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.
31 Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. [that is the bitter fruit of their own sin]
32 For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

It is not too late; we can still cry out to God and be heard at this time.

Proverbs 1:

- 33** But whoso hearkens unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

Isaiah 30

When Christ returns there will be a people who will know and believe the lessons of history – they will know their God, and obey their God.

We cry out to God, “Abba, Father, hear my plea.”

**** Isaiah 30:**

- 19** For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: He will be very gracious unto thee **at the voice of thy cry**; when He shall hear it, He will answer thee.

Psalm 4 Where your marker is back in the Psalms.

- **** Let’s take a look some inspiring verses in the Psalms and look at this concept of **crying out to God for deliverance** and being heard by God.

Psalm 4:

- 1** **Hear me** when I call, [David is begging of God] O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me *when I was in distress*; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

David was often in distress – so are we.

- **** David was a man after God’s own heart. Not just his repentance – but his constant looking to God to be saved out of **distressful** situations.

Psalm 6:

- 4** Return, O LORD, **deliver** my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

Psalm 7:

- 1** O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and **deliver** me:

Look at how often David called to God in his distress. This is an example for us to do the same.

This is a message of hope – in that God hears us.

Are We Like David – This is a right attitude.

Hurry up lord and **help me**.

Psalm 22:

19 But be not thou far from me, O LORD: O my strength, hasten [be quick about it] thee to **help me**.

A petition to God:

Psalm 25:

16 Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I *am* **desolate** and **afflicted**.

Let's understand our need to cry out to God.

Psalm 25:

17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my **distresses**. [my anguish]

18 Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and **forgive all my sins**.

Here we see a picture of this Last Day of Unleavened Bread – **coming completely out of sin – and being delivered by God**.

We – as Christians – put ourselves in vulnerable positions because of our sins. Therefore, we must rely on God to come to our aid and assistance and deliver us.

Psalm 25:

20 O keep my soul, and **deliver** me: let me not be ashamed; for I put my trust in thee.

Psalm 31:

1 ...In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: **deliver** me in thy righteousness.

Hurry! Tell God to hurry?

Psalm 31:

2 Bow down thine ear to me; **deliver** me **speedily**: be thou my strong rock, for a house of defense to save me.

Remember how the Israelites raced **speedily** across the Red Sea to escape the Egyptians – and with God's deliverance, they did escape.

Psalm 34:

15 The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and His ears are open **unto** their **cry**.

God desires to hear from us – He wants us to cry out to Him in the time of our distress.

Psalm 37:

40 And the LORD shall help them, and **deliver** them: he shall **deliver** them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in Him.

Psalm 39:

8 Deliver me from all my transgressions: make me not the reproach of the foolish.

Hurry! Tell God to hurry again.

Psalm 40:

13 Be pleased, O LORD, to **deliver** me: O LORD, make **haste** to **help me**.

This is a New Testament concept in the Old Testament.

Psalm 41:

1 Blessed is he that considers the poor: the LORD will **deliver** him in time of trouble.

Do we really think of those who need to hear the Gospel of God?

Psalm 46:

**** 1** God *is* our **refuge and strength**, a very present **help in trouble**. [Sin is trouble and God is our fortress.]

Here we see “trouble” again:

**** Psalm 50:**

15 And **call upon Me** in the day of trouble: **I will deliver thee**, and thou shalt glorify Me.

Notice **the depth** of pleading that David goes into.

We all find ourselves in hopeless situations...

Sometimes trials are too much for us... they would drown us.

How often are we powerless to bring about reconciliation? Only God can bring about the needed repentance (**Romans 2:4**).

We can do nothing on our own to restore peace and fellowship...

If it were not for the sure promises of God. .. we would surely perish.

**** Psalm 56:**

13 For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou **deliver** my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living. [God wants to restore and preserve our lives.]

Psalm 57:

2 I will **cry unto** God most high; **unto** God that performs all things for me.

Psalm 79:

9 Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name: and **deliver us**, and purge away our sins, for **Thy name's sake**.

If God allowed us to perish – how would His name look? When we are delivered – God's name is glorified.

God says:

Psalm 91:

14 Because He hath set his love upon me, therefore will I **deliver him**: I will set him on high, because he hath known My name.

God is going to set us above the kings of the earth – on high – that action on His part will bring glory to His name.

**** Psalm 91:**

15 He **shall call upon me**, and I will **answer him**: I *will be* with him **in trouble**; I **will deliver him**, and honor him.

Psalm 102:

1 A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and pours out his complaint before the LORD. Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my **cry** come **unto** thee.

Psalm 107 – Read this entire chapter when you have time.

Psalm 107:

5 Hungry and thirsty, their soul **fainted** in them.

**** 6** Then **they cried** unto the LORD in their trouble, *and He delivered them out of their distresses*.

When we cry out to God He will lift us out of our distresses.

Study all of **Psalm 107** when you have time in your personal Bible studies.

Psalm 107:

**** 13** Then **they cried** unto the LORD in their **trouble**, *and He saved them out of their distresses*.

14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.

15 Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for his goodness*, and *for his wonderful works* to the children of men!

(repeat of :13)

Psalm 107:

**** 19** Then **they cried** unto the LORD in their **trouble**, *and he saved them out of their distresses*.

20 He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered *them* from their destructions.

(repeat of :15 & ...:31)

Psalm 107:

21 Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for his goodness*, and *for his wonderful works* to the children of men!

Psalm 107:

**** 28** Then they cry unto the LORD in their **trouble**, and He brings them **out of their distresses**.

29 He makes the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

30 Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven.

31 Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for His goodness*, and *for his wonderful works* to the children of men!

Psalm 118

Psalm 118:

5 I called upon the LORD in distress: the LORD answered me, *and set me* in a large place.

21 I will praise thee: **for thou hast heard me**, and art become my salvation.

Here is the title of today's sermon again:

** Psalm 120:

1 In my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me.

Judges 10

We certainly do not want for our pleas for deliverance to be unheard, do we?

There is an example in Judges of Israel not looking to the True God:

Judges 10:

14 Go and **cry unto** the **gods** which you have chosen; let them [the false gods] deliver you in the time of your tribulation.

Will Wall Street save America?

Will Hollywood set us free?

Will Congress and the President save America?

God says, "Try to make it without the Ten Commandments in your schools and courts. Let's see how that will work out for you!"

Israel got the point real quick – and repented of their idolatry.

Judges 10:

15 And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, **We have sinned**: do thou unto us whatsoever seems good unto thee; **deliver us** only, we pray thee, **this day**. [Please immediately hear us Lord – save us from distress.]

1 Samuel 12 We will see the same thing.

There was a time when I thought there was a chance that America would repent – and turn back to God.

1 Samuel 12:

10 And they cried unto the LORD, and said, **We have sinned**, because we have forsaken the LORD, and have served Baalim and Ashtaroath [pagan gods]: but now **deliver us** out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve thee.

Psalm 43:

1 Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O **deliver** me from the deceitful and unjust man.

** Psalm 56:

9 When I **cry unto** thee, then shall mine enemies turn back: this I know; for God is for me.

Turn to God – Go to God – that is our only refuge.

Luke 18:

7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which **cry** day and night **unto** him, though he bear long with them?

2 Corinthians 1

The Feast of Unleavened Bread pictures coming out from under a death sentence – that we brought on ourselves.

2 Corinthians 1:

9 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but trust in God which raises the dead:

10 Who **delivered** us from so great a death, and **doth deliver**: in whom we trust that he will yet **deliver us**;

2 Timothy 4:

18 And the Lord shall **deliver** me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory forever and ever.

Romans 7:

24 O wretched man that I am! **who shall deliver** me from the body of this death?

Answer:

Romans 7:

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.

Isaiah 30

Isaiah 30:

18 And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the LORD *is* a God of judgment: blessed *are* all they that wait for him.

19 For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee **at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee.**

In closing, let me pose the question:

What greater necessity is there?

... than that we be delivered from the bondage of sin?

... we be delivered from this body of sin?

... than that we come completely out of sin?

We cry out to God in our time of anguish and trouble to deliver us from our distresses...

2 Samuel 22

I wish we had time to read all of 2 Samuel 22

Please read all of this Song of David when you can – it is very good.

2 Samuel 22:

- 1** And David spoke unto the LORD the words of this song in the day *that* the **LORD had delivered him** out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul:
- 2** And he said, The LORD *is* my rock, and my fortress, and **my deliverer**;
- 3** The God of my rock; in him will I trust: *he is* my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, **my Savior**; thou save me from violence.
- 4** **I will call on the LORD** [in my distress], *who is* worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies.
- 5** When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid;
- 6** The sorrows of hell [grave] compassed me about; the snares of death prevented me;

Brethren, notice the outcome when we cry unto the LORD in our distress:

**** 2 Samuel 22:**

- 7** **In my distress I called upon the LORD**, and cried to my God: and **He did hear my voice** out of His temple, and **my cry did enter into his ears.**

End