

WHY Put Sin Out?

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When Israel came out of Egypt they were brought out with a strong hand. And God told them that for seven days they were to eat no leavened bread. The Night to Be Observed memorializes the joy which prevailed among the Israelites as they came out of Egypt. It is analogous to the joy we experience when we forsake the world and its way of sin as we enter into the covenant relationship with God at baptism.

Now we are observing the Feast of Unleavened Bread -- and putting the leaven out of our homes represents the process of putting sin out of our lives. Coming out of Egypt was relatively easy for Israel. The hard part was forsaking the habits and attitudes they had learned in Egypt. Putting sin out became awfully difficult for physical Israel -- and for the most part they never succeeded very well in doing that.

For those of us in spiritual Israel today, the easy part is behind us -- making that first commitment to God and reaching the point of initial repentance and baptism may not have seemed too easy to some of us -- but it was really not as difficult as the part we're working on now -- putting sin out of our lives.

Getting rid of sin is a process -- it's a lifelong job that requires diligent, sustained effort. But the job might be made a little easier if we understand WHY we must put sin out of our lives.

Why does God want us to put sin out? Now you might say "because God commands us to." Yes God commands us to put sin out of our lives -- But WHY does God want us to do that? God does things for a purpose. When God tells us to do something, it's for a reason, or more often that not, for several very good reasons!

Why then does God want us to put sin out? What is the purpose? What are his reasons for wanting us to do so?

To answer that question, let's first ask, "What is sin?" The answer is simple. 1 John 3:4 -- sin is the transgression of God's eternal, spiritual law (Psalm 111:7-8; 119:151-152).

The Scriptures reveal essentially two ways of conduct. One way is expressed in the principles of God's law. The other way is conduct in violation of that law, i.e., sin.

When God brought Israel out of Egypt he set before them the two ways -- and he said they had to choose between them (Deuteronomy 30:15-20). One way leads to life, good, blessings. The other way ends in death, evil and cursing.

God's law simply expresses a cause and effect relationship. Obedience to its precepts produces joy, happiness, and abundant life. Sin, on the other hand, produces misery, suffering, unhappiness and death.

Look at the world in which we live -- you can see everywhere what sin produces. The world is plagued with all sorts of societal and personal problems that are the direct consequence of sin.

Among them poverty, diseases, divorce, illegitimacy, violent crimes, thefts, fraud, corrupt governments, ethnic and racial hatred and violence, war and death.

Sin enslaves (Lamentations 5:1-16; Romans 6:16; John 8:34).

Sin blinds you and deceives you (Proverbs 4:19; 5:6; Romans 1:21; Hebrews 3:13; Isaiah 29:9-14; Ephesians 4:17-19; Proverbs 11:7).

Sin produces unhappiness and suffering (Proverbs 5:10-11; 13:25; Lamentations 4:3-10).

Sin cuts you off from God and his blessings and brings curses (Isaiah 59:2; Deuteronomy 28:15-10).

Sin leads to death (Proverbs 1:32; 2:16-19, 22; 3:25; 5:3-5, 11; 6:32; 7:26-27; 11:19; Romans 6:21, 23; James 1:5).

God law was given for life (Ezekiel 20:11), but Israel rejected it and chose the path of sin, and God gave them over to law that were not good, the laws of the heathen nations and laws their own devising (verses 21-26).

God's law, however, when obeyed, produces understanding and discernment (Proverbs 4:18; 6:23).

God' law produces honor (Proverbs 3:25; 4:8-9).

God' law produces health (Proverbs 3:7-8; 4:22).

God' law produces prosperity (Psalm 1:1-3; Proverbs 3:9-10; 8:21).

God' law produces happiness (Proverbs 3:18).

God' law produces peace (Psalm 119:165).

God' law produces life (Proverbs 3:1-2, 13, 16-18, 22; 4:4, 10, 13, 22-23; 7:1-2; 10:2; 11:19; 13:14; Revelation 22:14).

So why does God want us to put sin out of our lives? It's not because God is arbitrary, petulant or capricious. It's because God wants us to be happy. He wants us to live peacefully, joyfully and abundantly, he wants us to have good health, he wants us to prosper, he wants us to have wisdom and discernment, he wants us to inherit honor and glory and eternal life.

So as you're thinking during this feast and later on about putting sin out -- as you struggle to overcome sin throughout your life -- remember why you're doing it. Remember all the reasons God gives for getting rid of sin. If you do you'll want to get rid of sin -- and with God's help you'll succeed.