**Why Do We Still Eat The Forbidden Fruit?**

Numbers 19:13  **Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead**, and purifieth not himself, defileth the tabernacle of the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from Israel: because the water of separation was not sprinkled upon him, **he shall be unclean**; his uncleanness is yet upon him.

A man defiled the tabernacle if he touched a dead body and was unclean.

That led people to assume something about the Passover, to the detriment of people who wanted to be involved in passover.

Numbers 9:6-13  And there were **certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover** on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day: And those men said unto him, We are defiled by the dead body of a man: wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer an offering of the LORD in his appointed season among the children of Israel? And Moses said unto them, Stand still, and I will hear what the LORD will command concerning you. And **the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the passover unto the LORD.** The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it. But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he brought not the offering of the LORD in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin.

After reading about the Old Testament passover, let's look at our New Testament passover.

1 Corinthians 5:7-8  Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even **Christ our passover** is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

In this story, men became defiled by having touched a dead body.

Numbers 19:11  He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days.

Numbers 19:16  And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.

And they were forbidden by the other people to keep passover.

* It seems that priests told them they could not take part.
* So they came to Moses and asked why they could not take part.
* Moses sought God about it all.
* And it turned out that God did not forbid them at all.
* They were commanded to keep the passover.

They wrong-guessed the issue!

And something very opposite was told concerning one who was clean and did not choose to keep the passover.

* Moses was told that a clean person who chooses not to keep it is cut off from God's people.
* A person had to be involved in the passover.

This throws a wrench into what people would commonly expect religion to involve.

Something in the people made them think God would not allow the unclean into the passover.

And I have seen this same spirit today, thousands of years later.

People are the same today.

The Pharisees were the type who were disgusted with Jesus eating with Zaccheus when the man was a publican, cheating his own people of money for the Romans.

* One compared to him who would sell his own mother for money.
* But Jesus rebuked that idea over and again.
* He came to help the unrighteous.
* The sick need a physician.

And the uppity people who think they are good enough without God, are rebuked also.

* The clean who chose not to get involved in passover was cut off from Israel.
* The one who had not touched a dead body!
* The one who was not defiled!
* He had to take it as much as the unclean had to take it.
* His cleanness should not be taken and considered anything of his own doing.
* He requires the blood of Jesus just as much as the unclean person did.

The instance of the unclean man being forbidden to take part in the passover shows us the concept people have in the goodness of humanity.

* **They think it is our goodness that determines our state of being before God.**
* If one chooses to get involved in religion, then one had better be clean, the think.
* But a clean one does not have to be involved, they reason.
* It's only a nice thing to get involved in if you want to, they assume.
* But only the uppity can get involved, they boast.
* This thing is not for the mongrels of society, they sarcastically spew.

God smacked that entire idea.

It's the idea of WORKS that considers one who is unclean to be in the outs concerning this idea.

* This lying spirit would make us believe that if a person does not know enough to **make themselves holy enough** for God, then they are not fit to even enter with the people of God.

And it is the same idea of WORKS that cause a clean man to think he is exempt for need to be involved in God's work.

**FOLKS...GOOD OR BAD, YOU NEED GOD...OR YOU ARE LOST.**

**CHRIST IS OUR PASSOVER, and GOOD OR BAD, everyone must come to Christ!**

That does not mean anyone can preach, or anyone can lay hands on others.

AFTER YOU GO TO CHRIST YOU CAN GO TO THESE OTHER THINGS.

BUT EVERYONE COMES TO CHRIST.

Man got a damnable idea in his head from eating the knowledge of good and evil in the forbidden tree.

* Most religion is "works"-oriented today.
* But the truth of the matter is that it's not a matter of our personal WORTH.
* It's a matter of BIRTH.
* Are you born again and in Christ or not?

***People can be very very wicked and yet be very religious, too.  Watch:***

John 18:28-29  Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and **they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover**. ***{the hall...: or, house of Pilate}*** **Pilate then went out unto them**, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

In John 18:28 a tiny detail is mentioned that most of us have not even noticed.

* Jesus was being lied about and treated cruelly.
* He hurt no person and said no lie.
* Yet the Jews led Jesus into the hall of judgment and pushed him into Pilate's house.
* The margin says the judgment hall was actually the house of Pilate.
* But they would not go in themselves lest they be defiled.
* They were ready to eat the passover.
* They could not defile themselves by being in a GENTILE house.
* They hated Jesus with a passion, and yet would not dare to enter a Gentile's house to remain "clean".
* How hypocritical!
* They were getting Christ's murder secured by the most miserable and cheating manner.
* They were so religious that Pilate had to get out of his house to go out to deliberate with them over Christ.
* **Wicked sinners can be were very religious.**
* They don't miss a meeting or an event, and yet destroy people and break hearts and bring others to tears!
* Go to confession and proceed to ruin, lie and malign.

1 Corinthians 5:7-8  Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, **neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness**; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

They ensured they had no leaven in their houses when they took passover, but Paul said the house is our hearts, and the leaven is malice and wickedness.

Christ is our passover.

* Here we see a direct reference to the same attitude that was shown in the rejection of the folks who wanted to take part in passover, but were forbidden to do so by the uppity folks.
* As much as they were to be allowed to take part in passover, people who want to know Christ should be able to take part, no matter how unclean they've been in the past.
* Just as these men were driven away passover, people are tempted to drive away people from coming to Christ.
* But we are told to keep the passover not with, malice and wickedness.
* Have love for all.

Matthew 5:24  Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

1 Corinthians 11:28  But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

Praising God and turning around and speaking against a person, no matter what they have done, is simply unacceptable in the eyes of God.

God help us.

Refusing to forgive someone while you worship God is putting you in deep trouble with the Lord.

* Jesus tried showing that in the following story.

Matthew 9:9-13  And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him. And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. **But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice**: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

He wants MERCY FROM YOU and not sacrifice.

* Sacrifice is right and good.
* But, all your sacrifice in religion is useless if you have a bad attitude!
* The kindness in the hearts of the people is more important to God than the outward religious rituals people carry on with.
* God commanded sacrifice.
* But He does not even want it from you if your heart is refusing to get a right attitude.
* Was Jesus saying that sacrifice is no good anymore?
* No.
* ***Sacrifice is indeed commanded by God.***
* ***But your sacrifice is sickening to Him if you do not FIRST have MERCY in your heart.***
* If you are going to be mean-spirited to your family after you worship and praise God then you are a hypocrite.
* You're stuck in a 21st century Pharisaism.

When you sacrifice and don't have MERCY in your heart, you are not connecting sacrifice with the inward reality that is supposed to be the reason you want to sacrifice.

* You are involving yourself with God, and everything about God is love and mercy.
* Therefore, show mercy yourself if you are going to involve yourself with the God of love and mercy!

***Is your religion getting inside your heart and changing you?***

***Some people do not even believe they can be changed.***

* ***The reason is that their religion is really a SELF-EMPOWERED religion.***
* And because they know they cannot change themselves, they totally abandoned the thought of change.
* They learn to live with their vicious spirits and put up a costumed christianity, and wagging the dog.

Are you really involved with this God for Whom you are praising and singing?

* Is this something that your HEART is into?
* Sometimes human beings like to look very religious and are worried about their reputations but they do not actually put their hearts into it.

***Or do you even believe your heart can be changed?***

What good is our Christianity if we have not gotten the knowledge of good and evil out of our systems?

* Did we really get Life or did we not?
* What tree are we continuing to return to and feed from?
* You see, our attitudes towards people springs from our hearts.

We hand out fruit of life in church, thank God, and you can leave it there and not eat it and leave and go directly to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil again.

1 Corinthians 8:1  Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. **Knowledge puffeth up**, but charity edifieth.

1 Corinthians 13:4  Charity suffereth long, [and] is kind; charity envieth not; **charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up**,

And the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil influences you to criticize and judge and seek harm in others so long as you look good.

Look at how the forbidden fruit made Adam and Eve react.

Gene 3:11-13  And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

This is the reaction the people had after they ate of the fruit of JUDGMENT.

Law-mentality is the kind of thinking that is judgmental of others all the time.

* The outward is the topic of concern with judgmental people.
* Criticism is always made of how someone looks or what they do.
* Meanwhile the critic is miserable within and bitter and hard and harsh.
* No mercy.
* No burying the hatchet.
* GOOD AND EVIL
* GOOD AND EVIL

James spoke of double mindedness.

* Many people are one thing before your face but another thing behind your back.
* As if they have TWO MINDS.
* We can have one personality at home and another one at church.
* DOUBLE MINDED.

This led to the false front in our culture of men not allowing themselves to weep, nor show pain.

* Its false because the man who does not scream in pain still has pain and still hates it.
* But his false front makes it look like he is not hurt at all.
* But that is just it -- he has to LOOK STRONG and LIE in his outward.
* People are so afraid of not being accepted that they put on a different personality than that which they really are.
* The entire problem is that their works-religion makes them feel THEY must take things into their own hands.
* Create a false image rather than TRULY HAVE GOD CHANGE US!

We need to learn to hand the controls over to God.

Matthew 19:16  And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, **what good thing shall I do**, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, **If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast**, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. **But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful**: for he had great possessions.

This young man was not there to ridicule Jesus as so many others had.

* He did not deride Jesus' words, but said he did all Jesus recommended in keeping law.
* But Jesus told him there is something not in the law that is required to make him complete.
* Give away all he had and follow Christ.
* The man could not do it.
* He walked away sorrowful.
* He did not deride Jesus again.
* He was sincere.
* And he walked away wishing he could change.

Why did he not call on God?

* Why did he look at the thing Jesus requested and call on God
* Why walk away sorrowful?
* Why walk away as though he could never experience what Jesus recommended?
* Does Jesus recommend things that we cannot experience?

Matthew 19:25  When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED?

In reality, people who try to put up a tough image are actually not satisfied with the way they really are.

* They know they are not right.
* But the problem is that they really do not think they can be right.
* So they MAKE UP AN IMAGE THEY THINK THEY NEED TO BE, but never will be.
* And they PRACTICE THAT IMAGE, which is not really themselves.
* The danger is they think they cannot really change!
* They act so loving in the church, when they are terribly hard on people when the church doesn't see.
* Telling the waiters off.
* Hollering at the cashiers.

Don't abandon the hope THAT YOU CAN CHANGE!

I learned that Sigmund Freud discovered that mankind cannot live up to rules.

* He was right.
* Even the Bible said so.
* But his error was in thinking we should therefore GET RID OF ALL RULES and think that NOTHING IS WRONG OR GOOD.
* Forget the entire concept of good and evil.

Then in the fifties, the USA was so worried about communism that they figured a way to get their country to never ever accept dictatorship.

* Teach the parents to not discipline their children so much anymore.
* They said that disciple hinders the child's ability to develop individuality.
* And then when the kids came to adulthood, they gave their parents fits in the sixties with their rebellion and drugs and free sex.

Their error is in not realizing that GOD CAN CHANGE LIVES.

No, we cannot live by rules alone.

* But what the rules tried to turn us into was good.
* So God came along and directly began working in born again souls, who would let him, to become what the rules tried to make us become.

God can make you what you ought to be.

* He can cause you to become the way so many think they can never become.

THE ONLY REASON ANYBODY WOULD DOUBT THIS IS BY RESORTING BACK AGAIN TO YOUR OWN INABILITY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS.

This deception is into us so much that even when we say GOD CAN CHANGE YOU, people think, "No, I cannot change myself."

LIFE CHANGES THINGS and makes us what we ought to be, not knowledge of good and evil.

God gets the controls in your life and He causes you to become what you really know you need to be anyway.

Luke 18:11-14  The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men [are], extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as [his] eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified [rather] than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Notice the PHARISEE boasted of everything HE DID.

The publican boasted of nothing, but CALLED OUT TO GOD FOR HELP.

And taking the elite of society, and the dregs of the Jews, and showing that the worst is justified before the Pharisee due to calling on God rips the carpet of flesh-religion out from beneath the feet of anyone!

Matthew 18:15-22  Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him **his fault** ***{ONE FAULT ONLY}*** between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, **let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican**. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, **how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times**? Jesus saith unto him, **I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven*.{ 490 SINS}***

**If one man who committed one sin would not repent and be considered a heathen and a publican, whereas a man who committed 490 sins in one day and asked for forgiveness is to be forgiven, then Christ is trying to tell us that he is more concerned over humility and desire to serve God than over how perfect a lifestyle we can live!**

If you have desire and sincerity and truly grieve over your sins, I don't care how many sins you commit, God can take care of changing you and giving you victory so long as you keep repenting sincerely over your errors.

Don't stop coming to church simply because you repeat sins all the time. If you really want to serve God and have LOW RESISTANCE to sin, YOUR DESIRE to serve God and YOUR HUMILITY to repent each and every time will get God to work on you for victory!

YOU take care of truly seeking forgiveness. God will take care of changing you and strengthening you.

All the rules of the New Testament simply KEEP US SAFE FROM SIN after we are saved.

***BUT RULES NEVER SAVED ANYBODY.***

And the ones eating the forbidden fruit go wild over unnecessary and impractical rules because they think rules save us!

FAITH IN GOD'S WORKS OUTSIDE OF YOUR ABILITY SAVES YOU AND CHANGES YOU!

Romans 4:6-8  Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

Titus 3:5  Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

You will DIE if you eat the forbidden fruit.

* If you think to improve yourself YOU WILL FAIL AND DIE.
* ***Why keep eating of the forbidden fruit when there is LIFE here this morning?***