

*He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; his truth shall be your shield and buckler. Psalms 91:4*



# The God Who Covers

The Revelation Of God's Covering in Scripture

by  
Todd McDonald

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the New King James Version of the Bible.

**To Angela, my best friend,  
best coach, and my love...  
and to Allie and Tucker,  
God's gracious gifts to me and  
hope for the future**

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### **P**reface

There are many messages the Holy Spirit is communicating to the Body of Christ in this hour. We ARE the generation that will see the consummation of the ages and the ushering in of the millenium reign of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is going to be a glorious age... far better than any supposed utopia that the demonically influenced dreams of the New Age might conjure up. Israel, the fig tree, has budded; our Lord told us in Matt 24:34, "Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place." He spoke of the generation that saw the budding of the fig tree (when its branches put forth leaves) as the Bridal generation. What a wonderful time to live in! We will see the beginnings of "everlasting righteousness" and the times of restoration of all things. What a privilege! I used to talk in terms of the "End Times". I don't anymore. They are not the end times.. they are the "Beginning Times." In fact, I hope this writing winds up on the bookshelf of SOMEONE who survives to actually live in the millennial period. And whatever you think that period of a thousand years might be like... keep an open mind. None of us really knows for sure, and at best we can only make educated guesses.

We have been ordained by God to live "for such a time as this." Of the many emphasis areas of the Holy Spirit taking place, the Bridal identity of the Church and the burning love of our God for humanity I think stand out. The restoration of the "Godidic" order of worship that we call "Davidic" worship along with a worldwide prayer emphasis of the Holy Spirit is helping to lay the foundation in the Church for a people who "know their God and will do GREAT exploits." A Church that is not enthralled and enchanted with the beauty and splendor of God will not survive what is coming to planet earth. Whether you are pre-post-or-pan millennialist, the fact that the world is approaching a climax in evil coupled with a greater dividing line between lukewarm Christianity and those born of the Spirit is undeniable. Simultaneously to this, the Spirit is "hovering over the darkness", ready to birth the greatest harvest of souls ever seen in human history. Why such specific focus of the Holy Spirit to stir intercessory worship as it is in heaven and move people to drink water from the "river of His pleasures"? I agree with the idea that the Church is going to see tribulation.... Maybe not WRATH. Jesus promised us that IN THIS WORLD we would face tribulation. How great will the tribulation be? I don't know. I'm not going to put a 0, 3 ½, or 7 year time period on it and fit it into some charted system. Does that mean we could face part of the "GREAT" tribulation? That's another unanswerable that we can only make educated guesses at.

Personally, I like the Boy Scout motto: "Always be prepared." It's how I look at people too: "Expect the best but prepare for the worst." I tend to never be disappointed with people because of this motto. I think that is an attitude the church needs to adopt in this hour. "Expect the best, but PREPARE for the worst." Many who do not embrace this paradigm I think run the risk of being disappointed with God at some point. Many, however, are calling the church back to LOVE.. back to the FIRST COMMANDMENT... back to PASSION.. back to PURITY... back to POWER. All of these are found in the PRESENCE and EMBRACE of the Holy One ... the Lord God Almighty who is and was and is to come. The LOVE paradigm found in the romance of the Gospel I believe is VITAL to the Church being prepared for the judgments to come. A Church that is receiving a "Kingdom that cannot be shaken" will not be PHASED one way or the other in terms of facing "end-time" judgments—whether none, part, or all. However, a church that is PREPARED to face no tribulation is a church which I believe will produce a great falling away and even cause some to not be ready when their bridegroom returns (5 out of 10 virgins to be exact—does that sound familiar?).

So why is this book so appropriate for this hour? Well, in any other time of human history I would probably agree that this book is nothing more than a boring snoozer about an abstract theological concept. However, given the current emphasis areas of the Holy Spirit and the nearness of a burning jealous God who is going to confront planet earth directly, I think it is something worth paying attention to. This subject area is something we need to have as part of the "last-days" foundation. It MUST be part of our thoughts, feelings, and faith!

What is this subject? It is the revelation of the God Who Covers.

**Ps 32:6-10**

*For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to You in a time when You may be found; surely in a flood of great waters they shall not come near him. You are my hiding place; you shall preserve me from trouble; you shall surround me with songs of deliverance....Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; but he who trusts in the LORD, mercy shall surround him. (NKJ)*

We are not only going to need to understand and have a vital revelation of the beauty of God to survive what is coming, we are going to need something more. Combined with a burning heart of desire for God, we need to be founded on the concept and truth that God is the GOD WHO COVERS us. He surrounds us. He is our shield. He is our hiding place. He is our protector. He is our refuge. He is our COVERING. Without His mercy, grace, and power, who will stand? Well, no one will. That's why we must be in an intimate embrace when "things start going down". If the Church is not, we will begin to doubt, accuse, and fear God.. even questioning His motives and reasons (that sounds familiar too, doesn't it?).

That's what this book is all about. It is one of the many emphasis areas of the Holy Spirit in laying a foundation for a Church that "will not be shaken" even though the world and everything else is going to be. Thank God we are and will be delivered from His wrath... but keep an open mind about what kind of tribulation you may or may not have to face. If you do not engage in this opportunity to "get in the flow" of the Holy Spirit, you may find yourself one day not too soon accusing God and questioning His love without even realizing it. Returning to your first love AND understanding that He is the God who "has you covered" will go a long way in preparing you for what is to come.

Americans are quite sedate when it comes to understanding trials and tribulations.. for the most part, we just don't have them! We don't have to worry about being imprisoned, beaten, tortured, or killed for professing faith in Jesus. There is a vast part of the church that does... how could anything of the coming judgements be any worse given those circumstances? Well, they can't. That's why those who have inherited the "Kingdom that cannot be shaken" aren't shaken.. whether by disease, turmoil, war, persecution, famine, death, disaster, or martyrdom. Only a Church that understands the God of endless burning desire for humans or a Bride passionately in love with her coming Bridegroom will be adequately prepared to "do great exploits" in the face of many who "shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering."

God has us covered... no matter what. Worship is one vehicle of that expression... in fact, God's covering is an INVITATION TO US, FROM HIM, to PURSUE HIM. I was surprised to find out the depth of the revelation of God's covering found in Scripture. It was first seen in the garden and it is experienced today by those who worship in Spirit and in truth. It covers a wide variety of expressions and a wide variety of symbols. It can affect your view of how God thinks of you. To me, God's covering provides the "mechanics" of how God can hate sin but still be a God who "likes" you and I. His covering is a facet of His love and His righteousness intertwined. It is a perfect picture of the One who is passionately jealous with burning desire for humans. Covering is the Scriptural basis for believing that God really wants to come and dwell in me and in you through our faith and trust in His Son. God does want to BE near us.. and He has provided a way. That "WAY" can be thought of as His "COVERING".

God's covering is also a foundational basis behind the idea of intercessory worship. The worship that is found in heaven is not like our human concept. It is a meeting of the harp and bowl... and the God who covers us is the same one who welcomes us into His throne room, to find grace in the time of need, to find joy in His presence, and to drink from the "rivers of His pleasure". The original idea for writing on "covering" and the revelation that the Holy Spirit showed me came as I was doing a study/workbook on

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worship. It was the topic and theme of worship, or drawing near to God, that caused me to pause and consider the “bigger” and more vast subject to start with.

In the end, God desires one thing from humanity: a dwelling place. He desires a place where He can live and move and breathe among beings that He created to be like Him. We will never be His equal, by any means. But, God has ordained us to be “In His Image”. The full depth and meaning of this can really only be seen primarily in the context of covering and secondarily in the context of covenant. The desire of this God, this Creator, this Sovereign, and this All-Wise Omniscient All-Powerful Holy One is fairly simple: to form a people in whom He can move and dwell and live. Why do you think He created all of the universe to start with? It was ALL for us! Everything in creation.. all of it. All for us! Why do you think He offers covering? It’s ALL about us! Why did He “cover” Himself with flesh to approach fallen mankind and bring about eternal redemption? It’s ALL about us! He wants to DWELL and find a HABITATION in you individually and in us corporately. That’s it. That’s the story of redemption and the story of eternity in a nutshell. That is the revelation of the God Who Covers.

So are you worried about life? Worried about your family? Worried about your lost loved ones? Worried about the future? Worried about money? Worried about your career? Worried about your investments? Worried about worry?

*Don't worry.*

**God has you covered.**

--Todd McDonald

## Chapter 1

### It's 3AM America... Do You Know Where Your God Is?

But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in You; They trusted, and You delivered them.  
Psalms 22:3-4 (NKJ)

"It's 3AM America.. Do you know where your kids are?" Remember that old cliché from the 70s? For some folks in America, knowing where their child is at around 3AM in the morning might be a valid question. For others, we might ask if they even know who they are themselves. Just stand around and watch or listen to people for more than half an hour. They are not "all here" are they? Sometimes people lose track of where they are in life... and a sense of "Where am I at and where am I going?" can start to set in. The first recorded question God ever asked fallen man was, "Adam, where are you?". A lot of people today are wondering "where" God is also. It is an age long question that fallen man has asked since we left the garden. It is a largely unanswered question to many not because there is no good answer, but because we are a fallen race whose mind has been darkened to the spiritual reality of who we are and what this world is really all about. When it comes to the Creator and Sovereign of the Universe, however, there is only ONE answer. God is on His throne.

***1 King 22:19***

*Then Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left. (NKJ)"*

***Ps 11:4***

*The LORD is in His holy temple, the LORD'S throne is in heaven; his eyes behold, his eyelids test the sons of men. (NKJ)*

In fact, God hasn't and will not move off His throne. God did not move off of His throne one inch when Adam and Eve sinned, when Lucifer fell and became satan, when the judgment of the great deluge came in Noah's day, when you sin, when I sin, or when the whole world spits in His face even today. Nope. God is THE God of the universe and He sits ENTHRONED on His THRONE.

***Ps 29:10***

*The LORD sat enthroned at the Flood, and the LORD sits as King forever. (NKJ)*

Thrones are interesting pieces of furniture. On earth, they represent kingly authority and power. The one who sits on a throne is a person that exercises both the right of judgment and administration of power over his servants. The concept of thrones and kingly power didn't originate on earth by the way. The concept originates in heaven. Men on earth have understood and used this concept-- some for good and others for horrible and ungodly ends

***Ps 103:19***

*The LORD has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all. (NKJ)*

Thrones of human political power have a spiritual origin, though ever since the fall of man their source has typically not been from the Kingdom of Light. Human thrones can exercise power in the physical world, regardless of what their spiritual source may be. Consider however that earthly kings are not eternal, immutable, flawlessly righteous, holy, unendingly loving or gracious. Human forms of government and power do not exist beyond the natural realm of creation. However, take those kind of attributes and apply them to the One who sits on the throne of the Universe and you are confronted with

THE being to whom every human being had better fear... and stand in awe of. This Being threw off His kingly robes and took on the role of a servant about 2000 years ago, "COVERING" Himself with humanity and coming to this earth as a created human.<sup>1</sup>

**Phil 2:5-11**

*Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, **being in the form of God**, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, **taking the form of a bondservant**, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Wow! It boggles the mind of man to conceive such an idea. Friends, you cannot be equal with God without being God. You cannot be in the *form* of God without having the *essence* of God yourself. People who would argue about the deity of Jesus just don't get it—there is no clearer message of Scripture than the fact that Jesus of Nazareth was divine in nature. The Son of God did not LOSE His nature and equality with God. He instead took on a role that kings do not have! He took on the ROLE and FORM of a servant.

**2 Cor 8:9**

*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. (NKJ)*

Though His nature never changed, His role did. But the SAME one who sat on the throne in eternal and glorious splendor and light as God makes a statement to us now not just as God, but now as an exalted God-MAN:

**Rev 3:21**

*"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. (NKJ)*

Yes the God who became flesh, clothing and covering Himself with humanity and who overcame death, hell, and the grave... that Holy One sat down with His Father on His Father's throne as a God-Man! This isn't some science fiction story like Dune either. It's not even a Star Trek episode gone awry. This is the reality of life that is *truly* life. This is the reality of the unseen supernatural realm that is above our puny little 5-sense, three-dimensional human existence that is part and parcel of a natural creation.

So you might well ask, 'Isn't the Bible full of instances of God coming among us and leaving His throne after all?' Well, yes and no. The great Gospel message is that God DOES invade our world.. He does condescend in order to repair and restore our broken relationship with Him. There is a "God Who Became Flesh", and His name is Jesus. This God-Man said that in essence He brought the throne of God with Him when He became man—in other words, he brought the KINGDOM of God with Him in His person. According to the one who WAS and IS *the* Word, He was with God in the beginning and He was God in the beginning. When He came to earth, His essence of deity did not change, but His role changed from King to Servant. In this great mystery, this Divine-Servant represented and brought the Kingdom of God in a very unique way:

**Mark 1:14-15**

*Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and **the kingdom of God is at hand**. Repent, and believe in the gospel." (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

The Kingdom of God was no longer far away in the spiritual realms of the heavenlies.. it was now at hand! The time was fulfilled. Satan's dominion on the earth and over man was about to come to a screeching halt. A new kingdom order was being established on planet earth from that day forward. The

Kingdom of God was at hand because the King was at hand. However, just like the prophetic fulfillment of both Moses and David, Yeshua as a MAN had to also face rejection from His own people, suffering even to death, and then be exalted to the right hand of the Father. You see, the Son of God did not have to be exalted to the right hand of the Father (He was already at that place before time began or creation came into being!<sup>2</sup>). The Son of David, the Son of Man, the Seed of Jesse, the Star of Judah, the Word in the flesh: the man Jesus of Nazareth had to be exalted to the right hand of the Father because He was a MAN! No man could have ever or will ever be exalted to that position except the sinless Son of God, the one who took the role of a servant and was obedient to death, even death on a cross. When you move on from the beginning of His ministry, Jesus the Messiah clearly demonstrated that He brought and conveyed the power and the reign of the Kingdom of God wherever he went:

**Matt 12:25-28**

*But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. **But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.**" (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Surely the Kingdom of God **had** come upon those stone-cold, hard-hearted religious folks of that day. Daniel had pinpointed approximately the time of Messiah's appearing. The fact that He would be cut off and rise from the dead (not on account of His transgressions, but for the sins of others) and the fact that these events would occur before the destruction of the Temple (which occurred in 70 AD) should have been more than enough evidence in conjunction with the entire law, prophets, and writings to identify Yeshua of Nazareth as the Holy One of Israel.<sup>3</sup> The very King Himself **had** come in their midst and the religious pride and tradition of most devout Jewish leaders blinded them to the glory of God. So even when God came down and dwelt or "tabernacled" with us in the form of a lowly servant, He still "brought" His throne with Him. Jesus showed us that one primary purpose of prayer was to "establish" and "seek" that the Kingdom of God would come and be established on the earth, allowing the will of God to be done just like it is done in heaven.

**Matt 6:9-10**

*In this manner, therefore, pray: our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. (NKJ)*

The point I make with all of this is that God does not so much COME DOWN to us as much as we GO UP to Him.<sup>4</sup> That GOING UP involves an alignment... a juxtaposition of the natural realm with the reality of the supernatural realm where this awesome God inhabits eternity.<sup>5</sup> When John was going to be given the revelation of those things which were, those things which are, and even things yet to come, God did not "come down" to John. No. He brought John up to Him! He told John in essence, "Hey, your perspective is far more limited from an earthly viewpoint.. COME UP HERE, and I will *really* show you what is going to happen."

**Rev 4:1-2**

*After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "**Come up here, and I will show you things** which must take place after this." Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Positionally, Paul even says that we are seated not on this old rock called the earth, but we are seated in the heavenly places where our Lord and Savior is! Without a doubt, Jesus has entered His rest and He is now seated far above ALL principalities and powers. Since all things are under His feet, then positionally, all things are under our feet if we are sitting next to Him! What a thought.

**Eph 1:19-23**

*and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him*

*from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (NKJ)*

**Col 3:1** *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. (NKJ)*

**Eph 2:4-6** *But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and **raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, (NKJ, emphasis mine)***

However, we know that the entire process of us GOING UP to Him is a pathway that God Almighty has provided by His own grace and mercy (by grace you have been saved, as Paul would interject). No man can reach God by His own merits or works or righteousness.<sup>6</sup> No, the whole point of this book is that God has "rolled out the red carpet" so to speak in order for us to approach Him. That carpet is red because of the blood of His Son Jesus... blood that was spilled to atone and make propitiation not just for our sins, but the sins of the WHOLE world. God is indeed STILL on His throne. He has never left it and He never will. This book is about the revelation of that "red carpet", that "covering" that God has provided so that we may DRAW NEAR to Him<sup>7</sup>. It is a revelation that begins in the first book of the Bible and can be seen in its final consummation by the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon those who place faith in Jesus the Messiah. It is an aspect of God's nature that coincides with His utter holiness, His utter righteousness, and also His longing TO love and TO BE LOVED by human beings. The revelation of the God who covers us is a deep theological truth that should be foundational in any disciple's belief system and experience. In essence, God extends a call to any who will hear him: "**Don't worry... I've got you covered!**".

There are two stark facts that stand which prevent man and God from communing in the way God originally designed and created humanity<sup>8</sup>. First, God is Holy. Second, man is not holy because of sin. God's Holiness by definition separates Him from ALL created beings. Man's sinfulness by definition separates him from God. The "covering" of God in the person of Jesus shows us how this Consuming Fire burns with Holy desire to be near fallen humanity.<sup>9</sup> We have in the person of Jesus the Infinite God as a Finite Creature: man! How mind boggling! Praise to Him that He FOREVER lives and will live as our mediator and advocate... as the ONLY human who touches (or will ever touch) both the full NATURE and ESSENCE of God Himself and the NATURE and ESSENCE of man.<sup>10</sup> The holiness of God gives us our first context when we open the Scriptures to look at God's covering. It also places back in view our original idea of God's throne and the fact that it is stationary relative to human kind and human activity. Consider the following well known verse in its full context:

**Ps 22:1-23** *My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, and from the words of My groaning? O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; and in the night season, and am not silent. **But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel.** Our fathers trusted in You; they trusted, and You delivered them. They cried to You, and were delivered; they trusted in You, and were not ashamed. But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All those who see Me ridicule Me; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, "He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!" But You are He who took Me out of the womb; you made Me trust while on My mother's breasts. I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother's womb you have been My God. Be not far from Me, for trouble is near; for there is none to help. Many bulls have surrounded Me; strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me. They gape at Me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion. I am poured out like water, and all*

*My bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it has melted within Me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws; you have brought Me to the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots. But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me; O My Strength, hasten to help Me! Deliver Me from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dog. Save Me from the lion's mouth and from the horns of the wild oxen! **You have answered Me. I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise You. You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, and fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!** (NKJV, emphasis mine)*

We often hear "God inhabits the praises of His people!" What we don't often hear is the context of this statement. Some translations rightly translate the Hebrew word *yawshab*<sup>17</sup> as "enthroned". It can also mean to "inhabit". When we ponder what David said originally here, it makes more sense later on when Jesus quotes this, more than likely as He lay nailed to a wooden tree on Golgatha's hill.

Take a minute if you will and let's go back in time. Think about a time when there was no "Christianized" view of the world. Think back when the cross was yet a dim future shadow and not a past reality. Let's read this in a context of what David saw... and when he saw it, he was actually SINGING it! I am sure the recorder must have been thinking to himself, "Boy, did David have a bad night last night or what? What is all this talk about hands being pierced and bones out of joint? What is all this talk of mockers and lions surrounding him? What about all this despair?"

Remember, David was singing this as part of his daily worship. Seven times a day David paid his vow of worship to the Lord.<sup>12</sup> The songs of inspiration that came forth during these times varied in their intensity, purpose, and scope. Scribes were assigned the duty of recording these times of praise and worship within the Tabernacle of David.<sup>13</sup> The Spirit filled and David sang. Not all the songs were recorded either. The Psalms are really the "Top 100" list of the intercessory prayers and worship that filled that tent on Mount Zion a couple of thousand years ago. Yea, this song in particular is *really* weird when you think of it in the context in which it came forth.

Reread this portion of Psalm 22 again and then go forward. Read in the context of the cross, David looked into the future and saw Yeshua, bleeding and naked on a cross, gasping for breath, saying:

"Yes Father.. our Fathers *did* trust in You. Yes O Holy One.. You who delivered our Fathers in the days of old. They were never put to shame when their trust was in You. You established your Kingdom reign and authority in the very praise of your people, Israel. You delivered them from evil O Father. So I understand Father that when people look on me right now, they are going to ASSUME that I must not really have spoken for You. They will assume that because You are not delivering me from this hour and this cross that evidently you are not with me! They are going to ASSUME O Lord that because I am put to shame and because I am not delivered that I must NOT be the promised Messiah. But O God, You are the one who said 'I am Your beloved Son'.. You are the one who cast me upon the seas of humanity from birth. Even while nursing with my mother Mary, I TRUSTED You O my Father! Yes, Mary... Yes, my mother... **WOMAN! BEHOLD YOUR SON...** What am I to do O my Father? How will she survive? John, listen carefully now... **BEHOLD YOUR MOTHER!**"<sup>14</sup>

Think about this for a minute. It gets better.

"I know how this must look my Father.. You have brought me to the dust of death! I am a worm.. I am no longer even what looks like a man. O Lord... my hands and feet are pierced through. My bones have not been broken, but my strength is all but gone. OH GOD! The pain...

The agony. Father... My tongue is clinging to my mouth. I am poured out like water my God. My strength is dried up like a potsherd. I THIRST!"<sup>15</sup>

Let's go a little further.

"Father, be not FAR from Me now! I have had communion with You since I can humanly remember and from eternity past! Father there is no one left who can help me. You are my ONLY help now. What else can I do? You are the one who lead me to this very hour! O my Father, every demon of hell and satan himself seems to be gathered around me as a pack of lions devouring a prey. I hear their taunts O Lord! Be not far from me my Father! Not now O Lord! Not now O Father! Not when I need You the most! I reach out for you O Lord, but I cannot FEEL you. I cannot SEE you now my God! I cannot TOUCH you. I cannot HEAR you! Where are you my Father.. where are you my Counselor? **ELOI! ELOI! LAMA SABACHTHANI?**<sup>16</sup> [Or as we would say in English, My God! My God! WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?] Hasten to me My God! Deliver me O LORD from the sword and from these dogs who say that You are not here to help me. I know what it must look like O Father to them. I know it must look as though You have rejected me! I know it must look as though the evil one has won! I know they even think they are doing you a service O God by crucifying me! **FATHER, FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO...**"<sup>17</sup>

Keep going.

"I know why O Father... I know why I am here. Yes that's right. For all who look to the Son will escape judgment... just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so all who look to me lifted up on this pole will be saved! Friend, **ASSUREDLY, I SAY TO YOU, TODAY YOU WILL BE WITH ME IN PARADISE.**<sup>18</sup> I know where I have come from O LORD.. I know to whom I am going my Father. I know that if you deliver me NOW, there is no deliverance for them LATER. I know that if you rescue me, there is no rescue for them. I know that if you do not bruise me now, they will have to be bruised for iniquity's sake later! I know that their sin would bring them to the dust of death! I understand O Lord! It has pleased you to bruise me Father! It has pleased you to lay on me the iniquity of them all! So, in spite of my human feelings and emotions. In spite of my human thoughts. This I KNOW.. that I will yet praise you my Father. I will yet speak of your deliverance and answer. I will yet declare your greatness and praise. **FATHER, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT. IT IS FINISHED!**"<sup>19</sup>

Pretty awesome thought isn't it? David not only got to see the picture of the crucifixion... he also saw the resurrection of Jesus in this prophetic song! What was the Father's vindication of His Son? What was the ONLY way the Father said that He would vindicate His Son? As Paul put it, Yeshua was emphatically declared to be the Son of God with power by His **resurrection from the dead**<sup>20</sup>. Yes, the empty tomb speaks far louder than any skeptic can yell. The empty tomb WAS God's answer. Notice David continues with "YOU HAVE ANSWERED ME!" Yes, God showed His ultimate approval, trust, and exaltation of Jesus of Nazareth by bruising Him brutally for the sins of all mankind on a Roman cross and then raising Him from the dead three days later. That was God's answer. That was God's reply—not deliverance FROM death, but victory OVER death. It was not deliverance FOR Him, but deliverance FOR you and I.

Then David saw an interesting picture of the resurrected Jesus:

"Listen O my people... all of you who fear the Lord. I WILL PRAISE my GOD in YOUR MIDST. My PRAISE is going to come forth IN YOU. The words of laudation and praise and thanksgiving I have for my Father... those words I will PUT in your mouth. I will declare Your name O Father to my brethren.. even while they assemble. Even as you gather children, my God will sing over you with rejoicing. I WILL DECLARE Your name to my brothers. I WILL DECLARE all that You are

and all of Your majesty. You are my shield... You have answered me LORD. You have given me the name which is above all names. When men see me, they will WORSHIP you. When men believe in me, they BELIEVE in you who sent me. Blessed be your name O God!"

This is THE context for which we flippantly throw around the words "God dwells in the praises of His people." Jesus tied the deliverance and presence of God with the people of Israel to their praises. Jesus also tied His own deliverance and justification to the fact that though it appeared God had abandoned Him on the cross, Messiah would YET praise Him and God would YET provide absolute proof of His justification.

David saw an interesting aspect of the character of God here. God is HOLY. David knew and saw that. But David also saw that God was ENTHRONED (*yawshab<sup>17</sup>*) in the praises (or *tehillah*) of Israel. The Holy, Holy, Holy God who inhabits eternity—that God will establish a resting place, a dwelling, an abiding presence in the atmosphere of praise. Heaven is already this way. To the degree that earth aligns itself with this heavenly principle, the Kingdom of God will be transfixed and aligned on earth as it is in heaven. Praise is THE natural environment of heaven continually. It isn't what goes on for 30 minutes 2 or 3 times a week. It is 24-hour, day and night... though it is ONLY day and night because we live in a temporal existence subdivided by that time unit.

Although God is everywhere present (omnipresent), there is a distinct manifestation of His rule, which enters the environment of praise (His manifest presence). The manifest presence of God is always associated with the Kingdom of God. Praise (honest and sincere) will bring the presence of God. His presence will live or abide (take up residence) in our lives. God does not just merely *visit* us when we praise Him, but His presence *ABIDES* with us so that we can partner with Him in a growing relationship.

Three key concepts are tied together in Psalm 22: praise, trust, and deliverance. If you place trust in God, you cannot help but to praise Him. God responds and answers those who patiently wait and trust in Him. Praise cannot be helped when we place our trust in God and He in turn brings our deliverance. Deliverance from hopelessness, sin, depravity, bitterness, unforgiveness, loneliness, depression, addiction, poverty, boredom, fear... you name it, God CAN and WILL deliver those who put abiding trust in Him and who PRAISE Him with all of their heart, soul, and strength.

God is on His throne. Yes indeed. But, God *will* align His throne where He finds agreement *with* His throne! This agreement is best seen in the context of worship, whether as a lifestyle or as an event that a corporate body participates in. Praise releases God's glory and it can bring the worshiper an actualized response of His kingly reign. God's enthroned responses through the Holy Spirit can take many forms: prophecy, healing, miracles, affirmation to individual hearts, a call to reverential silence and awe, conviction of sin, and salvation of sinners. As Jack Hayford is well known for saying, "The presence of God's kingdom power is directly related to the practice of God's praise."<sup>21</sup>

The idea of "enthronement" is that when God's people exalt His name, He is ready to manifest His kingdom's power in the way most appropriate to the situation, as His rule is invited to invade our setting. In a very real way, praise prepares a specific and present place for God among His people. Some choose the term "establish His throne" to describe the "enthroning" of God in our midst by our worshipful welcome. As Charles Green so eloquently states<sup>22</sup>, worship is an entry point for His kingdom to come and to enter, that His "will be done" in human circumstances. We do not manipulate God, but align ourselves with this great kingdom truth: His is the power and ours is the privilege (and responsibility) to welcome Him into our world—our private, present world or the circumstances of our society.<sup>23</sup>

Why does praise bring the presence of God?? Or more correctly, why is praise the vehicle to God's presence? Praise can be described as setting up a "covering" or a "tent" with which we can agree with God. Worship, because of its association with the presence of God, is closely linked to "covering", a concept which is seen throughout the entire course of Scripture and the history of God's dealing with

man. To understand worship fully, we need to understand God's provision of "covering". This idea is best conveyed by looking at a few principles that God has demonstrated about His presence with His people throughout the history of Scripture.

Could it be that one of the main reasons believers do not progress further in their experiential knowledge of God or see a continual and growing degree of His presence in their lives is a lack of experience in true worship? A serious lack of true teaching on the nature and purpose of worship has existed in the Body of Christ historically, but the Holy Spirit has begun to bring light and focus back to the two "spiritual wings" of the church: praise and intercession. Praise and worship is not an area of renewed emphasis... it is a foundational truth that will be seen in the Bride who awaits her coming Bridegroom in this generation! One of the main reasons that I write an entire book on the concept of "covering" is because it provides a Scriptural basis to a topic that most people see as nothing more than an "emotional release" for "emotional" kind of Christians. Uninhibited and unreserved worship is not for "emotional" kind of people... true worship will always cover the spectrum of human expression and emotion and intellect. Worship at its core is more tied to the choice of the will than it is to the act of the emotion or the thoughts of the intellect. Worship is also tied to God's ultimate revelation of "covering"... but "covering" is not limited only to the concept of corporate or private worship.

Personally, learning how to worship God without reserve or fear of man has been an essential ingredient to my spiritual deliverance over the years from all sorts of addictive personality traits and ultimately to experiencing more of the REAL presence of God on a day-to-day presence. Apart from the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the subsequent release of spiritual language, worship I can say for myself has been THE key element of my spiritual growth. Why? Well, we were MADE to worship God.. that's why. If you are not a true worshipper in body, soul, and spirit, then you are missing out on the core reason that you were created!

I gave a definition of "covering" in my preface, but let me re-iterate it again. Here is I believe a very simplistic yet workable one:

**COVERING is an invitation to us from God to PURSUE Him.**

The word *covering* itself should invoke images of several things in your mind, and in fact does deal with several concepts seen throughout Scripture:

- ❑ **Clothing (a place of provision)**
- ❑ **Shelter (a place of refuge and concealment)**
- ❑ **Dwelling place/tent (a place of meeting or fellowship)**
- ❑ **Shadow or overshadowing (a place of power)**
- ❑ **Shield (a place of strength and protection)**

Covering can also be defined simply as "something that covers so as to **protect** or **conceal**." One of the first things we will see as we journey through the Bible to see God's covering revealed is this simple fact:

**COVERING is required for man and provided by God.**

We are unholy, unworthy, and unable to enter the presence of Almighty God, who is holy, righteous, just, and worthy. 'Covering' conveys the idea that we are "**protected**" from the holiness of God in one sense (we could not stand in His pure presence and see Him as He truly is..) 'Covering' expresses the idea that we are "**protected**" by the garments that God provides for us. We are "**shielded**" by God's power from our enemies. We are "**clothed**" with His righteousness, and we are "encamped" by His presence in our lives (as a tent, a dwelling place).



and carried out without question.

Hell is where God's will is rejected  
and His presence is not found.

Agreement is ONENESS in PURPOSE.

The degree you come into agreement with  
His purposes is the degree you can  
experience the kingdom of heaven on earth.

DON'T AGREE with the enemy..  
otherwise, HELL will rule your thoughts.

*Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Align us with your purposes, your thoughts, your will, your love, your faith, your hope, and your passion O God. Bring us to absolute oneness in purpose with you... just as Jesus has prayed for us. Open our eyes to see the depth of your love for us and how you have covered us.. covering all of our weaknesses and sins, protecting us from you Holy gaze, and concealing our inadequacies. All so we may approach You. All so we may commune with You. All so we may KNOW you, from the least to the greatest. We draw near to you Father.. we repent of mindsets not from your heart... we repent of our darkened thoughts about you. Draw near to us O God.. we draw near to you. Amen.*

## Chapter 2

### Where Is the LORD God of Elijah?

My tears have been my food day and night, while they continually say to me, "Where is your God?"  
Ps 42:3 (NKJ)

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The Westernized, intellectualized, rationalized Church of the new millenium has been wondering (or in some cases it just doesn't care) why the God of glory that is revealed in the Bible can only be seen in brief glimpses here and there. If we are the temple of the living God, why doesn't that glory manifest itself in a more lasting and recognizable way? Didn't the great apostle to the Gentiles even tell the Gentiles that they could expect even more glory than even that which was revealed in the days of Moses?

**2 Cor 3:7-11**

*But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, **how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious?** For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of righteousness exceeds much more in glory. For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

It is our right as New Covenant believers in Messiah, whether Gentile or Jew, to expect that this greater glory is ours to experience. Many in the church believe that we should not expect to see God the same way the people of the Bible saw Him. Many would say that the Bible is not a pattern of how God intervenes and comes in the midst of *our* day to day lives. Many others are wondering, as they should be, "Where is the God of the Bible?". Some, if not most, have already forfeited the "experience" of the God of the Bible and satisfied themselves with "doctrines about" the God of the Bible instead. We can (and should) ask just like Elisha did, "Where is the LORD God of Elijah?".

In asking this question, "Where is the LORD God of Elijah?", we get a great overview of what "covering" is all about. You may or may not get visual images when I say the word "covering". Just giving examples of covering tends to fire off the right mental processes however. In that context, let's consider a covering of sorts: **Elijah's mantle**. This mantle was a physical symbol of something profoundly real in the spiritual sense. It is a good start for us when we are attempting to get a grasp on this thing I am calling the "COVERING" of God. Covering is a big enough subject as it is. **More than being information about a spiritual topic, the COVERING of God needs to be something that you and I pursue and walk in.** God offers it certainly. But if we do not PURSUE it, we will never realize the benefits for which it is offered. God's COVERING is a gift to man so that we may "Boldly approach the throne of grace to find help in our time of need". It is a gift to man because it is the ONLY way by which sinful humans can be transformed and changed and actually ENJOY and COMMUNE with the God who created them.

So what is the **mantle** or **covering** of Elijah really all about? More than anything, and for more than any other reason that I write this book, that mantle represented **spiritual authority**. I have a personal interest in pursuing spiritual authority with God—especially by means of worship and divine order that God wants to be released in our day. The Lord is returning for I believe a church that has recognized what it means to have spiritual authority with God. The Bride of Christ was fashioned and framed by the

Father to be a suitable helper and partner for His Son. He is calling that Bride to “take the keys” of the kingdom and begin to reign spiritually with Him in heavenly places. I am not talking about winning elections, changing laws, and getting Christian legislation passed. Please understand that when I say “spiritual reign” I mean SPIRITUALLY reign. It would be no surprise to me that when the Church rises up to be the partnering Bride her Groom is calling her to be, then political offices will change on the earth. More than that, a Bride on the earth that is functioning in true partnership with her Bridegroom King will do what Paul said we would do:

*Eph 3:10 To the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, (NKJ)*

When we make known the manifold wisdom of God to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, those powers can and will be dis-lodged. It was BY THE CHURCH, the Bride, that God intended for this wisdom to be made known. Not angels. Not glorified saints. Not tribulation-believers. Paul wrote this to the CHURCH roughly 2000 years ago. That is what we are pursuing... spiritual authority with God and spiritual authority with our Bridegroom as His Bride. This authority is to be primarily pursued through intercessory worship—but that is for later discussion.

The story of Elijah and Elisha provides an interesting framework for us to start with as we pursue spiritual covering. Before I begin to explore the Scriptural revelation of covering from Genesis onward, I want to give you a paradigm of sorts to follow as you pursue this truth and find the depth of its meaning in your own spiritual journey. Elijah was a great and powerful prophet of the living God. Israel KNEW that there was a prophet of God in Israel in his day. Elijah, like us, is a great example of how we can ascend to the heights of spiritual victory in one day and the very next day be found cowering in fear under demonically inspired depression and self-centeredness. James the brother of our Lord (also known by his *real* name Jacob) uses Elijah as an example of how God will perform supernatural wonders and heal the sick. God does this through us not because of our greatness but simply because we BELIEVE and have FAITH that God is good and that our prayers are heard before His throne.<sup>1</sup> Elijah was a man, JUST LIKE US. Unstable and flaky as a leaf being blown by the wind... but God used Him mightily for His purposes in the earth. That is why the story of Elisha's pursuit of that MANTLE or COVERING that was upon Elijah is a good place for you and I to start in our pursuit of the COVERING of God. All Elijah did for God he did out of that place of COVERING.. that mantle of power and alignment with the purposes of God that was upon his life. Elijah, after he came out of his cave of fear and despair from the threats of Jezebel, threw his mantle over Elisha as a sign that Elisha would be his successor.

*1 King 19:19-21 So he departed from there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he was with the twelfth. **Then Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle on him.** And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you?" So Elisha turned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them and boiled their flesh, using the oxen's equipment, and gave it to the people, and they ate. **Then he arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

If you are born-again, Jesus has “thrown his mantle over you” and you have responded by becoming His servant. That is what discipleship and following Jesus as Lord and Savior is all about. Elijah was INVITING Elisha to pursue him as his pupil and successor. So, notice first that this MANTLE or COVERING served as an INVITATION to deeper, bigger, and better things—not to mention a deepened relationship and understanding of Elijah himself. The same applies with our Lord and us. As I said, God's COVERING is an invitation to us from Him to pursue Him.. it represents the lengths that God will go to in order to have relationship with a bunch of folks that are rebellious and for the most part don't want anything to do with Him!

So now that we know that Elisha was “called” and “invited” to be Elijah’s successor, take a look with me at how this passing of the torch actually occurred.

**II Ki 2:1-15**

*And it came to pass, when the LORD was about to take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha **from Gilgal**. Then Elijah said to Elisha, “Stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on **to Bethel**.” But Elisha said, “As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!” So they went down to Bethel. Now the sons of the prophets who were at Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, “Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?” And he said, “Yes, I know; keep silent!” Then Elijah said to him, “Elisha, stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to Jericho.” But he said, “As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!” So they came **to Jericho**. Now the sons of the prophets who were at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?” So he answered, “Yes, I know; keep silent!” Then Elijah said to him, “Stay here, please, for the LORD has sent me on to the Jordan.” But he said, “As the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you!” **So the two of them went on**. And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood facing them **at a distance**, while the two of them **stood by the Jordan**. Now Elijah took his mantle, rolled it up, and struck the water; and it was divided this way and that, so that the two of them crossed over on dry ground. And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?” Elisha said, “**Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me**.” So he said, “**You have asked a hard thing**. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so.” Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried out, “My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!” So he saw him no more. And he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into two pieces. **He also took up the mantle of Elijah** that had fallen from him, and went back and stood by the bank of the Jordan. Then he took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, and said, “**Where is the LORD God of Elijah?**” And when he also had struck the water, it was divided this way and that; and Elisha crossed over. Now when the sons of the prophets who were from Jericho saw him, they said, “The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha.” And they came to meet him, and bowed to the ground before him. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Note here that the LORD God of Elijah was *with* Elisha *because* of the “mantle” or “covering” that had been passed on to Elisha *from* Elijah. In fact, Elisha wanted a double portion of this spiritual authority. A double portion literally means “two mouth fulls”.<sup>2</sup> He was in essence saying, “Hey, if you’re going to give it to me, I want to get a second helping”. This terminology most likely refers to the law respecting the firstborn, who had a *double portion* of the property of his father<sup>3</sup>. As Elisha may have considered himself the first-born of Elijah, so he requested a double portion of his spiritual inheritance.<sup>4</sup> This should be the cry of our heart because even our Lord promised as much for those who would believe in Him.

**John 14:12**

*“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and **greater works than these he will do**, because I go to My Father.” (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Elijah was *going* to the Father, Jesus was *returning* to the Father. Just as Elijah had a mantle of the Holy Spirit’s power upon Him, so did Jesus have unlimited access to the power of the Holy Spirit operating upon Him. Instead of His disciples asking Him for greater works, Jesus came right out and promised that the “mantle” that was upon Him WOULD BE transferred to those who believe! Not only would those believers do “equivalent” works, but they would do “greater” works—all by the power of the same Holy Spirit that anointed Jesus’ life and ministry. Sounds like “doubling” was being offered by Messiah Himself to those who would place faith and trust in Him. Not only that, Jesus is the firstborn of the family of God

and He has been given FULL rights to administrate His Father's inheritance UNTO US! Think about it! Jesus shared our humanity so that he could divy up the riches of His Father's household (the very Spirit of God Himself) among us, His brothers.

**Rom 8:29** *For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. (NKJ)*

**Col 1:18** *And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. (NKJ)*

**Heb 9:15** *And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. (NKJ)*

**Eph 1:18** *the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, (NKJ)*

He became POOR so that we could become RICH. He is the reason that we are co-heirs of the promises of God and partakers of God's divine nature<sup>5</sup>. Jesus was going to take the double portion of the inheritance as the first-born among the dead and among many brethren ... and he promised that he would "divy" out that inheritance so that those who believed in Him would do His works and GREATER works.

This "mantle" or "covering" that both Elijah and Jesus carried represented an alignment of sorts. It was not so much that God came down to Elijah. No, it was really that Elijah WENT UP to God and aligned Himself with WHERE GOD WAS. Elijah so aligned Himself with the throne of God that the will and purposes of God would come forth from Elijah just by his spoken word! Jesus, who unlike Elijah, was sinless, also aligned Himself COMPLETELY with the will of His Father. Even as a human who was the Son of Man, Jesus did not come to do His will as a human. He came in the form of a servant to do the will of His Father, to speak the words of His Father, and to work the works of His Father.

**John 4:34** *Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work." (NKJ)*

**John 5:30** *"I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me." (NKJ)*

**John 8:38** *"I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father." (NKJ)*

**John 7:16** *Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me." (NKJ)*

When we look at the whirlwind trip that Elijah took Elisha on, we can see that "alignment" and obtaining the "covering" which God provides requires a SEEKING after and PURSUING on our part. That's right. It is just like salvation. No one gets saved who does not want to be saved, even though God wills that EVERYONE would be saved<sup>6</sup>. Likewise, no one can get saved unless God provides the grace and wooing for the decision to be made. It's that simple. In the same manner, no one can take advantage of the "covering" that God offers unless they pursue and approach God by His provided "covering"! One of the most common mistakes that we all make is trying to approach God on terms other than those the Holy Spirit would stipulate. Prayer follows a similar paradigm as well. Even when it comes to the spoken prophetic word of God, human beings who are in alignment with God's will are expected to participate in seeing God's purposes brought into reality on this earth<sup>7</sup>. We will see this theme developed extensively in the Hebrew scriptures and on further into the New Testament. Notice that Elijah pursued Elisha from

Gilgal to Bethel, from Bethel to Jericho, and from Jericho to the Jordan. We can see this as sort of a “phased approach” to walking in the covering of God. It is indeed a journey, and the journey that Elisha went on can be symbolic of our own journey to find and be “found in” the Covering of God.

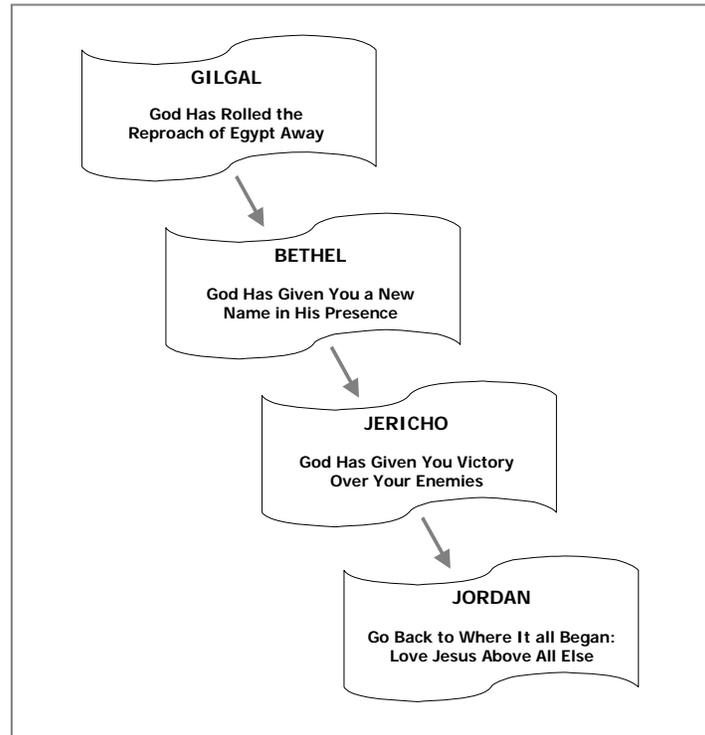
Gilgal is the place of remembrance where God has done great works in our lives... it is a place of thanksgiving and praise, laudation and acclaim to God. It is the place where God has “brought us through” to victory, to walk in the promise land of His fulfilled will to us. Gilgal was the place of the first encampment of the children of Israel after crossing the Jordan and served as a place where remembrance would be made.

**Josh 4:19-24**

*Now the people came up from the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they camped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. **And those twelve stones which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal.** Then he spoke to the children of Israel, saying: "When your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, 'What are these stones?' then you shall let your children know, saying, 'Israel crossed over this Jordan on dry land'; for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan before you until you had crossed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which He dried up before us until we had crossed over, that all the peoples of the earth may know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever." (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Josh 5:9**

*Then the LORD said to Joshua, "This day **I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.**" Therefore the name of the place is called Gilgal to this day. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*



**Gilgal** represents a starting place in pursuing the “covering” of God. It represents a place where God has taken away the reproach of your entire former life apart from God. The life you once used to live in carnality, selfishness, malice, hatred, envy, bitterness, jealousy, lust, bigotry, unforgiveness, callousness, and coldness to God. The reproach of who you once were has been “swallowed” just as those Egyptian

soldiers were swallowed as they pursued the fleeing Israelites. Egypt is representative of the land of slavery.. where you were once bound by sin and helpless to free yourself. It is the land where the "king of Egypt" was your master.. and not God. When your old life is completely swallowed, there is no longer any need for shame or despair. In fact, it forms one major theme of covering that will be developed later on. Paul says that our lives are "hidden" or "covered" with God in Christ. Paul was always fond of referring to who we once were in the PAST tense and referring to it as the OLD self.

*Col 3:3* For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (NKJ)

*Eph 2:13* But now in Christ Jesus you **who once were far off** have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (NKJ, emphasis mine)

*Col 1:21* And you, **who once were alienated and enemies in your mind** by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled (NKJ, emphasis mine)

*1 Pet 2:10* **who once were not a people** but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. (NKJ, emphasis mine)

*1 Cor 6:11* And such **were some of you**. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. (NKJ, emphasis mine)

Many of us lived horrible lives of supposed "freedom" before we met the Lord. Even people who lived a "good" life may have avoided some pain and consequences in life, but their hearts are just as black and sin laden as any murderer, child molester, or sexual pervert. You don't have to kill any one to be greedy, vengeful, mean, hard-hearted, wicked, or lustful. All you need is an unregenerate spirit. All you need is man apart from the Spirit of God and left to his own carnal appetites. Whether the spectrum of corruption is large or small, the need to have the reproach of our life apart from God rolled away is the same.

*2 Cor 5:17* Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Being "IN" Christ is itself a revelation of covering. God has covered our former lives completely in Christ. This is where the original idea of "covering" is found in Scripture, as we will see in the next chapter. God's first redemptive act was to "cover" Adam and Eve. This is our starting place in God.

### **Gilgal = "God Has Rolled the Reproach of Egypt Away"**

We move in the covering of God from Gilgal to Bethel, or "God Has Given You a New Name in His Presence". Many significant things happened at Bethel in the Bible. Abraham made an altar to God and Jacob had visitations with the Almighty.

*Gen 28:15-22* "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you." Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it." And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it. **Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel;** but the name of that city had been Luz previously. Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, so that I come back to my father's house in peace, **then the LORD shall be my God. And this stone which I have**

*set as a pillar shall be **God's house**, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You." (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Gen 32:27-30**

*So He said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." **And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."** Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell me Your name, I pray." And He said, "Why is it that you ask about My name?" And He blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Gen 35:7-15**

*And he built an altar there and called the place **El Bethel**, because there God appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother.... Then God appeared to Jacob again, when he came from Padan Aram, and blessed him. And God said to him, "**Your name is Jacob; your name shall not be called Jacob anymore, but Israel shall be your name.**" **So He called his name Israel.** Also God said to him: "I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body. The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants after you I give this land." Then God went up from him in the place where He talked with him. So Jacob set up a pillar in the place where He talked with him, a pillar of stone; and he poured a drink offering on it, and he poured oil on it. **And Jacob called the name of the place where God spoke with him, Bethel.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Bethel** represents another facet of our pursuit in seeking the covering of God. Bethel is known as the "House of God". The New Testament clearly gives the revelation that WE, the church, are the house of God. This is also one of the final installments we see in the progressive revelation of God's "covering" in Scripture.

**1 Tim 3:15**

*... I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in **the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Paul NEVER refers to a building or sect when He speaks of the "church" in the New Testament. The "church" is the group of people in whom God DWELLS individually and collectively. It is within this facet of God's covering that we move from not only having our reproach taken away at Gilgal, but we move on to becoming a member of God's house, a member of His family, and being given a "new name". It was at Bethel that Jacob built a house for God, but it was at Bethel that Jacob became Israel also. Remembrance of our OLD self is not only rolled away or covered... rather, God also gives us a NEW and FRESH start as well. It is one thing to take a homeless person off of the street, bathe him, feed him, shave him, and give him a hot meal. It is quite another thing to do all of that and then make that person a member of your own family, provide them with resources to get back on their feet, and then make sure they get a job and become productive members of society again. God does that to us all when we come to Him by faith in His Son Jesus. The prodigal son was not only received back, but he was given his Father's authority and dignity as well.<sup>8</sup>

At Bethel, we find that God comes to make us part of His household and members of His family. Paul says that the church is the PILLAR and GROUND of truth... that same pillar that Jacob slept on became the same pillar he poured oil on and dedicated to God to be His house. God says that He wants to make us "PILLARS" in His House and give us a new name, just like Jacob!

**Rev 3:12**

*"He who overcomes, **I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God**, and he shall go out no more. And **I will write on him the name of My God** and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. **And I will write on him My new name.** (NKJ, emphasis)*

Many people miss the clear reference to Jacob when Jesus speaks this to His church in the book of Revelation. Jacob eventually “went out no more”, continually running from God and being unstable in all of his ways. God turned Him from being Jacob (the supplanter) to being Israel (he who struggled with God and prevailed). God gave Jacob this name after wrestling with Him at Penial, but it wasn’t until Bethel, the place of God’s house where God’s presence and the gateway to heaven itself was found, that God finally CALLED Jacob by his new name, Israel. For you and I as believers in Jesus, we will find all that we need for life, godliness, happiness and satisfaction is found as members of God’s household in His PRESENCE.. as those who have been given new names in Jesus the Messiah. This is all part of God’s plan of “covering” for us.

**1 Chr 4:9-10**

*Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, "Because I bore him in pain." And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, "Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!" So God granted him what he requested. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Just like Jabez, we can call on God and ask God for a new name—for a name that carries blessing instead of remembrance of pain! A name that will cause our territory to be enlarged and that would bring the “hand of God” to be with us. It is in the presence of God that we are transformed and made new. It is in the “Household of God” that we are given new names and dignity as members of His family. This is the essence of Bethel and the second facet of covering we see in our pursuit of God.

### **Bethel = “God Has Given You a New Name In His Presence”**

After moving from Gilgal to Bethel, Elisha followed Elijah to Jericho. It is in **Jericho** that we see clearly a place where God fights for us and on our behalf. God is our defense and He is our offense!

**Josh 5:13-15**

*And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, "Are You for us or for our adversaries?" So He said, "No, but as Commander of the army of the LORD I have now come." And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?" Then the Commander of the LORD'S army said to Joshua, "Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy." And Joshua did so. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

I love that question. “Are you for us or for them?... NO” Uh, excuse me, but was that an answer? The LORD did not answer Joshua because Joshua was asking the wrong question. As we develop the concept of covering throughout the course of this book, this is a theme that I stress very greatly. It is not so much of whether God is for us.. it is whether we are for God and whether we are aligned with Him. The Captain of the Hosts was there not to take sides but to take over. He was not just another force that Joshua the military leader needed to figure into his battle plans. No... the Captain of the Host was there as the ONE who would establish the will of God and overturn Jericho. Joshua just needed to bow head low and listen as to what his role and the role of the nation would be in seeing this victory achieved. The Lord works and fights for us not to make us look good! He fights to establish His covenant of love and promise with those who trust in Him!

**Josh 6:1-5**

*Now Jericho was securely shut up because of the children of Israel; none went out, and none came in. And the LORD said to Joshua: "See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor. You shall march around the city, all you men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days. And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. **It***

*shall come to pass, when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him." (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Jericho was TIGHTLY shut up and also, as it seemed, impenetrable. But the LORD of Hosts told Joshua, "SEE!". This is yet another aspect to pursuing and embracing the covering that God provides and offers each of us. Only FAITH can SEE God. Only the PURE IN HEART can SEE God. But IF YOU CAN SEE IT, YOU CAN DO IT. That is how God's power works. If God gives you a vision for something that He will accomplish in your life, then you CAN do it and achieve it! We can't come up with our own wild dreams and expect the same results however. We must SEE what God tells us He is going to do and then obediently follow His directions in order to SEE it come to pass. "IT SHALL COME TO PASS" were the words spoken by the Angel of the Lord to Joshua. "See, Jericho has been given (past tense) into your hands Joshua.."

Salvation and the "covering" of God works the same way, and we must pursue His covering the same way Elisha pursued the mantle of Elijah. Moving from having our reproaches rolled away, being placed into God's family, and given a new name, we must move on into the victory that God promises each of us. This is part of what His covering provides as well.

**1 Cor 15:56-58**      *The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But **thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.** Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

God has ordained for no area of defeat in your life or mine. No area of temptation or stronghold of the enemy is too big or powerful. When your former nature has a "strong hold" on you emotionally or intellectually, God has ordained that it must be overcome in time. Nothing and no "thing" will have dominion over you. That is the promise of God for those who pursue Him and walk in His covering.

**Rom 6:11-14**      *Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For **sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

The victory of God only comes by the grace of God working in our lives. The place where God fights for us and defeats our foes is the place where God's grace becomes more than just a theological concept and actually becomes experiential reality. Victory was declared, just as it was for Joshua, on the cross of Jesus. It will be achieved as we allow the Captain of the Host of Heaven to 'take over' our lives. It worked the same for a guy named Zerubbabel too.

**Zech 4:1-10**      *Now the angel who talked with me came back and wakened me, as a man who is wakened out of his sleep. And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I said, "I am looking, and there is a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, and on the stand seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. "Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left." So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, "What are these, my lord?" Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: **Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts. Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he***

*shall bring forth the capstone with shouts of "Grace, grace to it!" " Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying: "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands shall also finish it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth." (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Zerubbabel was facing severe opposition in the re-building of the temple. They were an exiled people returning to a desolated capital trying to find some semblance of God's presence and purpose for Israel once again. They worked very hard just to be allowed to go back with a remnant and rebuild the temple. Zerubbabel I am sure began to doubt at some point whether it was his idea or God's idea. Big projects always have to start somewhere, and the end of a matter is ALWAYS better than the beginning. He and all the Jews in Jerusalem faced a lot of discouragement, were given numerous reasons to quit, and were troubled from every side.

**Ezra 4:1-5**

*Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the descendants of the captivity were **building the temple of the LORD God of Israel**, they came to Zerubbabel and the heads of the fathers' houses, and said to them, "Let us build with you, for we seek your God as you do; and we have sacrificed to Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here." But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the heads of the fathers' houses of Israel said to them, "You may do nothing with us to build a house for our God; but we alone will build to the LORD God of Israel, as King Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us." **Then the people of the land tried to discourage the people of Judah. They troubled them in building, and hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.** (NKJ)*

Friends you might as well realize that when God begins to build His temple WITHIN you, the "people of the land" are going to discourage you, trouble you, and frustrate you. You WILL face opposition spiritually and otherwise to every major work that God does in your life. Zerubbabel felt that opposition. It even made the work stop for a while. When God's work in our life seems to come to a screeching halt, we cower in fear and wonder "Are you still there God? Do you still love me? Do you see all this I'm going through?"

**Ezra 4:23-24**

*Now when the copy of King Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum, Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem against the Jews, and **by force of arms made them cease.** Thus **the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem ceased, and it was discontinued until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.** (NKJ)*

The devil is going to issue "Cease and Desist" orders against you when God begins to re-build His temple within you. Zerubbabel was probably discouraged. In fact, we are going to be discouraged at times in our walk with the Lord. But ONE word from God changed discouragement into continued resolve and spiritual fortitude. Part of the "covering" of God that looks for God to fight on our behalf comes with the RHEMA of God in our times of despair.

**Ezra 5:1-2**

*Then the prophet Haggai and **Zechariah** the son of Iddo, prophets, **prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel**, who was over them. So **Zerubbabel** the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak **rose up and began to build the house of God which is in Jerusalem**; and the prophets of God were with them, helping them. (NKJ)*

The famous "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit" verse was spoken to a group of people unsure of whether God was going to "finish" His plan to re-build the temple. In fact, the words "GRACE,

GRACE" were going to be used to TEAR DOWN every mountain and obstacle that stood in the way of God's will being accomplished. This is the message of Jericho. It is the message to every believer in Jesus. It is part of God's covering. Every obstacle we face, God's grace is ABLE to overcome it. Every thing that turns us aside, God can bring us back. Every thing that hinders our growth, God's grace can bring us back. Every reason to find despair and hopelessness that we will ever reach God's glory is answered by the TRUTH that God will finish His work in us.

**2 Cor 3:5-6** *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but **our sufficiency is from God**, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. (NKJ)*

**2 Cor 12:9** *And He said to me, "**My grace is sufficient for you**, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. (NKJ)*

**Phil 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**; (NKJ)*

**Heb 12:1-2** *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith**, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (NKJ)*

Jericho is not only a place where God fights for us, it is more importantly the place where "God Has Given you Victory Over Your Enemies". As we pursue the "covering" of God, we will move through this place as well. Remember, it is on **the road to** Jericho that we will encounter opportunities to show God's love.<sup>9</sup> In the midst of trial, opposition, persecution, and finding people in need, we as the people of God MUST love our neighbor and thereby show God's love to a lost and devil-controlled world. It is ON OUR WAY to VICTORY at JERICHO that love must be shown. This is the essence of Jericho and the third truth seen concerning our pursuit of the covering that God offers.

### Jericho = "God Has Given You Victory Over Your Enemies"

From Jericho we can see the final truth about covering as we arrive with Elisha and Elijah at the Jordan. The Jordan evokes several images: the Israelites crossed the Jordan to enter the promised land, with a miraculous display of God's power like that seen at the Red Sea<sup>10</sup>; Naaman the leper was cleansed of leprosy by washing in the Jordan under the direction of Elisha<sup>11</sup>; John the Baptist washed people in the waters of repentance in the Jordan<sup>12</sup>; Jesus was baptized by both John and the Holy Spirit at the Jordan<sup>13</sup>.

It was hard to figure out exactly what the Jordan represented here... the other places have such great clues about them. I was then reminded of what the Jordan signified to the Israelites. The crossing of the Jordan represented the final consummation of God's promise to bring Israel "out" and then to bring them "in". The wilderness was that place somewhere in between the two. The promised land in many ways represents the "spiritual" walk with God for the believer, versus the "carnal" or "fleshly" walk found in the wilderness. Egypt represented the life apart from God. So when we come to the Jordan we are looking at the dividing line between the life of the spiritual man, filled and led by the Spirit of God, and the natural man, still wandering in the soulish realm of feelings and intellect. Jordan is where we *begin* to walk in all that God has promised and provided. It is our starting point in pursuing the fullness of the life that God has to offer. The significance in terms of pursuing the covering of God is this: some times in our pursuit of the "things" of God we need to return to where we began, to our starting point. There is no other place to start with God than to know two things for certain: 1) **God loves you**, and 2) **you**

**love God.**<sup>14</sup> With the fact of these two truths, you can do ANYTHING in God and never lose zeal, fervor, or favor. The most theologically correct and foundationally solid church of the New Testament was probably Ephesus. Paul's letter to Ephesus contains some of the highest and lofty words of divine truth and orthodoxy ever written. Consider, though, what the Chief Shepherd had to say to Ephesus in the revelation given to John:

**Rev 2:1-5**

*To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: "I know **your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil.** And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary. Nevertheless I have this against you, that **you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works,** or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place-- unless you repent." (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Looking at Ephesus from the perspective of the modern church, we would say that it was "UP THERE". In fact, it would probably appear on some list as one of the top 10 churches in America. Their works and labor had been known even in the heavenly realms. They did not bear with those who were evil, those people who practice such things as abortion, homosexuality, fornication, witchcraft, lust, adultery, drunkenness, pharmakeia (drug use), or even lying under oath. No, they were perfect in terms of how humans measure spirituality. But Jesus said that they had LEFT their FIRST love. Their FIRST WORKS were evidently focused more on LOVING JESUS than on working FOR JESUS. This is what I feel the Jordan represents. It is the place of our FIRST LOVE with Jesus. It is the place when we truly enter into spiritual rest with Him and find rest for our souls. If we will truly find the covering that God offers, we must continually return to the place where we began our walk with the Lord. It is the place where passion for God drives us more than our knowledge about God. It is the place where our hearts yearn for nothing else but to please Him as our first pursuit in life. We get easily sidetracked from this simple goal. It happens to the best of us.. even the most spiritually mature. Trust me, if it can happen to Ephesus, it can happen to you and I!

**2 Cor 11:3**

*But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. (NKJ)*

Paul was concerned about this in his spiritual children. There is a call in the Body of Christ given by the Holy Spirit to "Keep the first commandment first." The first commandment was to love God with ALL of our being: body, soul, and spirit. It is a simple call. The Gospel is simple enough for a child yet complex enough to choke the greatest theologian who approaches it with his mind and not his heart. This is what the Jordan represents. It represents the final destination of our journey in pursuing the covering of God. Of course, did you notice that the ending place in the journey was just another beginning?

### **Jordan = "Go Back to Where It All Began: Love Jesus Above All Else"**

The whole point of this discussion was that Elisha pursued Elijah on this journey and in return received a spiritual endowment: a double portion of Elijah's "mantle" or "covering". The places in the journey are significant because they represent for us places in God that we will go as well if we pursue and seek after the covering that God offers us. Now that I have opened up this whole idea of seeking and pursuing God's covering, let me now give the greater truth that is in operation. Seeking 'something' of God and not seeking God can lead to serious problems spiritually. Seeking the things of God are not wrong. Seeking the things of God IN EXCLUSION or IN PLACE of seeking God is. You have heard ad nauseam, "Seek the giver and not the gifts." This of course is half-true. Half-truths are by definition half-false. The scripturally correct rendering is to "Seek the giver AND the gifts."<sup>15</sup> Would we ever dare chide Jesus for commanding people to "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness"? Of course not. I could just here someone say, "Now Jesus, you know that we need to seek the King and not the Kingdom!"

Jesus is saying that we are to seek the King AND the Kingdom. The danger still lies in the fact that we can sometimes place more emphasis or value on the “thing” and not the source.

**Amos 5:4-5** *For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel: "Seek Me and live; But do not seek Bethel, nor enter Gilgal, nor pass over to Beersheba; for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel shall come to nothing. (NKJ)*

Oswald Chambers had some great insight into this passage:

Bethel was the place of Divine blessing historically. What place could be more suitable to seek than Bethel, there to have the spirit of communion revived and quickened by sweet and divine meditation? and yet God says, ‘But seek not Beth-el’, ‘nor enter into Gilgal.’

Gilgal was the place of the first encampment of the children of Israel after crossing the Jordan; what could be better after sanctification than to return in memory to the place of our first encampment in the promised land? yet God says ‘nor enter into Gilgal’, ‘and pass not to Beer-sheba’.

Beer-sheba was the place of wonderful refreshing; Abraham dwelt there; Hagar was relieved there; Jacob was comforted there. What could be better than a pilgrimage back to our ‘Beer-shebas’, the place where outcasts have been received, the discouraged encouraged, the failures revived and made successes? Yet God says, ‘and pass not to Beer-sheba.’

At first reading of these verses one might wonder what their message is when applied spiritually, and yet very little attention will reveal that it is the old story that it is the Lord Himself and not the places of blessing the children of God are to seek. The place of former victories for God, the place that was heaven on earth in days gone by, will be places of defeat and failure if you persist in going there as a means of reviving. The message of God is ‘Seek ye Me, and ye shall live.’ It is the message that runs all through God’s Book and all through the experiences of the saint’s life. I wonder how many of us are trying to haunt places instead of seeking the Lord? There are places of revival to which the people of God take pilgrimages and spend hours and days and weeks there, trying to get a jaded life back again into communion with God, trying to revive by meditation and the power of association what can never be made alive apart from the living presence of God Himself. God is not confined to places, and where He once blessed, He may not bless again, it depends on the motive in seeking it.<sup>16</sup>

I can’t say it any better. We are to seek and pursue the covering of God, but not as an end in itself. This is how many can make even worship an “idol”. We can begin to worship our worship. We can begin to return to old familiar ways where we remember God’s presence in hopes of bringing spiritual renewal. As Oswald says, “my goal is God Himself, not joy, nor peace, nor even blessing, but Himself my God”<sup>17</sup>. To pursue God’s covering without an end to apprehending and beholding God Himself is foolish. He IS the ultimate obsession and passion to start with! However, it is just as foolish to say, “Well I’m going after God.. I don’t need to worry about all this covering stuff!”. The idea here is that God’s covering IS the only way of approach for those who pursue Him. In other words, our desire is essential if we are to receive the covering that God offers—just like the desire necessary to pursue and walk in spiritual gifts.

Speaking of that pursuit, let’s go back to our account of Elisha and Elijah and notice that Elijah TOLD Elisha to stay behind on several occasions during their journey. Would you have the nerve to tell a man who called fire down from heaven, “No! I’m ignoring your instructions. I’m going with you. Just as sure as God lives and you live... you are not going to keep me from following you.” I think most of us would say, “Hey, no problem Elijah! If you don’t want me to tag along, no sweat! In fact, there’s a chariot race

on TV this afternoon that I'm going to miss if I keep nagging you and following hard after your every step..."

Read some parables that Jesus taught on prayer. Remember the woman who "hounded" the unjust judge, the same judge who also told the woman to "go away". But tenacity and perseverance in prayer are two essential ingredients in dialoging with God. And by the way: Don't get offended that God EXPECTS you to deal with Him in this manner! Else, why would we need to continually knock, continually ask, or continually seek? These things "separate the men from the boys" so to speak when it comes to prayer. Could you imagine if God answered every prayer or plea you made to Him in a burst of anxiety, fear, or anger? How many people would be dead because you muttered "Lord strike my enemies, I mean Your enemies O Lord, deader than a door knob!" out of a wounded spirit or a fit of passionate anger? Be glad that God is the way He is! By the way, it would probably be more likely that you would already be in heaven because some other saint muttered one of those, "Lord just take him on to heaven before I do" kind of prayers concerning you!

So Elijah ignored Elisha's command not once, not twice, but three times. Let's take special notice that there were 50 or more of Elijah's own cream of the crop from the Prophetic School of Ministry, sitting around watching. The fact that they were all "sons of the prophets" did not mean that their dads prophesied—it was a way of saying that they were part of the prophetic order. The point is that none of them were "following hard" after Elisha, even though they KNEW that Elijah was going home to be with the Lord that day! How come they were watching "at a distance"? Why didn't they follow closely like Elisha? Yes, it was known that Elisha was appointed to be the successor. Did that exclude them from spiritual pronouncements Elijah would make before his departure? I tend to think not. I would have settled for a hand on the head or at least a one or two word blessing. Something is better than nothing! Elisha wanted the blessing of the first born.. the double portion, as Elijah's spiritual disciple and son. I think the other "sons of the prophets" could have expected something as well: IF they had bothered to pursue Elijah like Elisha was doing. We don't know—it's just speculation. But Elisha wanted to hear the last words of his mentor and receive that blessing more than anything else.

Fortunately for us, the last words of Jesus before He died were NOT His last words. The "It is Finished" later became "Whoooo.... Receive the Holy Spirit!" and "Tarry in Jerusalem until the Gift of the Father is poured out."<sup>18</sup> In fact, even the last words that Jesus spoke to His disciples before His ascension and after his resurrection are not His last words! Even though we were not there to "hear" the final words of Jesus, as Elisha was certainly expecting when Elijah departed, we don't need to be! Jesus is still speaking to us today, though all we need know of Him is certainly contained absolutely and finally in the canon of Scripture.<sup>19</sup> We can today DRAW NEAR to God so that He will DRAW NEAR to us, as James puts it. We can today APPROACH the THRONE of GRACE in time of need to obtain mercy<sup>20</sup>. We can today HEAR His voice, HEAR His song of rejoicing over us<sup>21</sup>, and HEAR the love sick moans of the God who has burning passion for humankind. This is the reason and necessity for the concept of COVERING. Without the covering of God, just as Moses was hidden in the cleft of the rock, we can not approach the Holy One of Israel<sup>22</sup>.

The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob dwells in unapproachable light.. and unless He provides the "pathway" into His presence, NO MAN may approach Him. Take comfort, though, my friend. A pathway HAS BEEN provided conclusively and for all time for you:

**Heb 10:19-22**

*Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, **let us draw near** with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

It is by the blood of the spotless Lamb of God, Yeshuah the Messiah, that we can DRAW NEAR to God with a true heart that has full assurance of faith. He sits at the right hand of God to sprinkle us from our evil conscience and to bid us to come near to Him while arrayed in robes of righteousness that are not our own. Forever as the God-Man and the ONLY intermediary between God and men, He is our ACCESS to God. Yes, every knee will bow to Him and every tongue will confess to Him that He, the Son of Man, is the Lord of all Lords. He is also our High Priest, our Righteousness, our Advocate, our Sanctification, our Justification, and our Propitiation. As you will see, Jesus serves as the greatest revelation of God's covering. In the person of Jesus, God covered Himself with flesh so that our sins could be completely "covered" by His blood. It all began in the garden, though. The first occurrence of man's fall brought the first action of God to cover—and thus we can see a progressive revelation of this truth from Genesis onward. Let's look at this progression.

*Lord let us take time to thank you right now. Let us remember that you are the God who has rolled away the reproach of our former life. Let us remember that you are the God who has brought us into your family, into your presence, and even given us a new name. Let us remember that you are the God who not only fights for us, but that you guarantee our victory if we will but abide in You. And Lord, bring us back to our first love. Bring us back to a passion and yearning and desire for the Son of God. Let us love Him like you love Him, Father. Jesus, let us love the Father like you love the Father. Holy Spirit, communicate to us and shed abroad in our hearts this amazing love of God. Amen.*



## Chapter 3

### The First Covering

Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.  
Gen 3:21 (NKJ)

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Adam and Eve were made in the beginning, without SIN<sup>1</sup>. SIN brought separation from God and a loss of the life with which God intended us to live in—the very life of God Himself, indwelling and partnering with us.

**Gen 1:26-27**      *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man **in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Gen 2:7**      *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and **breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;** and man became a living being. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Gen 2:16-17**      *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it **you shall surely die.**" (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

We understand from the Hebrew meaning of "breath of life" that God breathed and imparted multiple levels of life. It can literally be rendered, "*And God breathed into his nostrils the breath of LIVES.*"<sup>2</sup> By understanding the triune nature of man we could say that this breath imparted spiritual life (*zoe*), soulical life (*psuche*), and physical life (*bios*)<sup>3</sup>. Even in the warning against choosing man's own way over God's, our Father made it clear that death was death on multiple levels as well. In fact, the Hebrew could actually be rendered "*in dying you shall surely die.*"<sup>4</sup> So, when Adam was created multiple levels of life came and when Adam sinned multiple levels of death came. The first and primary form of death was of course spiritual. We see after more than 900 years of Adam's life that eventually physical death came as well<sup>5</sup>. Either way, Adam died on the day he sinned, then he continued to die, and then he died. Human kind was designed and meant to live eternally in fellowship with their creator. Had God not cut off the pathway to the Tree of Life, man would have eaten and lived forever separated from His Creator. God instead began to immediately bring about a program of restoration. Even so, one of the saddest statements of the Bible is found only 5 chapters into the story of human history:

**Gen 5:3**      *And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son **in his own likeness, after his image,** and named him Seth. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Adam, who was made in the image of God, now transmitted not the glory and image of God to his offspring, but rather the image of himself—a fallen man. Sin and death entered the human race by this means.

**Rom 5:12**      *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned-- (NKJ)*

The lineage of Adam was poisoned and the race was forever doomed to fall prey to sin and its power. Mankind is still made in the image of God.. but that image has been severely marred and grossly distorted by sin. We have become partakers of Adam's nature without our approval or consent<sup>6</sup>. None of us even asked to be born and none of us even asked to be born with the deck stacked against us already! Then after we are born, we live true to our Adamic nature: we sin! How can this be fair at all? The paradox of our existence is that we must still make a choice as to whether we will find the true meaning of our existence. We can either choose to return to our Creator or we can choose to live in our fallen state and exist for eternity away from the presence and glory of our Creator.<sup>7</sup> As soon as we say, "No fair God... I couldn't help but be the way I am", God will show you the unlimited and perfect nature of His love and the endless depth He went to in order that you could be saved and live in relationship with Him. He will show you that for every 100 people like yourself that ignored Him there were about 10 who chose to seek Him and wound up finding Him! In the end, every tongue will be stopped at the weight of the evidence that will be produced over and against our intellectual non-sense. Apart from the "Life is not fair" argument, let's just examine the facts of the original fall for a second.

God as Creator and Lawgiver had absolute and perfect justification to KILL Adam and Eve for their transgression out-right. He could have started all over with another race and allowed both Adam and Eve to be forever separated from Him. Friends, it is always EASIER to create than it is to restore. Who wants to drive a user car with all of its flaws when you can go buy a new car with no problems?? Just like cars, no matter what race of beings God would create, as soon as a being in the image of God is given the power of moral choice, someone somewhere at some time is going to mess up. God could have destroyed Lucifer as well. Why He didn't I don't know. I think it has to do with His nature and the fact that He does not create robots—whether angelic or human. Lucifer's rebellion did not stop God's plan to create and make man in His own image. Did you notice that? I believe that Lucifer's creation was prior to the creation week of Genesis 1:2. I am one of those who believe in a pre-Adamite creation, though I do not believe it is the explanation for supposed biological life millions or billions of years ago. Even if (*and it is a huge unsupported if*) there were another race of people or animals before Adam, nothing in our fossil record points to that ANYWAY.<sup>8</sup> Though I digress, we see that God began a process of restoration during the creative week of Genesis and we see that His ultimate goal of creation was still fulfilled. Lucifer's fall to satan did not stop God's plan to create man. Even the devil's ultimate deception and ownership of the human race did not stop God's plans to form a Bride for His Son! Remember that the WOMAN was MADE for the MAN.<sup>9</sup> God does not destroy things made in His image-- even beings that are spiritual but not quite in His image like the angels.

Instead of starting over with a different Adam and Eve, God closed access to the Tree of Life (which would have meant that man would have lived in eternal condemnation) and instead provided a way for Adam and Eve to continue fellowship with Him. This "access" to God was accomplished by an act of "covering". In fact, ALL access to God is based on COVERING. That's a bold statement, but I think it is proven true from cover to cover. The first SIN also brought about the first COVERING. Adam "got the wind knocked out of him" so to speak, i.e. the life or "breathe" of God left Him. The indwelling presence and overshadowing glory of God that covered Adam and Eve was no longer there. Once that glory left, Adam and Eve realized something: they were not designed nor made to be without a covering!

**Gen 3:7** *Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and **made themselves coverings**. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Gen 3:21** *Also for Adam and his wife **the LORD God made tunics of skin**, and **clothed** them. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Note something here. Man's problem is not his desire to cover himself. In fact, the knowledge that we were made to be covered by something other than ourselves appears to be "innate". The problem was that the first covering, the one created and made by man, was INADEQUATE. Therefore, God provided

HIS OWN. This allowed Adam and Eve to continue living physically and to begin instituting God's program of restoration in the earth. The covering of leaves, just like religious works and good deeds, are not an adequate approach to God. Only a covering PROVIDED by God will allow one to enter into His presence.

God's covering, as well, required sacrifice: *a giving of life*. You can't get "skin" off of something unless it dies in the process. Animal rights activists please take special note. It was God's idea to kill an animal in order for humans to be allowed to live. Though we do not know for sure from the Scriptures, the likelihood is very HIGH that the animal God chose to slough was a *lamb*. It set up the idea of *substitutionary atonement*: the idea that someone or something else could provide the covering that was needed for Adam and Eve, instead of them providing their own. Not only that, the someone else was the *innocent* one.. not the *guilty* one. The animal had done nothing to deserve death: God simply chose to kill the animal in order for the sin of Adam and Eve to be covered.

There is a third aspect to notice here too. **The covering that Adam and Eve made *seemed* logical and correct to them; it made sense.** However, it was not according to God's design and His provision of covering. The reason that so much of our worship never touches the reality or heart of God is that it is based too much on what makes sense to US as humans. Worship in Spirit and truth must rely on God to provide us with the adequacy to enter His presence. In fact, what man does in his own eyes will always make sense to a man. We always think that our way is right or better... even over God's way.

**Prov 21:2** *Every way of a man is right **in his own eyes**, but the LORD weighs the hearts. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Prov 26:12** *Do you see a man wise **in his own eyes**? There is more hope for a fool than for him. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

The fall of man was occasioned by a triple assault on the triune nature of man. The food was good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and hey, it even made one WISE. What can be wrong with wisdom and knowledge? I'll tell you what's wrong with it: it made man's soul the center of his being and not his spirit, as God had designed man. Once intellect and emotions took over the authoritative source of man's choice, man's spirit no longer became the source of his self-concept and will. As a result, man died spiritually, cut off from the presence of the God who can only be touched by spirit.

So now that God had provided a covering, what was man's responsibility??

Adam and Eve had to TAKE OFF their covering of leaves and PUT ON God's covering of skin. Don't get offended by this either. Many today would say something to the effect of "Well if man has anything to do with his salvation then it can't be of God alone." Give me a break. God offers salvation.. but it must be received. It cannot be received until we surrender "our way" and embrace "God's way". This is called "repentance", and it is NOT a four-letter word. God is not against reasoning with us, but His reasoning always brings us to see that His WAY is the RIGHT way and the ONLY way! Do you realize that Adam and Eve could have REFUSED to put on those animal coverings? Yep. They sure could have. God did not force them to put those clothes on or take their leaves off. God instituted a plan of restoration to bring Adam and Eve back into fellowship with Him. He didn't take away the consequence of their sin by the way. They were still dead spiritually... and they were still the parents of a fallen race of people. So we see that "COVERING" allows us to live and fellowship with God even though we are imperfect and fallen people ourselves.

Let us remember:

- 1) Our covering won't do;
- 2) Only God's covering will suffice; and
- 3) We MUST receive the covering that God offers us
- 4) His covering is NECESSARY in order for the restoration in relationship to take place.

Cain and Abel experienced this same struggle: the struggle between accepting God's way or coming up with our own way. Abel's sacrifice was pleasing to God and Cain's was not. This caused one to be accepted and one not to be. Have you ever stopped to think about why this wasn't just a question of one being a farmer and one being a shepherd?

**Gen 1:29-30** *And God said, "See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; **to you it shall be for food.**" Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food"; and it was so. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Gen 2:8-9** *The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is **pleasant to the sight and good for food.** The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Gen 3:17-18** *Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil **you shall eat of it all the days of your life.** Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and **you shall eat the herb of the field.**" (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Gen 4:1-5** *Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the LORD." Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now **Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.** And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an **offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat.** And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

First of all, if it has not occurred to you after reading the Genesis account, both men and animals were vegetarian by the command of God all the way until the Great Deluge of Noah's day. Even AFTER the fall, God still commanded and expected vegetarian diets. Did men and animals eat meat? The fossil record seems to indicate they did... though why should that surprise us since we know that man has rebelled against God since time began? The point is that Cain had a normal and respectable livelihood. The question that is seldom asked is "What in the world was Abel doing raising sheep if everyone was supposed to be vegetarian?" The answer is that these sheep were OBVIOUSLY being raised for the purpose of SACRIFICE—to be offered to God in accordance with the original covering He gave to Adam and Eve. It was understood by everyone that God's way of approach MUST be by a blood sacrifice. That was His program of redemption and it was what allowed man to continue on in fellowship and knowledge of God.

The issue of fruit vs. animal sacrifice was not an issue of respective "livelihoods". Oh no. Don't miss the point here. When God asked Cain about his "down-trodden" countenance, He told Cain: "If you do well, will you not be accepted?" Cain knew what "doing well" meant. Cain knew that doing well was related to how mom and dad and the rest of his brothers and sisters brought sacrifice to the LORD. Cain knew that God had cursed the ground after mom and dad disobeyed. Cain knew that it wasn't about the "fruit of his own efforts" but rather it was about "God providing for you."

**Gen 4:6-7** *So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? **If you do well, will you not be accepted?** And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it." (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Understand this: Cain knew full well that God's way of approach was by the blood and the sacrifice of a lamb. There were also other daughters and sons of Adam and Eve already living at this time. We don't know how many, but we do know that Cain had a wife at the time when Abel was slain.

**Gen 5:4** *After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; and **he had** [other] **sons and daughters.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Gen 4:17** *And **Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch.** And he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son-- Enoch. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

The fact that Adam and Eve had **other** sons and daughters is overlooked by a lot of people (yes, sisters and brothers married each other before a law was ever given to Moses thousands of years later to not marry close relations any more).<sup>10</sup> It can be safe to assume that Abel was raising sheep for the purpose of sacrifice.. not for food. His brothers and sisters, and probably Mom and Dad, could have very likely got their sacrificial sheep from him. It's speculative of course. Everyone could have raised their own... or maybe a few other brothers were shepherds as well. We don't know for sure. Either way, Cain KNEW what God's acceptable covering and way of approach in worship was. Cain, however, wanted to approach God on his own terms. Cain wanted to provide his "own covering." We see what resulted.

Not only was Cain's covering "not respected" by God, the bitterness and jealousy that came out of Abel's acceptance gave ground for the devil himself to jump in the middle. The devil is a 1) liar and a 2) murderer, even from the beginning just like Jesus said<sup>11</sup>. So within the first four chapters of the Bible we see that satan had already deceived Eve and stirred up hatred to the point of murder in one of Adam's offspring. Cain's "covering" was based on his own wisdom and out of his own pride. Cain didn't want to have to go to Abel to get his sacrificial lamb... he wanted his own merits and his own efforts and his own sweat from his own brow to count for something! Hello! Does this sound familiar at all? It is the human condition to a tee. We WANT to earn God's favor. We WANT to bring our merit and our own work. We WANT God to judge us based on what WE can do! It is by the grace of God that we are not... because none of us has a fighting chance on those terms.

God on the other hand says, "You may come only by the way I CHOOSE and the way I PROVIDE." That is the essence of covering. God's way is not based on man's wisdom, man's intellect, or man's sense of propriety. God's ways, in fact, is very "messy" in human terms. God's way offends man's intellect and wisdom. Why? Because it was in man's wisdom and intellect that he with full knowledge thumbed his nose at the God of glory.

**1 Cor 1:20-21** *Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, **the world through wisdom did not know God,** it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Rom 1:18-23** *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible*

*God into an image made like corruptible man-- and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. (NKJ)*

The world through human wisdom will NEVER know God. I like apologetics.. and I like expounding to people the intellectual defenses of Christianity. Unfortunately, wisdom never draws people to God! At best it just causes us to realize we are mistaken about our own thoughts about God. Something you need to understand about God is this: **He does not submit to human ideas of what God should be like!** We don't know how to approach God acceptably unless God shows us the way—and He has! Jesus said that He IS the WAY. Any approach to God other than through His Son is doomed to failure.<sup>12</sup> Any approach to God based on our good works, our religious deeds, our charity, our righteousness, our spiritual enlightenment, our self-realization, our climbing the ladder, or our effort is DOOMED! We cannot come by Joseph Smith, the Virgin Mary, Mohammed, Buddha, Krishna, "the force that pervades the entire universe that lives in us", or any other idol of man's creation. We cannot come by our pastor, our parents, our perfect Sunday School attendance, our devout church activities, our charitable giving, our denomination, our intellect, our emotions, our family, or our social status. The book of "beginnings", Genesis, shows us clearly that COVERING is an idea that originates in the heart of God to bring us BACK into fellowship with Him. We are "accepted" only in the covering that God provides Himself.

*Eph 1:6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

We are not born acceptable to God. Sin guarantees it. However, we can be MADE accepted in the Beloved! That is the great news of the Gospel. It is the beginning of the story of redemption found in the Book of Genesis. Worship also has a close tie to this aspect of covering. We do not know how to worship God acceptably or "rightly" from our own wisdom and ability. We must allow God to show us.

As we move out of the Garden, we see in the history of the Bible more and more examples of how God interacts with human beings. Covenant plays a large role... but keep in mind the times when God's presence comes among and with humans. These times give us a greater and greater revelation of the covering of God. As the writer of Hebrews urges us to move from the first principles of the faith, so too let us move from the first principles of covering and see what God will show us about His nature and His longing to be with us.

*Father, Giver of Life, the One Who Covers. Cover us with your grace and mercy. Cover us with the garments that You provide. Lord, we lay down our cursed fruits and supposed goodness... we come instead by Your way, Your will, Your covering. We renounce our own attempts to find you by our own wisdom, by our own enlightenment, by our own insight. We renounce any other means and method of man's religion. Jesus did not die to found a religion.. He died to cover our nakedness before you. We hear and respond to your call. Holy Spirit, open our eyes to see this great invitation – clothe us with your garments of salvation and forgiveness. We answer your call—and we choose to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*

## Chapter 4

### The Father of All Those Who Believe

Gen 22:11-12

But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me."

(NKJ)

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As we move from the Garden of Eden, we begin to see several other extensions of God's covering in action. Dispensationalists have long postulated that the Bible can be divided into specific time periods where God works in different ways and by different means. Not too far from that, covenant theology tends to agree with these same time periods or "dispensations", but explains these time periods in terms of the God who makes and keeps covenant. I tend to look at the Bible through the eyeglasses of covenant as well. The very definition of covenant—that one party binds Himself to act on the behalf of another and vice versa—is not that well understood by the Church at large. There is too much that does not fit our theology to believe that God has so "outstretched" His arm in order to bring rebellious human beings into relationship with Himself. Seeing God through the eyes of covenant is a paradigm many are not comfortable with either: covenant carries inherent in it both the idea of "responsibilities" and "rights". Both of these aspects can be taken to extremes, and no mature believer would in their right mind go to either one. For example, one extreme in covenant thinking might lead someone to believe that "responsibility" means we are working for our salvation or that we must "earn" God's favor. The other extreme would say that God "must" respond to our demands and our wishes because of covenant. Both of these are foolish extremes, though they do not negate the obvious lessons we can and should learn as the people of God in understanding the God who has made covenant with us. God has "opened Himself up" so to speak so that we may draw near to Him. Like Paul told the Athenians, "He is not far from one of us".<sup>1</sup>

Another approach at dividing "His"-story could be to consider the ways which God has "approached" or "come among" His people. In this respect, I can easily see the dividing lines of history in terms of "covering". God has drawn people into His very presence. God has covered and protected those who have found grace in His sight. God has been a shield and fortress of refuge. I will be developing this paradigm for you as we take a look at different ways God has provided covering in order to meet and commune and fellowship with human beings. God ultimately wants a dwelling place within humanity. God is SO committed to the human race in terms of purpose and destiny that you can look in heaven at this very instant and see a God-Man sitting on a throne right next to the Father who dwells in unapproachable light<sup>2</sup>. No man can see God and live... nor can any man fully comprehend or explain Him<sup>3</sup>. Yet Jesus, as a MAN, is the FULL revelation of the person of God. All the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Him! When you see Jesus, you see the Father<sup>4</sup>. Friends, this is mind-boggling. As I have often heard Pastor Mike Bickle say, "Only God can reveal God to the human heart." Only the Spirit of God can reveal to us the height and depth and width of all that God really has in store for us.<sup>5</sup> Given this fact, it should not surprise us that God has "laid" out the pattern by which we may approach Him. It should not surprise that when we see God approaching human kind, we had better take note. In these instances, God is revealing how He covers us by different means and therefore allows human beings the chance to partner with Him and see His will done in the earth. The earth was given to man for man to take dominion of... God is waiting for us to partner with Him and establish His will and kingdom... not our own.

Consider the first example of covering after the Garden:

**Gen 6:5-8** *Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that **every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually**.... But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Gen 6:17-18** *And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. But I will establish My covenant with you; and **you shall go into the ark**-- you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Gen 7:1** *Then the LORD said to Noah, "**Come into the ark**, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Gen 7:5** *And **Noah did** according to all that the LORD commanded him. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

This paradigm follows the example set in the garden. In God's grace, He offered a "covering" to Noah and his family. God provided this covering, but Noah had to "accept it". Noah accepted it by building the ark according to the specifications of the Lord, doing all that God commanded, and then ENTERING the Ark when the time came. The Ark was the "covering" that kept Noah safe in the time of utter destruction which was occurring on planet earth. Noah found GRACE in God's eyes. Finding favor in God's eyes is not a matter of being on God's "favorite" list. It isn't even a matter, as some extreme Calvinists might think, of being on the list that God has already by His foreknowledge made out and inscribed in indelible ink. Finding favor in God's eyes has to do with God "offering" favor and human beings "accepting" and "receiving" that grace in humility. Noah was PERFECT in his generations... he had not corrupted his lineage. Noah kept God in his mind. The thoughts and intents of his heart were TOWARD God, not toward every evil thought and intention. This is the essence of COVERING. It requires human participation though it by no means is of human origination. God is the source and thus offers GRACE... man must make effort to receive and in essence find GRACE. God offered GRACE to Noah. Noah FOUND GRACE or FAVOR in the sight of the LORD.

Why do some find it and some don't? I can't really say. What makes one person want to love and serve God and another person hate and spit on God, or even just flat out ignore Him? I haven't a clue. I just know that's how the world is and that this dichotomy is really the ONLY two true divisions of humanity: those who love God and those who do not. The patriarchs from Noah to Abraham and from Isaac to Jacob all had dealings with God. Why did God pick them? We don't know for sure, other than to know that God just wanted to. In the end, every decision of God will be shown to be supreme in both wisdom and righteousness. For all we know, God may have offered "covering" to other people before either Noah or Abraham... maybe they were the only ones who "accepted" it.

The patriarchs throughout Genesis interacted with the LORD on a very personal level and in several instances through the "Angel of His Presence" or the "Angel of the LORD". Most Biblical scholars agree that the patriarchs talked with God the Son, the Pre-incarnate Messiah, in these instances. Moses, the nation of Israel itself, Joshua, Gideon, David, and other men of the Bible also had dealings with the Angel of the Lord.

The lesson we learn from Abraham in approaching God is one that forms the fundamental foundation upon which the New Covenant is based: **belief expressed and supported by action**.

**Gen 15:6** *And he **believed** in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Rom 4:16-25** *Therefore it is of **faith** that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of*

*the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (as it is written, "I have made you a father of many nations") in the presence of Him whom he believed-- God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did; who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be." And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform. And therefore "it was accounted to him for righteousness." Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us. It shall be imputed to us who believe in Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Paul stated that Abraham's faith rested upon his unyielding belief in God's declaration to him that he would be a great nation (have offspring from him and Sarai). Abraham was ALREADY considered in "right standing" with God after this declaration. It was that "belief" that allowed God to "credit" righteousness to Abraham's account. It says that Abraham's belief and trust in God was ACCOUNTED to him for righteousness, or right-standing with God. I took accounting back a few years ago. One thing I learned was that you can not enter a credit in a ledger without also entering a debit. That basically means that an addition to one account requires the subtraction from another account. God can not just fabricate righteousness from a human being out of no where. Only a human being can have an account into which righteousness is deposited or withdrawn. Yet, it was Abraham's faith that allowed his account to be "CREDITED". The problem, as well, is that sin by it's nature requires a "DEBIT" of all funds in an account. ONE SIN.. ONE infraction of the LAW brings DEATH. That's a high price to pay. Thankfully, there is an ETERNAL and LIVING source of human righteousness that we will ever draw from. There is ONE who is ABSOLUTELY RIGHTEOUS and PURE: and by faith, my account will forever be credited with His righteousness by faith. And, because God has crushed Him and bruised Him for my iniquity, I will not have to face the "DEBIT" from my own account—forever. This is why faith PLEASES God. It is the "currency" of the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the means by which blessings are conveyed, sins are overturned, and righteousness is attained. Without faith we cannot please God, we cannot approach God, and we cannot expect to receive from God.

#### **Gen 22:9-18**

*Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But **the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven** and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you **fear God**, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, **from Me**." Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. And Abraham called the name of the place, **THE-LORD-WILL-PROVIDE**; as it is said to this day, "**In the Mound of The LORD it shall be provided**." Then the **Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven**, and said: "By **Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing**, and have not withheld your son, your only son-- "blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, **because you have obeyed My voice**." (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

#### **James 2:20-24**

*But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made*

*perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. (NKJ)*

**Heb 11:17-19**

*By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense. (NKJ)*

One of the most amazing revelations of Scripture is that God has ordained and created the human race in such a way that we have the power to "keep" things from God. We have all been given the power to retain some portion of the things God has given to us: life, money, creativity, knowledge, energy, talent—just to name a few. These are all things that God gives us to manage: either for good and beneficial purposes aligned with His will or for bad purposes in foolish living aligned with our own will. When God told Abraham that he had passed the test of faith, He in essence said: "Abraham, you did not hold back your one and only son... even though it is the son that I myself promised you. You acknowledged and feared me as the Creator God who keeps His promise. Even though I gave Isaac to you, you still realized that I am the ultimate owner and source. Abraham, you have shown TRUE FAITH." James and the writer of Hebrews confirmed that this faith was "tested" and found to be "true faith" when Abraham raised the knife to offer Isaac up as God had commanded. Abraham believed that even in offering Isaac back to God that God would resurrect Isaac in order for the promise of a lineage through Isaac to be fulfilled. We understand that Abraham's faith was consummated in not only what he believed but in what he did. This should not surprise us. Paul says nothing less, even when he talks in terms of faith. We are saved by faith alone and not by any of our works. It just depends on the character and quality of that faith that determines whether you will have a genuine experience with God and be born-again. There are some versions of faith that are inferior to others. If your faith does not lead you to obedience, love, and a changed life then you don't have the kind of faith that will save you. Plain and simple isn't it? Many people in the Western church and even in America "believe" in God. So... James clearly says that just believing (having mental assent) is not equivalent to having a faith that saves. On the other extreme, Paul makes a very strong statement to those who would try to be JUSTIFIED by observing the law in his letter to the Galatians:

**Gal 5:4-6**

*You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love. (NKJ)*

There are probably just as many on this side of the spectrum in the Western church as well. They almost take holiness and perfection to a point where you are basically earning your salvation and working to please God. Paul says you ESTRANGE yourself from Jesus when you do this. This means you become a STRANGER to Christ. This means that He NO LONGER KNOWS you! That's right. Those who would step over the line and begin to actually earn their own justification before God will no longer be known by God long term. They will be in the group who on the last day will stand before Jesus and say "Did not we DO all these things in your name?" Remember His response? "Depart from me, I never INTIMATELY KNEW you!". Ouch. So what are we to do? Paul sums it up nicely after giving this very harsh warning to "good" people who believed their good works will outweigh their bad works (a reliance on the flesh) and God will let them into heaven on that basis. Paul says, "It is only by the Spirit of God that we become righteous... by faith. And the ONLY thing that REALLY matters or avails is FAITH WORKING through LOVE." **Faith working.** That is the key. When faith is not working it is a dead faith. That is what James says and Paul agrees. Faith without works DOES NOT MATTER NOR AVAIL anything! Faith working is what matters. Faith working is the kind of faith that will save you. Faith working is the character and quality of faith that really makes a difference in your life and the life of others. That is why the American paradigm of faith is so messed up today. We have one group that leans completely to one

side and another group that tends to lean toward the other. In Scripture, however, we see the complete picture of the “covering” that God offered and Abraham consummated. It is the definition of faith that I believe is workable and Scriptural:

## Faith = Belief + Action

**It was on Mt. Moriah that this covering was provided and accepted.** “Because you have done this thing...” meant that Abraham’s belief perfected by his actions would release and set in motion the GREATEST blessing mankind could ever dream or know about. This promise of blessing was conveyed to Abraham and it was from his “seed”, the Messiah, the greatest blessing ever given to man CAME. All nations of the world would be blessed from Abraham’s seed and lineage through Isaac.

*Gal 3:16*                      *Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Abraham played a part in the covering by being obedient through faith: He accepted God’s covering. Paul continually called Gentiles to the OBEDIENCE of the FAITH. If faith were strictly belief, Paul would not call us to its obedience.. which is by default ACTION oriented.

*Rom 1:5*                      *Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for **obedience to the faith** among all nations for His name, (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

*Rom 6:16*                      *Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of **obedience leading to righteousness?** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

*Rom 16:26*                      *but now has been made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures has been made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, **for obedience to the faith--** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

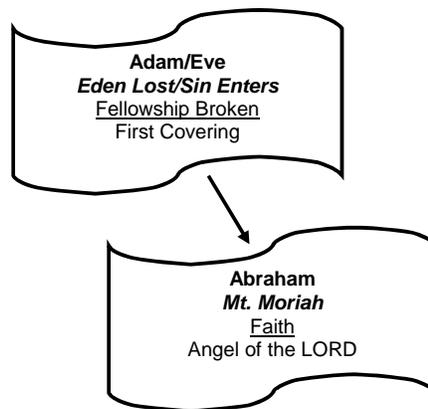
As we take our journey through the Scriptures, let me call your attention to a few things. Notice first of all how God’s covering is provided. Abraham was called the friend of God. He heard the audible voice of God. He entertained God as a guest in his house. God informed Abraham of His plans to bring judgment, even allowing Abraham to intercede and adjust these plans. Can you get any closer than that in terms of welcoming and receiving God’s presence than this? But God’s presence and fellowship with Abraham came with it’s own form of covering. We have just seen that FAITH was the carpet on which Abraham stood with God. It was on Mt. Moriah where this covering was seen in its fullness and consummated—allowing the release of the promise of a Seed through Abraham’s line. I am a child of Abraham because Abraham walked in this covering of faith with God. I live in the blessing of Abraham because his Seed came and redeemed me—adopting me into His family—and blessing me with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms that I can dream of.

Take note here that Mt. Moriah plays a key role in the later chapters of redemption’s story. We will revisit its significance later, but for now remember that on this mountain (which means “seen of God”) a ‘one and only’ son was offered up. It was on this mountain that the LORD revealed Himself as Jehovah Jireh, the “Covenant God Who Provides”. It was said of this place “In the mount of the LORD, it shall be provided.” Notice that the **Angel of the LORD** spoke from heaven during the exchange on Mt. Moriah as well. It was the Angel of the LORD who spoke and told Abraham to “STOP!”. It was a covering of faith that Abraham stood on when God spoke and approached him on this mountain. God began with faith in His story of redemption. We could also say, faith began the “history” of redemption. We know that righteousness of God is from faith to faith according to Paul.<sup>6</sup> Noah FOUND or was BESTOWED favor in God’s sight. The promises of God came from Adam to Noah to Abraham. Because of Abraham’s

obedience, the promise of God's blessing and favor passed on to Isaac on to Jacob and on to the sons of Jacob, who later became known as Israel. The whole process involves covering though. Abraham stood righteous before God because he was covered by faith—that was the key to it all.

## The presence of God with Abraham was accompanied by the covering of faith.

In looking on further, we will see that in major instances of God's dealing with His people, a covering is always provided. It will vary in terms of its nature, but God desired to regain access to a creation that had shut the door on Him. He had to do this legally through covenant. It is the experience of this coming of God among His people and interacting with those of covenant that we see His covering provided and extended. The important thing is that we see God working first by FAITH after the Adamic and Noahic covenants. The further covenants and further outworking of God's grace are all found in His promise to primarily one man: Abraham. The covenant of Moses, David, and of Messiah all come OUT OF the covenant and covering God offered Abraham. We are taking a step back to see where it all fits in the panorama of God's story right now. We will develop a picture of this, called the progressive revelation of God's covering, and so far it looks like this:



## The Progressive Revelation of God's Covering

From the time that fellowship was broken in the Garden, God began a program of restoration. He began to send out invitations to the human race. From the Bible, we know that there was always a godly line of people in the earth that responded to this invitation. Adam, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. All of these men, and other's not mentioned, were used by God to re-establish His covenant and promise in the earth. God began to cover us as soon as the first sin was committed. His covering then began to extend to greater and greater dimensions, all the time bringing to fulfillment and offering hope to future generations. These folks didn't know everything there was to know about God—they just knew that there was a God in heaven who showed love and faithfulness to those who would follow Him and obey Him. That's all they needed to know, and it's all we really need to know today. It was on Mt. Moriah that we see Abraham's life of faith distilled down into the offering of a one and only begotten son who had been promised by God as Abraham's seed. God wants Eden restored.. and one day it will be. It's called the New Jerusalem that will come out of heaven one day—filled with glorified saints of the Living God. New Jerusalem represents the restoration of all that was lost in the Garden—God living with man in fellowship and peace. His next approach to the human race is seen in the covering of faith that

Abraham accepted and walked in. He is the prototype for all those who are of the family of faith—Jews and Gentiles alike. Notice that for the most part, God's dealings were strictly with individuals. His dealings also tended to include future promises of greater dimensions. We move here from His dealings with Abraham to His dealings with another man: Moses.

*Lord, lead us in the covering of our Father Abraham. He stood righteous before you by faith. We are his children by faith. Lord we know that it is our belief combined with our actions that truly please you. Without this duo, Father, we are truly left to be only intellectually stimulated with no change in our life or we find ourselves working to repay a debt that we could never repay anyway. Help us find the balance O Lord in our life. Help us receive the covering of grace you offer us by faith alone. Help us know that in the mountain of the LORD, all things will be provided for us. Help us see that you are our source and provider... You do provide all things for us, in your mountain. Help us walk by this faith and not by our sight. Help us be partakers of the blessings of Abraham by faith. Amen.*

## Chapter 5

### The Burning Bush

Exodus 3:5

Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground."  
(NKJ)

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From Adam to Noah, and from Noah to Abraham, God was working to establish His covenant purposes in the earth. It is fairly well recorded throughout Genesis and the time of the patriarchs that the Angel of the LORD (also known as the Angel of God or "His" Angel) was one of the MAIN vessels by whom God would communicate His ideas and thoughts to His covenant partners. After this time of history, God began to put into place His plan to form a nation from the lineage of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (or Israel). It was from out of Israel that the lineage of a Redeemer would come. The foundation, however, required God to first form a people for Himself: *the descendants of Israel via 12 sons*.

Genesis ends with the children (or descendants) of Israel living in a foreign land: Egypt. The story also ends with Joseph being second in command of the most powerful empire on the earth in that day and him being reconciled to his brothers (who treated him very naughty out of jealousy years prior). God had worked for God what they had meant for evil. As a result, the lineage of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob survived the worst famine the earth had seen in a while. All because God sovereignty worked in the midst of bad situations that Joseph found himself in.

**Gen 50:24-26**

*And Joseph said to his brethren, "I am dying; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land to the land of which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." Then Joseph took an oath from the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here." So Joseph died, being one hundred and ten years old; and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. (NKJ)*

Exodus picks up this history and tells us in Chapter 1 that an Egyptian Pharaoh came along one day and said "Hey, I don't know who this Joseph guy was, but there's too many of his kin-folk living in our country." Chapter 1 reveals how in a very short time, the tables turned drastically on the children of Israel: they were now slaves in a foreign land instead of being honored guests of the second in command guy. Pharaoh was tossing their babies into the Nile left and right and basically trying to make life miserable for them. Out of this backdrop of events a child named Moses is introduced in Chapter 2. This child was no ordinary child. This child was to be special, even as the miraculous nature of his birth and care in the midst of infanticide would later confirm.

Moses evidently knew some facts about his Hebrew lineage. Even though he grew up in the House of Pharaoh as a son of Pharaoh's daughter, Moses looked upon the plight of his people at some point and was confronted with a decision. The movies and cartoons have different ways of explaining what happened, but Hebrews says it best:

**Heb 11:24-26**

*By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. (NKJ)*

Moses forsook a life of power and prestige and pleasure. One day he could bear the suffering and situation of his own people no more. He decided to act. Chapter 2 concludes by telling us that Moses had to flee Egypt after he killed an Egyptian that was beating one of his kinsmen. Pharaoh sought to kill him and so Moses fled to the land of Midian. In 25 short verses, 80 years of the most mentioned man in the Bible (apart from Jesus) is covered. We find out that Moses stays in Midian, takes a wife and has children, and settles down for a bit. It appears, for all practical purposes, that Moses was content being a shepherd and living with Jethro as part of his family. Chapter 2 ends with God hearing the groans of His people in Egypt.. 40 years after Moses has left Egypt.

40 years in Egypt.

40 years in the land of Midian.

25 verses.

Wow.

Have you ever felt like Moses must have felt at this point in his life? Have you ever felt that 80 years of your spiritual life could be summed up in 25 verses? Though Moses is writing, the Holy Spirit is still making a point here. Toward the end of his 40<sup>th</sup> year as a shepherd in Midian, Moses had NO IDEA that his life was about to drastically change. Many of you are in the same boat right now. Many of you have felt as though God has passed you by, just like he did Moses on the back-side of the desert. Moses life changed drastically in a matter of seconds. Why did his life change so drastically? Because Moses was about to have an encounter with God Almighty. Moses was about to meet "I AM". Moses was about to "see" and "experience" the power and presence of God like no other man in Scripture.

*Exod 3:1-10*

*Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And **the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush**. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn." So when **the LORD saw** that he turned aside to look, **God called to him from the midst of the bush** and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. **Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.**" Moreover He said, "**I am the God of your father— the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.**" And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God. And the LORD said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to Me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come now, therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

First of all, notice a basic principle about God here. God is Holy. His most basic attribute and characteristic is HOLINESS. Seraphim sing back and forth to each other around the very throne of God, "Holy, Holy, Holy." God is Holy in His essence. This kind of Holy is different than the normal definition of holy: "being set apart". This kind of Holy is the kind that God alone possesses and means "transcendently above and beyond all else." This definition of Holiness is reserved for God alone. It describes not only God in His basic essence, but it also describes EVERY one of His attributes. God is Holy in His love, Holy in His justice, Holy in His mercy, Holy in His grace, Holy in His omni-presence, Holy

in His omni-science, and so on and so forth. Holy can also be rendered “wholly other than.” God is “wholly other than” and “transcendently above and beyond” in every one of His traits and characteristics. This is why the god of Islam, the god of Mormonism, the god of Buddhism, the god of Jehovah’s Witness, the god of the New Age, and the god(s) of Hinduism are not the real God. The gods of these religions do not compare to the “HOLY, HOLY, HOLY” God of the Bible.

The God of the Bible is the UNCREATED, ONE AND ONLY, NO OTHER LIKE HIM ANY WHERE IN ANY DIMENSION IN ANY TIME IN ANY WAY, SHAPE, OR FORM, CREATOR of ALL SEEN and UNSEEN, SUSTAINER, PROVIDER, MASTER, KING of KINGS, LORD of LORDS God. Even this one little aspect of truth concerning God’s character and nature would liberate many from cults and false religions. The gods of other religions are “made in the image of man”. They are made to resemble man and how man thinks, feels, and acts. The idea that god is in ALL, in every living thing (and even non-living things) is just a fantasy of MAN. It’s just some man’s idea about god and the universe. The God that the Bible reveals is WHOLLY OTHER THAN. He IS NOT A MAN. He did not get promoted to God. He did not get elected to be God over this small portion of the universe or this dimension of time and space. He did not evolve or progress to Godhood. He did not attain His rank. He did not get created by some bigger God. He did not get created as some part of God. The God of the Bible, the God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is the UNCREATED GOD! That is the meaning of a HOLY God. That is what the Seraphim sing night and day about.

Out of God’s absolute essence of transcendent “being”, He imparts holiness to things that He comes in contact with. He does not (nor cannot) impart the “wholly other than” kind of holiness. However, he does impart a holiness that makes something or someone “set apart”. It is the idea that once God touches you (or you touch God), you will “never be the same.” You will be “set apart”. You will be “separate” from normal or common things after God touches you with His presence. The ground that God rested upon in the person of the Angel of the LORD became “holy” by the mere presence of the “Holy One”!

Though I will discuss who the Angel of the LORD is in more detail later, note at least here a few things about this Angel:

- 1) it was the Angel of the LORD who appeared in a flame of fire from the bush,**
- 2) it was the LORD who saw Moses turn,**
- 3) it was God who called to him from the midst of the bush, and**
- 4) it was this voice that said “I am the God of your father- the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”.**

It doesn’t take rocket science to figure out that the Angel of the LORD, God, and the LORD are one in the same person! This was no ORDINARY angel. This Angel in His person was the Divine One! He was God Himself—a mystery that would later be fully revealed by Jesus who expounded the God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: three in person and one in essence. Keep this thought in the back of your mind—it demands a little more explanation, but it will be worth the wait to get it.

God’s **presence** sanctified the place where Moses was standing. The ground itself became Holy as a result. That is a spiritual principle. Where God dwells and rests, God makes Holy. Only the presence of something HOLY can make something “UN-HOLY” to become HOLY. Think about this deep truth. Only the presence of the HOLY Spirit can make an UN-HOLY person become HOLY! Every attempt to make yourself HOLY apart from receiving the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (the born-again experience) is called RELIGION. Every attempt to make yourself a “holy” person by some kind of works that you do WILL NEVER MAKE YOU a HOLY PERSON! Think of the list that people make in this particular arena: depriving yourself of worldly pleasures, fasting certain kinds of food, being kind to poor people, thinking only good thoughts of others, giving money to worthy causes, saying kind words to people, building a house with Habitat for Humanity, helping out with the United Way fund-raiser, never stepping on an ant, serving faithfully in a church, volunteering time to a charitable organization, doing random acts of kindness, and

on and on and on I could go. I could even add to this list all of the “Christian” things that “Christian” kind of people do. Unfortunately, none of them matter apart from receiving the Holy Spirit of God by faith in Jesus Christ alone.

There is only one way to achieve HOLINESS according to Scripture. It is to be washed and cleansed by the Holy Spirit on a continuing basis, beginning first with a new birth and continuing on in a walk of grace and mercy with the Lord:

**Titus 3:4-5** *But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, (NKJ)*

It is according to “God’s own mercy” that He saves us. Not our goodness. Not our good works. Not what we bring to the table to do for Him. Not one ounce of our stinking, filthy, and wretched acts of goodness. They are filthy rags in His sight. Understand, God may want you to do some of those things I listed a few sentences ago. However, you can’t do those with some expectation that THOSE THINGS will make you a HOLY person. The best we can do with our life is to make ourselves UNHOLY. That is the BEST we can do. Only God can make us HOLY. Only God the Holy Spirit living in us and working upon us can change us to be a reflection of the Son of God. Religious programs can not do this job either.

Pardon me for saying this, but unless the Dalai Lama has embraced God’s Son as His Savior and is indwelt by the Spirit of God, then his sins are not washed away. All of his “goodness” and “holiness” are not going to make him “HOLY”. And I’m not going to call him “His Holiness”. I’m sorry, but you ain’t Holy unless the HOLY ONE lives in you. That is plain and simple (though not proper) English, right? That is our problem as humans: we want spirituality, but we do not want the Spirit of God. We want to be holy, but we don’t want to embrace the ONLY ONE who can make us Holy! I believe the Dalai Lama is indwelt by a spirit... it’s just not the Spirit of God. Many today who are pursuing spirituality apart from the cross of Jesus Christ are going to have a rude awakening one day: they will discover that they have become “spiritual” while being put in bondage to “spirits” that have deceived, lied, and tricked them.

You get the idea of holiness I hope. God’s presence and person brings His holiness as a natural consequence. We are still required to participate with God to achieve and reach personal holiness. Please understand that I am not discounting our role in developing personal holiness.

**2 Tim 2:19-21** *Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity." But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. (NKJ)*

Paul makes clear that we PARTNER with the Holy Spirit to bring about the holy life that He desires and that brings honor to the Son of God. Let me draw your attention however to something about God’s encounter with Moses. When Moses drew near to God, on whose “HOLINESS” did Moses stand on? The place where God rested became HOLY outright and it was in that “covering” that Moses drew near to God. God basically “brought His own carpeting”, meaning that Moses approached God through the holiness of God Himself: Moses basically walked on the carpet that God brought to the meeting. This reveals yet another aspect of God in offering “covering” to those He chooses to commune and dwell with.

Moses experienced the manifest presence of God through the “Angel of the LORD”, much like the patriarchs did at various times. The LORD also told Moses, “take your sandals off”. I’ve always been intrigued by this request. It is significant for several reasons. What was the big deal about the shoes anyway? The answer lies in how we define “holy” as humans. First of all, there is nothing “UN-HOLY” about the earth itself. The earth (and the universe for that matter) is just a part of creation. It is not

one and the same as the creator, but God the creator does sustain and govern its operation. The ground BECAME HOLY when the presence of the LORD rested on it. Nearness to Him will cause HOLINESS to come forth in the thing that is brought near. Looking or gazing upon the HOLY God will also cause us to become HOLY as a result. You cannot draw near to God and look upon Him in His glory without there being profound change in your life:

*Heb 12:14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord*

Many people rightfully believe that without holiness we will not see the LORD. I agree. The corollary is even more true, and yet far more overlooked by the church at large. No one can be holy without SEEING the LORD! The problem in the Western church is that we want to pursue holiness but we care nothing about seeing the LORD. Do you see the difference? We have taken the truth and the doctrine of holiness to be an end in itself. God forbid. I want to see the LORD! I want to behold His glory and gaze upon His beauty! Why? Because I know that I will never even be MOTIVATED toward HOLINESS apart from that. We have many sincere believers who are struggling to be holy because they are taught that holiness is required as a part of the Christian life and yet we have no one who is lightening their load by telling them WHY they are trying to be holy to begin with! Until we are given a glimpse of God, efforts at living holy and dedicated before the LORD can seem frustrating and hard sometimes. Happy and Holy are two words that are never talked about together in the Christian Church. Somber and Holy, yes. Sour and Holy, most likely. Zealous and Holy. Serious and Holy. Iron-willed and Holy. Resolute and Holy. Determined and Holy. But never HAPPY and Holy. Think about the paradigm the church has set up at large! It downplays and ignores the ONLY thing that can really bring about HOLINESS: the manifest presence of God. We have so successfully turned church into everything else BUT something that is ABOUT HIM. No wonder we can't bring about holiness in maturity for the vast majority of those who enter church doors week after week.

God was offering a covering to Moses here. Don't miss the picture. If you are going to move into the presence of the LORD, you MUST embrace and rely on His covering. That is where the shoes fit into the picture. We see another reference to feet many years later when Isaiah is given an open vision of the throne of God:

*Isa 6:1-2 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. (NKJ)*

The Seraphim that are described here have six wings. Without a long lengthy discussion right now of what purpose all the wings have, consider the two wings that are used to COVER the feet of each Seraph. The Seraphim (translated as "the burning ones") evidently are the CLOSEST living beings in all creation to the THRONE of God apart from the MAN Christ Jesus. They GAZE night and day on the beauty of God. God designed them to be able to RECEIVE and RESPOND to more and more revelation of His person. If God were to reveal Himself fully to you or I we would in essence "short circuit". We couldn't handle it. It's not that God doesn't want to reveal Himself to us—it's that WE CAN'T HANDLE the revelation of God in His totality. It will take ALL OF ETERNITY for us to understand and appreciate Him in His fullness.

God made the Seraphim, however, to be closest to His presence. They "burn" as a result of their proximity and closeness to the God who is a "consuming fire". As they receive more and more revelation over time they themselves become overwhelmed and cry out "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY--- TRANSCENDENT GOD, TRANSCENDENT GOD, TRANSCEDENT GOD—WHOLLY OTHER THAN FATHER, WHOLLY OTHER THAN SON, WHOLLY OTHER THAN SPIRIT"! That is what they do NIGHT and DAY in eternity. The wings that cover their feet are actually explained by the encounter that Moses had with God. God wanted Moses to remove his shoes because they identified his "creatureliness" in the presence of the

uncreated God. The removal of the shoes would identify Moses as a creature, one who was touching the earth, and as such as one who CAME FROM the EARTH. We are but dust in the wind (Kansas lyrics acknowledged). The wings that cover the Seraphim's feet identify them as being "created". That covering is directly related to the fact that they (even in all of their awesome splendor) are still a CREATED being. The un-created God is revealing Himself to the CREATED order and in such an exchange the creation needs to be "GROUNDED".

I worked for an electrician in my younger days—and learned some valuable lessons. One was "always turn the power off before you cut into wires". Whoop! Sparks and fireworks! The other thing I learned was that "being grounded" will kill you if you come in contact with an electric source in just the right way. The grounding causes a "path" so to speak for the electricity to flow—a negative to positive channel that electrons move across. If you are not grounded, you can touch thousands of volts of electricity and it will not phase you one bit! Now I have heard this picture illustrate how we as Christians cannot "touch the World" and "touch God" at the same time—we die when we try. I have a better picture that I think makes more sense in the context of Moses and these Seraphim around the throne of God. There are billions of people in the world right now who are completely ignorant of the most powerful, awesome, incredible, wonderful, and immense being in existence: God Almighty. They are completely ignorant of Him and they don't even care about Him as their creator or their source and sustainer of life! It is though God could walk up right next to them in all of His power (a million volts) and they would not even be phased by Him! However, the moment that a person becomes "grounded" and they realize that they are a mere CREATURE while God Almighty is the UN-CREATED CREATOR, a pathway can be established. That pathway is much like that flow of electricity between a positive source and a negative source.

You see, God only flows, moves, and works in the HUMBLE. Those who acknowledge their CREATURELINESS. Those who acknowledge their INADEQUACY. Power always flows from a place of "higher potential" to one of "lower potential". When we see ourselves as vile sinners in need of God's grace and as creatures who are ultimately responsible to a CREATOR God, then power can FLOW in that relationship. That is the state of being "grounded" electrically. We acknowledge that we are at a LOW POTENTIAL and that the Creator God is the source of the HIGHEST POTENTIAL in existence.

**Isa 66:1-2**

*Thus says the LORD: "Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build Me? And where is the place of My rest? For all those things My hand has made, and all those things exist," says the LORD. "But on this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word. (NKJ)*

**Isa 57:15**

*For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. (NKJ)*

The one with the HIGHEST POTENTIAL, the One who inhabits Eternity, the One who is HIGH and LOFTY says something very profound. He will dwell with one that is contrite and of a humble spirit! Wow! How awesome a thought. God wants us "grounded" so that we acknowledge the difference between our LOW estate and His HIGH estate. He wants us to acknowledge our creatureliness before Him. Without this, we will never FLOW in the power that comes in a relationship with Him. The whole idea is that when we "get plugged" into God, His "current" running through us will bring about our death! Yes, that's right. God wants us DEAD so we can be suitable vessels that His power can flow through. Even the picture of being "crucified" with Christ daily carries this connotation. It is the picture in our modern day of an "electric chair". In a very similar way, the cross is not a subject of art or jewelry as much as it was an instrument of torturous death for executing condemned men. The closest modern equivalent we have to the cross is the electric chair or gas chamber—but let's stick to the electricity paradigm for a second. When Jesus tells his followers to "take up your cross daily", that could almost be translated in our modern vernacular as "get up out of bed every morning, sit yourself in the electric chair, and turn on the power!" It is in our daily dying to self that His power is made perfect. Paul calls it "glorying in our

weaknesses" and admits that he was "crucified with Christ." He said that it was no longer him that lived but Jesus who lived in him. That is why I like that paradigm of electricity better: it shows that God desires us to be grounded, i.e. humble and contrite, so that His power can flow through us. The more humble we are, the more power. The more dead to self we are, the more "conductive" we are. That's what happens when electricity touches the human body in just the right way. It's also what happens when God's "electricity" touches the human soul and spirit.

As long as we try to be "at the same level" as God Almighty, there is no "potential difference". Electricity and power only flows across a "differential". The problem with the world is that they have not acknowledged the "gulf" that separates them as creatures from the Creator God. They are trying to be "god" for their own selves. The New Age believes that we have "god" essence inside of us and if we just meditate hard and long enough then we will "realize" this and become "self-actualized" or "enlightened" to our true inner power and strength. Unfortunately, they are starting at the position of being at the same "level" or "potential" as God Himself. You cannot have true "flow" of power in that kind of relationship. You can have a demonic flow of power in that relationship, however, and many do! Satan loves the proud! He loves those who think "I can do it all by myself." He is the author of "All the resources I need are within myself." He invented the whole notion of "I can be god too!"

There is no difference in "potential" when we are "god" over our own lives and destinies. There can only be One God... and you and I are not Him! Even as Christian we can run our own lives the same way we did before we got saved. God saved us FROM our former lives: He didn't save us so we could CONTINUE living like we once did, thinking like once did, and being like we once were.

**1 Pet 1:13-16**

*Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, **not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance**; but as He who called you is holy, **you also be holy in all your conduct**, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Eph 4:21-24**

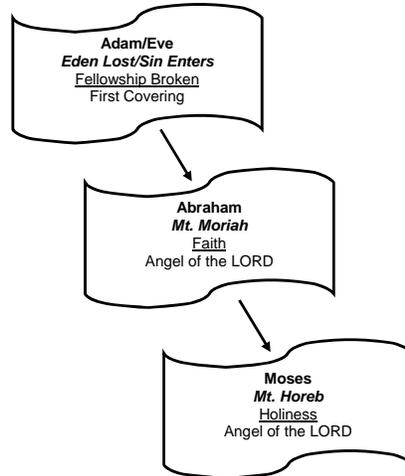
*If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. (NKJ)*

Do you see the link to holiness now? It is the acknowledging of the fact that we are the "created" and He is the "creator" that forms the basis of HOLINESS. He is the potter... we are the clay. He is the molder... we are the molded. He is the master ... we are the slave. He is the HIGH ONE ... we are the LOW ONE. He is the SOURCE ... we are the RESERVOIR.

God shows in both the Seraphim and the encounter with Moses that He extends a covering of HOLINESS to those who draw near to Him. Moses had to "take off" his covering of sandals in order to identify with his "proper position" in relation to the God of the Burning Bush. I enjoy Pastor Jack Hayford's teaching on this passage. I remember a few thoughts from one of his Promise Keeper's messages. Pastor Jack described on this occasion the difference of Moses "with shoes" and "without shoes". For example, we don't move quite so confidently on rocky terrain without shoes. We become rather "careful" about how and where we step. Pastor Jack also mentioned how the "sole" of Moses shoes had been imbedded with reminders of places Moses had been—all of his traveling and wanderings from Pharaoh across the desert to Midian. On those sandals was the residue of 60 or 70 years of his life. Likewise, when we approach God, we must remove our shoes. In doing so, we remove the things that have been lodged in the "souls" of our shoe as well. We put on and take off our "past" failures and "past" mistakes in order to embrace and stand upon the "newness" of a heavenly calling in Christ Jesus. The residue we accumulate just in the soul level alone can bind us, discourage us, condemn us, and hold us back from all that God has for us. We take those off though and we look forward to "only standing on God's covering."

Just like Adam and Eve had to take off their covering in the garden (leaves) in order to put on the covering that God offered (a lamb's skin), Moses took off his own covering (his sandals), and accepted God's covering of Holiness. It was in that COVERING that Moses met "I AM". His life was never the same after that. It is yet but another picture of the God who Covers.

## The presence of God with Moses was initially accompanied by the covering of holiness



## The Progressive Revelation of God's Covering

I would call this another installment in God's progressive revelation of covering. God drew near to one of us. Again. He took the initiative. He kept good on His promises. He is the one who invaded our world. He is the one who condescends. He is the one who made the effort. He is the LOVER that pursues us. Through Moses we see yet another glimpse of how GOD approaches man to draw man NEAR to GOD.

When God approaches man, it is always accompanied by His covering. Starting to see the picture yet? Good. Let's continue on from here as we look at God's further dealings with the nation of Israel. This "generation" is very crucial for us to understand. Why you might ask? Because they were a generation, much like ours, that was pivotal in the history of God's dealings with man. They were one of the three most important generations that Scripture talks about. They were the generation that saw the giving of the Law by the God of Israel who chose them as a covenant people. They saw the power of God displayed on a regular basis and with great intensity. We will too as the Bridal generation! Just read the book of Daniel or Revelation. We are going to see things NEVER SEEN before in human history. We are going to experience the supernatural, both from the kingdom of darkness and the Kingdom of God, in unprecedented ways. We know that seeing and experiencing God's power, however, is not enough to keep us enthralled or interested in God. Lucifer saw a lot of glory being highest in creation and closest to the throne—that wasn't enough to keep him from getting prideful.

Israel saw the WORKS of God, but only Moses was shown God's WAYS. As we will see, God really never wanted JUST Moses to come up into the cloud of glory. He wanted the whole NATION to come up with him. However, they had a problem with that. They didn't want for God to speak to them directly. His GLORY was too fierce! Instead, they chose a man to speak for them and for God to speak through that

man to them: Moses. God gave them LAW instead of what He really wanted to give them: Him in His glorious grace! What happens when we choose LAW over GRACE and the WORDS over the WORD-GIVER? We get what we want, but not what the heart of God wants to give us!

Note what the Apostle Paul said by the Holy Spirit about that generation:

**1 Cor 10:1-11**

*Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. **But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted.** 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." Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. **Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Yes, the end of the ages has come even more NOW than when Paul wrote that. Why should we pay careful attention to God's dealings with this generation? They are an EXAMPLE of how we are NOT to respond to the GLORY and MAJESTY of God. They will keep us sober as we run after the awesome God that delivered them from bondage in signs, wonders, and miracles. They will keep us sober as we run after the fearsome God who will reveal His glory soon to planet earth in unprecedented ways.

## Chapter 6

### Close Encounters of the Holy Kind

Exodus 20:18-19

Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off. Then they said to Moses, "You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." (NKJ)

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After God lead the *descendants* of Jacob out of Egyptian slavery, He began to form them as the *nation* of Israel. Through their journeys, Jehovah, the covenant God, began to establish principles, laws, and patterns that would establish the children of Israel as a permanent occupant of a future homeland: the Promised Land.

Think a minute about where Israel had just come:

Slavery and Bondage in Egypt. A hardened Pharaoh. A deliverer sent.

10 plagues.

Blood. Frogs. Vermin. Flies. Pestilence. Boils. Hail. Locust. Darkness. Israel unscathed.

The Passover instituted. Slaying of the first born of Egypt.

The blood of a lamb provides covering.

Freedom. Plundering of the wealth of Egypt.

1,000,000 people. 430 years of living and slavery in Egypt: reversed in a single night.

Supernatural guidance: a pillar of smoke by day, fire by night. Pursuit by Pharaoh.

Grumbling: Supernatural fire as protection.

A Sea Supernaturally Divided. Safe Passage.

Pharaoh's army supernaturally swallowed.

Grumbling in the Wilderness of Shur: Supernaturally bitter water was made clean (Marah)

Grumbling in the Wilderness of Zin: Supernatural provision of food (manna) in the wilderness.

Grumbling at Rephadim: Supernatural provision of water from the rock (Meribah/Massa)

Israel defeats Amalek: Supernatural victory from Moses uplifted hands (Aaron/Hur)

Israel arrives in the Wilderness of Sinai.

50 days from the Red Sea crossing: The Day of Pentecost.

God will for the FIRST time in human history make covenant with a **nation**.

This was it. This was the "reason" that God called Israel out of Egypt. It was the Day of Pentecost when God would give His law to the descendents of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and establish a covenant with them as His chosen people and as a chosen nation.

Why did God call Israel out of Egypt to begin with? Ever stop to think about that? Do a quick word survey of every time Moses told Pharaoh to "let my people go says the LORD". The answer is very intriguing.. and also serves as a reminder of why God calls us out of bondage today.

- Exod 4:22-23**      *"Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: "Israel is My son, My firstborn. So I say to you, **let My son go that he may serve Me.** But if you refuse to let him go, indeed I will kill your son, your firstborn."' (NKJ, emphasis mine)*
- Exod 5:1**            *Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let My people go, that they may **hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.**'" (NKJ, emphasis mine)*
- Exod 7:16**          *"And you shall say to him, 'The LORD God of the Hebrews has sent me to you, saying, "Let My people go, **that they may serve Me in the wilderness**"; but indeed, until now you would not hear!' (NKJ, emphasis mine)*
- Exod 8:1**            *And the LORD spoke to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: "Let My people go, **that they may serve Me.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*
- Exod 8:20**          *And the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh as he comes out to the water. Then say to him, 'Thus says the LORD: "Let My people go, **that they may serve Me.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*
- Exod 9:1**            *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh and tell him, 'Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: "Let My people go, **that they may serve Me.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*
- Exod 9:13**          *Then the LORD said to Moses, "Rise early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh, and say to him, 'Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: "Let My people go, **that they may serve Me,** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*
- Exod 10:3**          *So Moses and Aaron came in to Pharaoh and said to him, "Thus says the LORD God of the Hebrews: 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, **that they may serve Me.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

God wanted a people who would SERVE Him in the wilderness... He wanted them to hold a FEAST for HIM in the wilderness. That was the reason.

A very good friend of mine with a prophetic voice once spoke to me during a very pivotal time in my life. He asked me a very direct question. "How would Moses know that God was with him as he went to deliver the children of Israel from the bondage of Pharaoh?" In other words, God gave Moses the burning bush experience and then sent him off on a mission to go against the most powerful nation on the earth in that day and deliver a million people out from under tyrannical slavery. What was to be the sign or the "assurance" so to speak as Moses did these things that God was with him? How would Moses know that God would truly deliver the sons of Jacob and do the things He promised for Moses? This was the first time Moses had "met" God like this. I mean seeing and hearing God in a burning bush while standing on holy ground is one thing. Standing in the court of Pharaoh alone with your brother Aaron while surrounded by demonically inspired priests is something completely different. Moses truly wanted to know as well how he was going to convince his OWN people that God had sent him to do this. Who was he, a shepherd from Midian, to stand against the most powerful ruler on earth? And what would be the sign?

I didn't have an answer for my friend. So we read it together:

*Exod 3:11-12*

*But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?" So He said, "I will certainly be with you. And **this shall be a sign to you that I have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve (worship: NAS, NIV) God on this mountain.**" (NKJ, emphasis)*

Hmm. You mean God didn't promise Moses any OTHER sign that He would be with him other than this? You mean God's only sign of assurance to Moses that he was the deliverer was this simple fact: "When you get back here to this mountain that you are standing on and the children of Israel are serving me here, then YOU WILL KNOW I HAVE SENT YOU!"

I didn't quite understand the question or the answer, but I was about to. You see, I was at a point in my life when God wanted to push me out of my comfortable boat ride. I had some really weird ideas running through my head at the time. Ideas about corporate intercessory worship. Ideas I had put into practice over the years in private but was searching about "how" to introduce and train other believers in them. They were something I felt a burning desire to do, but I just didn't know how to "do it" in a group. I "knew" that God had laid some pretty heavy things on my heart that He wanted to see happen in me and through me. My big hang up was, "How am I going to know whether God is really doing this thing in me or are these desires I have just some wild crazy idea of my own?" I was struggling with something similar to what Moses struggled with. God was calling me to go a little further with Him... step out a little more... risk a little embarrassment. My friend was speaking for the Lord when he said, "You will not know whether God will use you UNTIL you do what it is He is asking you to do." Wow. Really? You mean He's not going to give me banners in the sky or angelic visitations or audible voices from heaven along the way? No. The way you will know is when you are back here serving God on the mountain of worship. Everything in between Horeb and Egypt and Egypt and Horeb is BY FAITH. Just like God told Moses.

Moses had to go BY FAITH back across that dessert into a land where he was wanted for murder. Moses had to go BY FAITH into Egypt and stand before Pharaoh. He had to go BY FAITH to his own people: and even they doubted him and spoke ill of him when their labors got harder. There would be no more burning bushes along the way. The LORD even tried to kill Moses on the trip TO Egypt because Moses did not observe circumcision of his child by Zipporah. How's that for re-assurance that you are in the will of God! There would be no more audible voices. It was now to be by FAITH that Moses would go and that God would "certainly be with" him.

Moses would not know that God had TRULY sent him UNTIL the children of Israel were serving God on Mount Horeb in the land of Midian. "When you have brought them out, they shall serve God on **this** mountain." That was it. Moses going in had NO ASSURANCE at all of any of the supernatural things that God would do. All he knew is that God PROMISED to show His wonders to Egypt and to Pharaoh. All he knew going in was that God would be with him, teach him what to say, and show him what to do. That was it. All that list of supernatural activity I described at the beginning of the chapter: Moses didn't have a clue how any of that was going to pan out. ALL Moses had to do was just GO! That was it. It would be by sheer faith that God would DO what he promised. Nothing more. Nothing less. A shepherd's staff and Aaron's help. How incredible.

Which leads me back to this point: God delivered Israel out from the bondage of Egypt so that they would SERVE HIM. That WAS the reason. There are many Christians who don't realize this powerful truth. Some Christians think God delivered them from sin so that they could miss hell and go to heaven. Though that is a definite fringe benefit of the package (and the primary message of most evangelists in our nation), it is NOT the primary reason God delivers us from the kingdom of darkness:

*Heb 12:28-29*

*Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, **let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.** For our God is a consuming fire. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

- Titus 2:14** *Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself **His own special people, zealous for good works.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*
- 1 Pet 2:9** *But you are a chosen generation, **a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him** who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; (NKJ, emphasis mine)*
- Eph 1:12** *We who first hoped in Christ have been **destined and appointed to live for the praise of his glory.** (RSV, emphasis mine)*
- Col 1:13-14** *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. (NKJ)*
- Heb 9:14** *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works **to serve the living God?** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

God has called us out of our own "Egypt" and the land of our bondage and slavery so that we may worship Him and serve Him on His holy mountain: Zion. We were appointed to show forth His praise, declare His glory, serve Him, know Him, be zealous for His works, love Him. Surely this is just more than missing hell and catching heaven. Grace is not just to punch our ticket on the heavenly express and give us a mansion just over the hilltop some where out in the future. Grace according to the writer of Hebrews is given to us so that we may SERVE GOD acceptably. Just like God told the children of Israel when He delivered them from the hand of Pharaoh. They did NOTHING to deserve anything they got. All the supernatural wonders. All the miraculous deliverance. All the divine guidance and provision. They merited NONE of it. God's grace was given to them so that they would SERVE GOD on that mountain with Moses. Just like the Church is called to serve God in worship on Mt. Zion. We have the SAME calling as one body of both Jewish and Gentile believers in Messiah.

Moses in Exodus 19 had arrived BACK where he began. He had come full circle. God had fulfilled His promise. He and the descendants of Jacob had come from Egypt to worship and serve the LORD on the same mount that God first spoke to Moses on. Oh yes, they had grumbled along the way. They had doubted already, began to accuse God, began to accuse Moses, and began to dis-trust God. In spite of ALL they had seen of God's wonders and supernatural power, they still had not developed the RELATIONSHIP with God in LOVE that He was really after. They liked God for what He did for them. However, when the chips were down and the tide had turned, watch out! Nonetheless, God was about to speak to Israel like they had never heard Him speak before! This mountain experience was to be the last stop on the journey before they would move into the Promised Land. As Moses continued to deal with God one on one, the nation of Israel was correspondingly drawn into the manifest presence of God as well. The Covenant God was ready to cut an agreement with the whole nation and establish His law as the cornerstone of their lives in a new Promised Land.

- Exod 19:3-6** *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: '**You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself.** 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. 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." (NKJ)*

Yes, the house of Jacob had seen what the LORD did to the Egyptians and everything else in between. Jehovah God wanted two things: **obedience to HIS VOICE** and **keeping of His covenant**. If they did

that, He promised two things in return: they would be a **special treasure** (the most special one in ALL the earth) and they would be a **kingdom of priests to Him**. This is exactly what Peter says that we as the Church of Jesus Christ are, right? A special people. A royal (kingly) priesthood. A holy nation. It's the same offer He made with them: the only difference is that our "Red Sea" was the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Our Passover Lamb was Yeshuah on the cross! Our Pentecost was just as glorious in some ways, but much different in outcome (as we will see shortly).

The time to ratify the agreement with Israel had come. God was about to make another "approach" in flying terms. He was about to do another "touch and go". God was about to "land" His very presence on Mt. Horeb. This approach, however, was going to last a bit longer than the experience Moses had with the Angel of the LORD in the burning bush. Jehovah Himself was about to come down and descend upon the top of Mt. Sinai (or Mt. Horeb). It was the 50<sup>th</sup> day from the crossing of the Red Sea and later would be the 50<sup>th</sup> day from the First Fruits celebration. It was also to be the 50<sup>th</sup> day from the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead: He WAS the first-born from the dead and the first-fruits of those risen from the dead as well. Also known as Shavout, this day was very significant in the history of Israel. It was the day that God fulfilled what He told Moses: "**this would be the sign that I have sent you**".

The **first** Pentecost was an AWESOME day to say the least. If the first meeting Moses had with "I AM" was scary, the next meetings with "I AM" would be no different for the entire nation:

**Exod 19:9-13**

*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. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go to the people and **consecrate them today and tomorrow**, and let them **wash their clothes**. And let them **be ready** for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. **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. 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**."*

Now, let's get down to business in our discussion of covering. Once again, God's presence was going to be accompanied by a covering: in this case, a **thick cloud**. The LORD wanted the people to wash their **CLOTHES**. There was a practical reason for this as well as a spiritual reason. Their clothes were dirty after 50 long days across the desert and an escape from Egypt. God wanted them to "wash away" the remnants of their stay in Egypt and "purify" their hearts at the same time. It was a time of purifying their lives before this all-important meeting with Jehovah to ratify His covenant. Purity and consecration thus became a PART of the covering that God was establishing. They had three days to prepare: three days to think about, ponder, and meditate on what God was proposing and offering to them. They had three days to consider what God had done and what God was about to do. There had to have been an **EXPECTATION** in the minds of the people of SOMETHING even bigger than what they had seen or experienced already.

The LORD also set specific **BOUNDARIES** so that the people could not even *touch* the mountain! When God draws near to man, He sets the rules. He is the one who sets the conditions. He is the one who drives the train. He is the conductor of the symphony. He is the one who sets the limits. That is part of the fear of the LORD: people could DIE in His presence if they were not careful. Ananias and Sappharia were not consecrated and pure before the presence of God when His glory was manifest upon the earth—and it cost them their life. Consecration was **required** as part of the covering that was to accompany God's presence; it was the human responsibility that accompanied God's provision. God wanted the people to come near to Him, but He still set the boundaries.

Jump out of your religious mind for a second with me. THIS WAS UNPRECEDENTED! Jehovah. The ineffable "I AM". The three time HOLY God of Eternity was about to step DOWN onto a mountain and meet with some folks on earth. All because HE CHOSE THEM by grace. They didn't earn anything. They didn't even deserve such an audience. Most had already started to despise their deliverance and wanted to go back to Egypt. It was all because He made a promise to their Father Abraham a number of generations ago. We see again though another aspect of HOW GOD APPROACHES HUMANS. God approaches humans and invites them to DRAW NEAR to Him. Consider a few things about this in our lives as we pursue the covering that God offers us:

*Acts 22:16* . . . *Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.* (NKJ)

*James 4:8* ***Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*** (NKJ, emphasis mine)

*Acts 3:19* ***Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.*** (NKJ, emphasis mine)

We are called to cleanse our hands and purify our hearts BEFORE we approach God. Actually, this is a call to SINNERS and not to BELIEVERS, though many BELIEVERS who have not progressed past the "elementary" milk of the Word should consider it as well. It just says that you can't have SIN and have GOD too. You must decide which one you want more. God will draw near to you, IF you will draw near to God.

How does a sinner do that?

Easy.

"Hey God, I am sick of sin! I am sick of running my own life! I am sick of me! I am sick of the devil having his way with me! I am sick of not having any purpose! I am sick of being the captain of my own destiny! I am sick of driving my own train! God, please HELP ME! I turn, as best I can, away from ALL THAT and I turn TO YOU!"

That's drawing near to God.

How does a double-minded person purify their hearts?

Easy.

"Hey God, I am sick of my own opinion. I am sick of Larry King's opinion, Ted Koppel's opinion, Oprah's opinion, Bill Maher's opinion, and the New York Time's editorial opinion. I am sick of determining right for my own self. I am tired of having a subjective standard of truth. I am done with thinking everything is relative. Your Word is truth. I choose to be a follower of Your Word and to pursue who you are by gazing into the only infallible testimony of You in existence: the Bible."

That's how you end double-mindedness.

You become SINGLE-MINDED on the Word of God as your source of TRUTH. You let it judge your thoughts and attitudes and emotions. You let it direct your ways and guide your paths.

Both of these can be processes. Our hands are never going to be thoroughly clean and our minds will never be completely singular in focus toward God. Only the Blood of Jesus makes us positionally clean in either of these areas to begin with. God looks on our heart though. What do you WANT? What do you

DESIRE? Do you WANT to be pure? Do you DESIRE single-heartedness? Is it your hearts desire to PLEASE God? That is what matters, more than our stumblings and our failures. The day you no longer FEEL remorse or desire to change from wickedness as a child of God is the day when you need to fear! But God has called us to more than just living in fear all the time. He has called us to victory! He has called us to have a Fatherly relationship with Him! He has called us to be a suitable “helper” and “counterpart” to His Son! We can relate to what Israel as a nation felt on that first Pentecost. God was drawing near and He wanted THEM to draw near to Him. But that required something of them. It required them to do something so that God COULD draw near to them like He wanted. This is yet another facet of covering:

## The presence of God with Israel was initially accompanied by the covering of consecration and purity.

When God drew near, it was one, noticeable, and two, scary. Even with preparation and consecration, the children of Israel were for the most part NOT PREPARED to meet God in this way. Many of us hunger for God; but then again, most of us would DIE if God showed up in all of His glory and all of His majestic splendor. Even in glimpses of His glory now on earth, we still get VERY UNCOMFORTABLE. We aren't prepared in a lot of ways any more than those folks were.

*Exod 19:16-25*

*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. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to **meet with God**, and they stood **at the foot of the mountain**. 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**. And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, **Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice**. **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. 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. Also let the priests who come near the LORD consecrate themselves, lest the LORD break out against them. 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.' 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**. So Moses went down to the people and spoke to them.*

God used all of their SENSES to get their attention: thunderings, lightnings, dark clouds, smoke, a loud sound of the trumpet, a shaking ground, a quaking mountain. AWESOME! That was what the original meaning of awesome was supposed to refer to: the incredible power and glory of God Himself. When the physical realm is touched by the glory of God and the glory of God is FULL BLOWN, the physical realm will RESPOND DRASTICALLY. I have read many attempts at trying to understand and figure out all the various physical manifestations in humans that seem to accompany revivals of the last decade (and that have accompanied almost EVERY great revival of history). Some explanations attribute these manifestations to satan and other explanations seem to intimate that “God would never act like that or do that... certainly not like THAT anyway.” Please. Give me a little break here.

Do you remember my analogy last chapter of electricity and how electricity flows LARGEST over the GREATEST differentials in electric potential? When people are confronted in revival with how FAR from God they really are, it opens up MORE of that differential between them and God. Have you ever seen someone touch a live electrical wire and shake? I have... and God is more than just some kind of “electricity” that makes us feel good temporarily. I'm not saying that people who don't get physical

manifestations are not as repentant or any less sincere in loving God. I'm just saying that some people are so "grounded" and brought low in how "needy" they are of God that it opens a dimension of God's glory working in them and through them in a way that causes their very BODY to respond as well. You can literally see with your eyes a "shaking" that is going on inside of them. You don't HAVE to have your body respond... but it's OK and not UNUSUAL if it does! I don't want to fish into those waters right at this time, but I just want to reiterate this thought: a response in the physical realm is certainly not "unusual" when the God of glory comes in greater and fuller dimensions of His glory. In this case, God's glory **touched** the mountain. Jehovah CAME DOWN upon Mount Sinai...how incomprehensible. The cloud that accompanied the terrifying glory of God Almighty Himself was immense and awesome: Moses and the people were BOTH scared. Even the writer of Hebrews reveals that Moses himself trembled!

*Exod 20:18-21*      *Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, **the sound of the trumpet**, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off. Then they said to Moses, "**You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.**" And Moses said to the people, "Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin. **So the people stood afar off, but Moses drew near the thick darkness where God was.***

*Heb 12:18-21*      ***For you have not come** to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to **blackness and darkness and tempest**, and the **sound** of a trumpet and the **voice** of words, so that **those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore.** For they could not endure what was commanded: "And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow." **And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I am exceedingly afraid and trembling."** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Who drew near to God and who did not, though? Moses was scared, yes. The people were scared, yes. Moses drew near. The people stood afar off. See again here that Moses wound up drawing near to God while the people stood "afar off". Was this what God had asked for? No. Remember a little earlier:

*Exod 19:13*      *When the trumpet sounds long, they shall come near the mountain. (NKJ)*

In Exodus 20, they had HEARD the sound of the trumpet. Instead of coming near the mountain like God wanted them to, they instead remained and stood AFAR OFF. God had given them boundaries and rules about TOUCHING the mountain and going "up" without His invitation to do so. However, God did want them to both draw NEAR the mountain and to HEAR Him for themselves. I'm not an English major, but STANDING AFAR OFF is not COMING NEAR! That is not what God wanted. He WANTED the people to come NEAR to Him. What did they want instead? They wanted Moses to dialogue and speak and behold the GLORY of God FOR THEM. They were AFRAID that God would kill them with His very words. They were AFRAID of God. What kind of relationship can you have with someone if you are scared they are going to kill you for doing wrong? What kind of love are you going to experience for a being who you see only as intent on your destruction? Not much I bet:

*I Jn 4:17-19*      *Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us. (NKJ)*

"He who fears"... that described Israel as a whole. God did not come down to SCARE them. He came down in His awesomeness so that they would be DRAWN into a lifelong love pursuit of Him. How could you not behold the glory of God and be drawn to Him? Well, it is possible. Lucifer stands as the PRIME example of how you can be HIGHEST in creation and CLOSEST to God and STILL rebel against Him. How stupid he (satan) was and is. You will never love God the way He wants you to love Him until you

get a glimpse of Him and know His LOVE for you first. We do love BECAUSE He loves us. He loves FIRST and He loves GREATEST. God made us to know, express, and return that LOVE. That is one of the PRIMARY reasons He created us and made us in His image. He wanted beings who could freely and voluntarily give and receive LOVE... just like Him. Lover's talk to each other. Lover's listen to one other. Lover's are not afraid of each other. Lover's draw NEAR to one another.

It was the people, however, who wanted someone to speak to them instead of God! It was the people who stood afar off instead of drawing NEAR up to God's boundaries.

The Church at large has a similar problem: we want someone else to have intimacy and fire with God so that they can tell us how we should live and what we should do. We want somebody else to experience the depths of God and then "share" it with us. We want God "second-hand." Am I right? God is just too scary otherwise... He is just too "hard" for us to deal with in all of His majesty and glory. Too many things in MY life have to be consecrated and purified in order for ME to draw near to God like that. But dear ones, THAT is exactly what God wants from you and me.

Some people might disagree with this, but I personally think Chapters 20 through 23 of Exodus would have been written DIFFERENTLY had the nation as a whole RESPONDED to God DIFFERENTLY. Do you think God wanted to give them a LAW to govern them? No. I don't think that's what He desired on this occasion. He was inviting a nation to allow Him to live IN THEIR MIDST. God Himself WANTED to be their LAW. He wanted His SPOKEN WORD to be their very livelihood and sustenance. Israel would learn this lesson the hard way, and at the end of their wilderness journeys would come to this conclusion:

**Deut 8:3** *So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that **man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

God wanted them to subsist and find their life on His very Word. The Septuagint uses the Greek word "rhema"... meaning the God-breathed "word" to render this verse from Deuteronomy. We would find later that the "Word" was a person who took on flesh and came to be our "bread of life." Either way, God was offering a relationship of INTIMACY, CLOSENESS, and NEARNESS. The people instead wanted LAW. They wanted someone to tell them "what to do." They just wanted a set of rules to live by. They just wanted someone to tell them what checkboxes they needed to do in order to get to heaven. They just wanted to live the way they always lived and add some good moral conduct to it so they could be acceptable to God.

Well, needless to say, they got what they wanted. And as a result, God USED the example of the LAW to teach ALL people groups on the face of the earth about what He DIDN'T intend. Why was the LAW given?

**Gal 3:19** *What purpose then does the law serve? **It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Rom 5:20** *Moreover the law entered **that the offense might abound.** But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, (NKJ)*

The LAW was given because of TRANSGRESSIONS. It was given to increase the offense. The LAW was given because a people God was trying to DRAW into His presence said "No God, we don't want your presence or your fellowship in that way!" The LAW was not given to INCREASE fellowship with God or to MAKE a person righteous. Following the LAW does not wash away one sin or purify your heart from evil. God WANTED something different... something else. God WANTED faith. God WANTED love for Him.

God WANTED voluntary agreement. God WANTED a relationship. The people wanted a spokesman and they wanted rules....

**Gal 2:15-16** *"We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, **knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Gal 3:21-24** *Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! **For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.** But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. **Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

We find out in the New Testament that God really didn't WANT to give the LAW. It was a great tutor. It was a great schoolmaster. It was a great object lesson. But it was NOT what God *really* wanted. That's why I say that if the house of Jacob had responded differently at that mountain, then maybe Exodus 20 through Exodus 23 would have been written differently. It's not that the CONTENT of God's law would be any different (His standards are absolute)... it's that the CONTEXT or preeminence of the LAW as the focal point may have been quite different. God would have still given the Law in some form I think, but maybe it would have had a different ROLE in the life of the nation of Israel. I don't know. I can only speculate. God still honored their request: He gave them a spokesman in Moses who heard from God directly and then told the people what to do. If you want to live under the LAW, that is exactly what God will let you do.

The only thing I know for sure is that Christians today are still living in large numbers under the same bondage and expectation of the LAW! We want the set of rules. We want the do's and don'ts. We want the checklists. We want the LAW to govern our lives because it doesn't speak or come with fire, thunderings, lightnings, smoke, and trembling! We can have our checklists without ever having to deal with a PERSON!

**Rom 7:1-4** *Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. Therefore, my brethren, **you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another-- to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

God wanted to MARRY the nation of Israel, and in a sense He did by covenant. More importantly, we as the Church are betrothed not to the LAW but to the LAWGIVER. We were meant to be wed to the Bridegroom and to attain a privilege and rank as co-heirs by grace into the richest and most glorious family in the universe: the Family of God. We were meant to be married to the Son... and to enter into a relationship with God full of glory, intimacy, and knowledge of Him. What happens when we refuse the intimate embrace that the Holy One offers us? We get the same thing that Israel got: we get the LAW. The LAW is not BAD. Please don't confuse me. But we use the LAW to bring about and do things that God never intended it to do!

The vast **undiscovered country** of the Church of Jesus Christ IS the person of Jesus Christ Himself. The Church of God for the most part does not even welcome or acknowledge the presence of God. He is

WHAT church is all about yet He is the least invited and least cared about Person IN the church. The target audience for 'church' is not the lost, the rich, the poor, the wealthy, the smart, the homeless, the young, the old, Yuppies, Generation X, Baby Boomers, the middle-class, the upper-crust, the lower-crust, black, white, Hispanic, or Asian! The target audience for church is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> They are "what", who, and why we do everything to start with! Without God, none of those target groups I mentioned are going to be affected anyway.

That is why the LAW is so much easier to deal with... yet it is so CONDEMNING and religiously SCORCHING.

Is not the LAW good? Absolutely.

Is not the LAW beneficial? Agreed.

Is not the LAW a written record of what is right and wrong? Absolutely.

Is not the LAW used by the Holy Spirit to correct us? You bet.

Is not the LAW required to awaken awareness of sin and "lead" one to Christ? Yep.

Is not the LAW (or the Word in general) what we need to renew our mind with? Yes.

Is not the LAW what keeps our way pure and we guard our life by it? Amen brother.

Is not the LAW given to keep us from destruction and loss? Roger that.

Consider what the Holy Spirit says through the Apostle Paul in this area:

**Rom 7:12** *Therefore the law is **holy**, and the commandment **holy** and **just** and good. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**1 Tim 1:8-11** *But we know that **the law is good if one uses it lawfully**, knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Also consider some of the "dumb" questions that Paul dealt with in this very same arena. Yes, there is such a thing as a dumb question. There are some questions that don't deserve an answer, but you must provide an answer because the person asking is only asking to ignore or rule out what you are trying to say. When you try to ignore God and skirt around the issue, you inevitably wind up asking "dumb" questions like "Can God make a rock that's too big for Him to pick up?" The Apostle Paul was a master at using his intellect under the anointing of the Holy Spirit to answer some of these questions... so I won't bother re-doing what's already been done. Consider some of the natural questions that arise in this discussion about the LAW:

**Rom 3:31** *Do we then make void the law through faith? **Certainly not!** On the contrary, we establish the law. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Rom 6:1-2** *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? **Certainly not!** How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Rom 6:15** *What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? **Certainly not!** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Rom 7:7** *What shall we say then? Is the law sin? **Certainly not!** (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Rom 7:13** *Has then what is good become death to me? **Certainly not!** ... (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Rom 9:14** *What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Certainly not! (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Gal 3:21** *Is the law then against the promises of God? **Certainly not!** For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

In every single case, Paul follows the “Certainly not!” with a lengthy exposition of the answer. So what is God’s big hang-up about the LAW then? It’s not a hang up... and it is not even a criticism of the LAW itself. It is a criticism of US and what WE are like. Given the choice of experiencing the LAW-GIVER of the LAW itself, most of us will choose the LAW.

Consider this:

**Heb 7:19** *For **the law made nothing perfect**; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which **we draw near to God**. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

**Rom 6:14** *For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. (NKJ)*

The LAW cannot make you perfect. The LAW cannot set you free from sin. Only drawing near to God and gazing upon Him in grace can transform your heart and soul and spirit. Only the “better hope” of a RELATIONSHIP with God can make you pure and cause transformation of your heart. The LAW is good... but it serves a higher purpose. The Bible is good... but it serves a higher purpose. Theological study is good ... but it serves a higher purpose. We were meant to draw NEAR to God in an intimate embrace of life-long pursuit and loving service. We have to spend so much time whacking off the religious ideas we have about God before we can really and truly see God for who He has revealed Himself to be in the Bible. What is one of the LARGE reasons God gave us such a written record as the Bible?

**John 5:39-40** *You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. **But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life**. (NKJ)*

That is it in a nutshell. We don’t mind going to the Bible or the to the LAW per se to find direction for our lives. As we should! God’s Word is the source of authority for governing our life. The point is that eternal life is not in the Bible! Eternal life... God’s life, is only found in God Himself! That is our problem. We will indeed study the Bible (although *that* is not even a given in 99.9% of evangelical Christianity)... because the Bible itself isn’t necessarily scary or fearsome in and of itself. Your Bible is not a PERSON... it’s a BOOK written BY a PERSON. Your Bible does not come with lightning flashes, smoke, and thunder when you open it? Right?

WHAT or better yet WHO motivates our study of the Bible? Do we study to discover the wonderful person of who God is and align our lives to be pleasing to Him? Do we study to allow the Author to unlock the depths of His person, character, and morals to us in order for us to be conformed to His own image? Or do we study to come up with some set of theological truths by which we can define every thing in Christianity so that it fits in our own nice little box of what God is or isn’t like? Is it to formulate in our mind that list of what to do and what not to do and then compare ourselves to that in order to see if God really likes us? The former versus the latter are certainly BETTER reasons to study our Bibles. God gave the Bible as a tool for us to gaze upon His person. We are to pursue Him above else—even His LAW. IF we pursue Him, we will fulfill and obey His law on the journey. However, if we PURSUE the LAW, we are not guaranteed that we will find or reach Him!

It has ALWAYS been about a person. In fact, it is about THIS person in particular that we must all come to terms with. And who is this person? We know Him as Jesus of Nazareth, the living Son of God.

**Rom 9:30-33**

*What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness of faith; but Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness. **Why? Because they did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law.** For they stumbled at that stumbling stone. As it is written: "**Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, and whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.**" (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Israel's problems and their stone of stumbling began right here on Mt. Sinai. It was at the giving of the Law that the root of their problems as a nation was formed. What has plagued them during their whole existence and history, from the time of their general rejection of Jesus as Messiah to the present day? It is their reliance on the LAW (first and foremost) as their PRIMARY guide and their reliance on someone else to hear from God and then expound and explain what God says (which defines their rabbinical systems precisely).<sup>2</sup> That is not what God wanted then and it is not what God wants now. He wants a people who will DRAW NEAR to Him when He DRAWS NEAR to them. He does not want us to shrink back in fear and think that He is going to kill us by His very words! That was why God took the time to extend a covering to the people. They were to consecrate and purify themselves, and having done that, they were WELCOME to come near to God in the cloud of glory that He extended to them.

Before we become too proud in our "enlightened" Christian selves, also remember that at times we are NO BETTER. In fact Paul warns us very sternly that we are JUST AS SUSCEPTIBLE to the same things that caused a LOT of the "natural" branches to be cut off from the olive tree (Israel):

**Rom 11:17-23**

*And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. **Do not be haughty, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.** Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. **Otherwise you also will be cut off.** And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

Yes.. do not be haughty. Fear God, but not in the way that keeps us from drawing near to God. Fear God in the sense that we DO draw near and gaze on Him in a love locked grip. We can see His awesome glory. The way is available for us to do that! Grace is available to us that will forever keep us in that love relationship with God. Paul is just saying very loudly here, "DO NOT REFUSE IT!" We can be just as guilty of letting our pastor or our priest do the "heavy stuff" with God while we walk away with just the set of rules we need in order to get by with God. That won't do anymore. Maybe you used to could do that ... but the day is at hand when that cannot and will not suffice anymore. The times are too perilous and the days are too short. If you are not enthralled and passionately pursuing God NOW, you will not be ABLE or PREPARED to because of events that are soon to take place on planet Earth. The force of gravity will be too strong on you... if you cannot break free to pursue God now, you certainly won't break free when His judgments are loosed in the earth.

But God is extending His covering to us yet again today. The call is going out right now for us to consecrate and purify ourselves so that we may draw near into the cloud of His glory. That is the only cloud of protection we have in the days to come. No other will suffice! It is in the account of the first Pentecost that we also see God **spoke** from out of the midst of that covering. Moses entered into the midst of the covering (His presence) and went up into the mountain. When God's covering is



*Gal 6:7-9*

*Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. (NKJ)*

"Eternal" life is no different than the normal "life" that comes from God. Life is life... life is ZOE. "Eternal" is just a descriptor... an adjective that describes the "quality" or "nature" of the LIFE that God gives. The point is that we are not going to wait to REAP life only in the age to come. We will REAP life in this age and in our life if we sow to the Spirit. What a great freedom when I learned that these combined truths point to this simple fact: even uninspired and unanointed disciplines (the "beholding of the Lord dimly") will lead to my TRANSFORMATION! Wow! I was set free when I realized (as I have heard Pastor Mike Bickle say on many occasions) that even if I don't "feel" like God touched me or changed me while doing "mundane" and "boring" disciplines, that I was transformed. How incredible I thought... and it continues to revolutionize my personal devotional life. I don't have to feel and see the Shekinah glory of God in order to be transformed! All I need to do is behold Him dimly... abide in His word... continue in His pursuit... remain in the vine. In the end, I WILL REAP LIFE! Friends, this simple revelation gave me a new zeal to pursue God... in the wet times, in the dry times, in the mundane times, and in the stupendous/awesome times. He is worth it! He is worthy! He is the object of all my energies and passions in this life. I briefly introduce this concept here and will pursue it later in the next chapter as well.. but keep it in mind when we begin to explore Moses further dynamics with the LORD.

As we press further, remember that God calls us "up to Him" in a sense more than He comes "down to us":

**God does not come down to us as we worship so much  
as He moves us up to where He is as we worship.**

Concluding our look at this installment of God's progressive revelation of covering, I draw your attention to the "conclusion" of this particular commitment ceremony at Mt. Sinai. In Exodus 24, we read a very intriguing account of how God INVITES Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel up to "worship from afar." The next morning, after Moses had told the people the words of the LORD and all His judgments, he "sprinkles" the people with blood and "sprinkles" the altar with blood. They read the covenant and make a blood oath to "obey all the LORD has said." God knew in His heart that they could not keep this promise, but He still made the covenant with them anyway.

Let's read the story now:

*Exod 24:1-18*

*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. "And Moses alone shall come near the LORD, but they shall not come near; nor shall the people go up with him." 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." And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient." And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you according to all these words." Then Moses went up, also Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and it was like the very heavens in its clarity. But on the nobles of the*

*children of Israel He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, and they ate and drank. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them." So Moses arose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God. And he said to the elders, "Wait here for us until we come back to you. Indeed Aaron and Hur are with you. If any man has a difficulty, let him go to them." Then Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain. 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. 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. So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights. (NKJ, emphasis mine)*

I draw your attention to a fascinating area of study here: seventy-four men eat a "covenant" meal with God. God ratifies His covenant by "throwing a banquet". Man would I have loved to been there! They SAW the God of Israel. They did not see His face, but they did SEE His feet. They ate and drank with God. WOW! Pastor Mike Bickle has expounded the idea of the beauty realm of God so well that I now take notice of it anytime I study the classic "visions of God" passages in the Bible. Notice that they ate this covenant meal on a "sky blue" sapphire pavement. I believe, as Mike does, that this pavement is the SAME pavement that Ezekiel sees in his open vision of heaven and it is the SAME "sapphire sea" that John sees in his open vision of heaven years later.<sup>4</sup> This was considered "worship from afar." Friends, they were on the very pavement of the heavenly throne room that is translucent blue and that is mingled with fire! They were on the same sea of glass that God's throne is situated on. They saw His feet and His throne! How close do you have to be so to God to see that? Friends, they SAW GOD! THAT is worship "from afar" in God's mind.

When they entered that cloud of "covering", they actually transcended earthly realms and stepped into the "heavenly realm" itself. Sort of reminds me of one of those scary movies where somebody steps through a "mirror" into another dimension...and this story sounds like something out of a science fiction story at best. Did they leave their bodies to do this? Could they tell the difference? Probably not. Even Paul said that in his trip to the third heaven he could not discern whether he was "in his body" or "out of his body".<sup>5</sup> When God "came down", evidently the "heavenly realm" itself descended with Him. In the context of God's covering, He extended an invitation for men to COME UP into His presence and eat a meal of covenant agreement with Him. How awesome to consider! We will eat a covenant meal with God very soon as well. It's called the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. It is when we will be wed to the Bridegroom and have a banquet of celebration together with Him! I think we will eat this meal on this sapphire pavement as well.

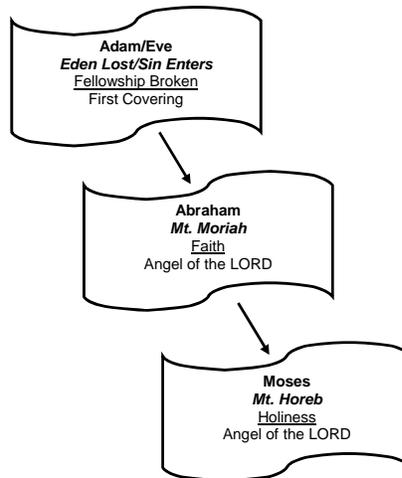
So let's get this straight. Worship from afar in God's definition involves:

- seeing God (some portion of Him at least)
- seeing His feet
- seeing His throne
- being swept up into heavenly realms
- standing on the sapphire glass sea
- eating a meal with Him

Mercy! What would worship "up close" look like? I mean my heavens! The answer is found with creatures called the Seraphim. They worship God "up close". They behold the FULL glory of God. They peer into the beauty of God and behold His very face. They are the "burning ones".<sup>6</sup> But, God SPECIALLY designed them to do this. No other creature in creation is revealed to have this capacity or to receive this level of "revelation" of God without "short circuiting" or being "consumed". More on the Seraphim later.

This “worship from afar” is what God wanted, though. Again, just my opinion, I believe Chapter 24 might have turned out a little different had the response in Chapter 18 and 19 been different. I think instead of just 74 people, God would have wanted the whole nation to “worship from afar” like this. He would have wanted them to participate in the meal. Do you see my point? Moses even makes a point to mention by the Holy Spirit that “on the nobles of the children of Israel” God did not “lay His hand.” It was almost as though they were “sneaking” a little closer than what they should have to eat this meal with God. But God let them... The were not crossing a boundary God had not set... especially one like a guy named Uzzah years later.<sup>7</sup>

There was another time, on “another” Pentecost, many years later that covenant people of God were visited with His presence in almost the same incredible way. This Pentecost was very similar to the first one in some intriguing ways. God was establishing and doing something “new” again. Just as no nation had ever made covenant with the living God, so to the Holy Spirit had been reserved to only a “few” people on whom He came upon and anointed for ministry.<sup>8</sup> Men of the Mosaic covenant did not enjoy the “indwelling” presence of the Spirit as those of the Messianic covenant do today. We actually have more as well..





## Chapter 7

### Beholding the Glory of the LORD

Exodus 3:5

Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground."  
(NKJ)

God continued to deal with Moses throughout the period before Israel entered into the promised land. Moses deepened His relationship with God and truly became a "friend of God" as Abraham had. Moses continued to dialog with Lord alone and then also in sight of the people themselves.

*Exod 33:13-17*

*Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people." And He said, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." Then he said to Him, "If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. For how then will it be known that Your people and I have found grace in Your sight, except You go with us? So we shall be separate, Your people and I, from all the people who are upon the face of the earth." So the LORD said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name."*

We must know God's ways first, before we can experience a deep relationship with Him.

Moses desired to know God's way so that :

Moses could know God (have relationship and partner with God)

Moses could find grace in His sight (be accepted by God)

**We must commit to following God's way if we are to know Him.** We must commit to following His way if we are also going to be accepted and pleasing to Him (experiential vs. positional acceptance). God always uses Kingdom principles to accomplish Kingdom purposes. God reveals His ways to us because they are the only way to accomplish His purposes. His goal always is to reveal Himself and draw people into a love relationship with Himself. His ways are always redemptive in purpose, re-establishing the God given order and design that He intended for our lives.

*Isa 55:8*

*Isa 53:6*

*Ps 86:11*

*For My thoughts are not your thoughts, **nor are your ways My ways**," says the LORD.*

*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to **his own way**. .*

***Teach me Your way, O LORD;** I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name.*

**God reveals His ways so I can accomplish His purposes..** He accomplishes His purposes and goals THROUGH us. What God works in, we must work out. We can not accomplish God's purpose through our own human wisdom and capability.

**Phil 2:12-13** *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out** your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who **works in** you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*

**Micah 4:2** *Many nations shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; he will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion the law shall go forth, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.*

**Although our ways may seem good to us** and we may have moderate success, we can only accomplish God's purpose in our life by following and learning God's ways. We will never appropriate nor realize the power of God in our life until we come to this realization. Worship is very similar. We cannot worship God out of they ways we think are best. . . we must rely on Him to show us the best way. Before we can seek and find the glory of the almighty God, we must first seek His ways.

**Exod 33:18-23** *And he said, "**Please, show me Your glory.**" Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live. And the LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. **So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by.** Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."*

Now Moses asks the question that makes most of us a little nervous: *show me Thy glory.* . . . Most of us feel that we are so far below the relationship with God that would even allow us to dare ask this question. Child of God, if you are walking in His ways and seeking first the kingdom, then **ask.** Ask humbly and with reverence but ask. We must ask, seek, and knock or else we will never know, find, and have the door opened. It is God's express purpose that we behold His glory.

**John 2:11** *This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and **manifested His glory**; and His disciples believed in Him.*

**2 Cor 3:7-8** *But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, **how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious?***

**2 Cor 3:17-18** *Now **the Lord is the Spirit**; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But **we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed** into the same image **from glory to glory**, just as by the Spirit of the Lord*

**1 Cor 2:9-10** *But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." **But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit.** For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.*

**Luke 11:9** *"So I say to you, **ask**, and it will be given to you; **seek**, and you will find; **knock**, and it will be opened to you.*

Ask and be prepared for God to answer; it is His express desire to reveal Himself to us as we walk in a love relationship with Him. Notice now the sequence of events that occur in God's answer to Moses. Moses desired to see God's glory but God tells him that NO MAN may see His face and live.

How did God plan on answering Moses desire??

- ◆ There was a PLACE near Him where Moses could stand
- ◆ God would COVER Moses as He passed by and then Moses would see His “hindparts” of His glory

Now lets consider the sequence of events in this case:

**Exod 34:2-8**

*So be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and **present yourself** to Me there on the top of the mountain. And no man shall come up with you, and let no man be seen throughout all the mountain; let neither flocks nor herds feed before that mountain." So he cut two tablets of stone like the first ones. Then Moses rose early in the morning and went up Mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him; and he took in his hand the two tablets of stone. Now **the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD.** And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation." **So Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.***

Moses presented Himself to God:

We must present ourselves to God as an act of conscious choice in order to worship God acceptably and reasonably. It **precedes** the worship experience of God that brings His glory into our midst.

**Rom 6:13**

*And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, **but present yourselves to God** as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*

**When we present something to God for His use, we say that it is “SET APART”.** The definition of “HOLINESS” is to be set apart for a specific use. We must do the presenting. . . that is the part that God can and will not do. That is an act of our will. SANCTIFICATION and SANCTIFIED means simply a process of making something holy or set apart.

**2 Tim 2:19-22**

*Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity." But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

## **The presence of God with Moses continued to be accompanied by a covering of holiness.**

God, in revealing His person, says “I will cover you”:

The LORD descended in the cloud. . . and stood by Moses. What an incredible thing to consider and ponder. We are covered IN HIM. There is a definite **vanity** in covering ourselves; Moses had to give up His covering.

**Gal 3:27**

*For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have **put on Christ**.*

**2 Cor 5:17** *Therefore, if anyone is **in Christ**, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

God, in revealing His glory, proclaims His name thus revealing His character:

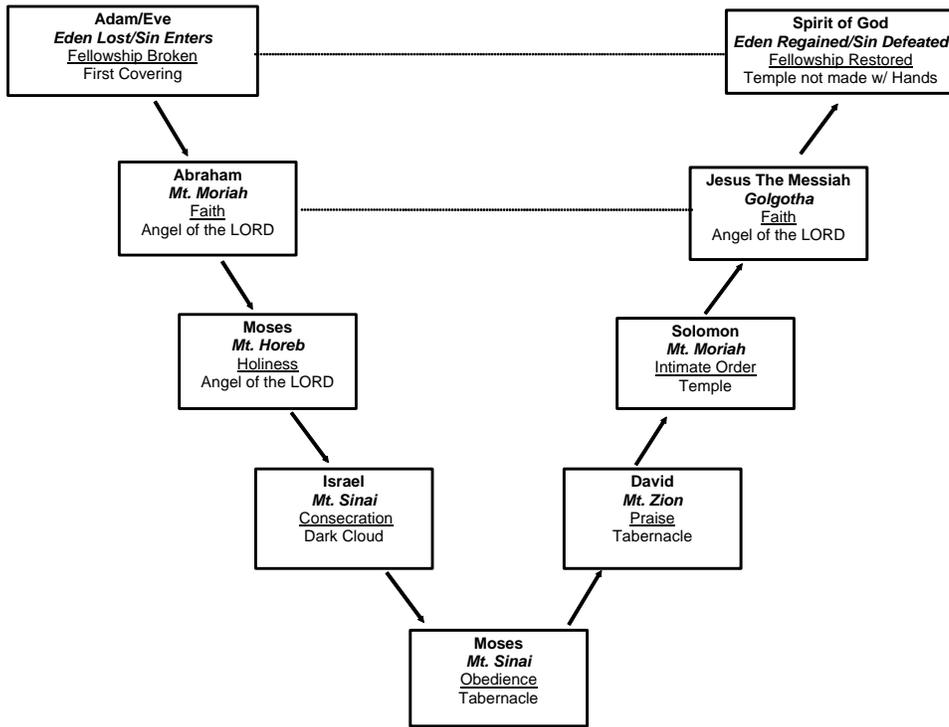
1. **Merciful:** full of compassion
2. **Gracious:** showing favor to those not deserving favor
3. **Long-suffering:** having an extremely high boiling point, slow to anger
4. Abounding in **goodness:** kindness and good deeds
5. Abounding in **truth:** firm, sure, reliable, continuous, stable, faithful of affirmation
6. **Keeping mercy** for thousands: watch, guard, preserve *goodness (#4)*
7. Forgiving **iniquity** and **transgression** and **sin:** lifting, bearing, taking, carrying away, sweeping away perversity, depravity, iniquity, rebellion, transgression, offence
8. By no means **clearing the guilty**

**John 14:13-14** *And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.*

Moses, in the covering of God, responded with WORSHIP

He made HASTE. There was no need to ask whether it was proper. The presence of God made any other response un-reasonable. Moses presented his BODY to God and it was his reasonable SERVICE of worship. It came as a direct response to a revelation of the PERSON of God.

**Rom 11:33-12:1** *Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor?" Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?" For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you **present your bodies** a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your **reasonable service**.*





## Chapter 8

### When God Begins to Settle Down

Exodus 3:5

Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground."  
(NKJ)

The first step toward a **habitation for the Deity worshipped** at the altar was taken at Sinai, when Moses built not only "an altar under the mount," but "12 pillars, according to the 12 tribes of Israel".

*Exod 24:4-7*

*And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning, and **built an altar** at the foot of the mountain, and **twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel**. Then he sent young men of the children of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the LORD. And Moses took half the blood and put it in basins, and half the blood he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "**All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient.**"*

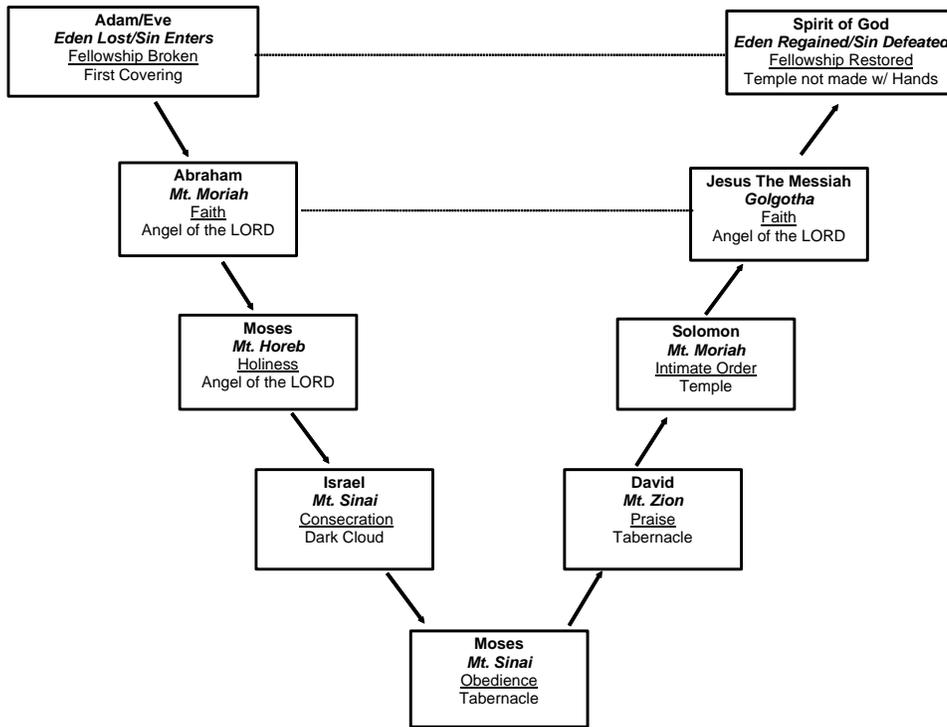
- ◆ There is no recorded command to this effect
- ◆ There was as yet no separated priesthood
- ◆ Sacrifices were offered by "young men of the children of Israel"
- ◆ Already the need of a separated structure was becoming evident.
- ◆ The ark was not yet made
- ◆ A priesthood was not yet appointed
- ◆ It was "without the camp"
- ◆ Joshua was the sole minister
- ◆ It was a simple place of revelation and of the meeting of the people with Yahweh

*Exod 33:7-10*

*Moses took his **tent** and pitched it **outside the camp, far from the camp**, and called it **the tabernacle of meeting**. And it came to pass that everyone who **sought the LORD** went out to the tabernacle of meeting which was outside the camp. So it was, whenever Moses went out to the tabernacle, that all the people rose, and each man stood at his tent door and watched Moses until he had gone into the tabernacle. And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the LORD talked with Moses. **All the people saw the pillar of cloud [the Holy Spirit] standing at the tabernacle door, and all the people rose and worshipped, each man in his tent door.***

Later, but still at Sinai, **after the sin of the golden calf**, Moses is stated to have pitched "the tent" (as if well known: the tense is frequentative, "used to take the tent and to pitch it") "without the camp, afar off," and to have called it, "the tent of meeting," a term often met with afterward.

This "tent" was not yet the tabernacle proper, but served an interim purpose.



## Chapter 10

### The Tabernacle of Moses

Exodus 3:5

Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground."  
(NKJ)

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When Moses **went back** into the mountain after the Lord gave the (moral, judicial, and ceremonial) Decalogue and the Book of the Covenant (which was the judicial statutes pertaining to Israel's new national life), he fasted and waited for further instructions from the LORD. During the forty days and nights, Moses received instructions from God that dealt with the pattern for a structure that was to be known as the TABERNACLE.

**Exod 24:15-18**

*Then Moses went up into the mountain, and **a cloud covered the mountain**. 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 [the covering]. 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. So Moses went **into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain**. And Moses was on the mountain **forty days and forty nights**.*

**Exod 25:8-9**

*And let them make Me a **sanctuary**, that **I may dwell among them**. According to all that I show you, that is, the **pattern of the tabernacle** and the **pattern of all its furnishings**, just so you shall make it.*

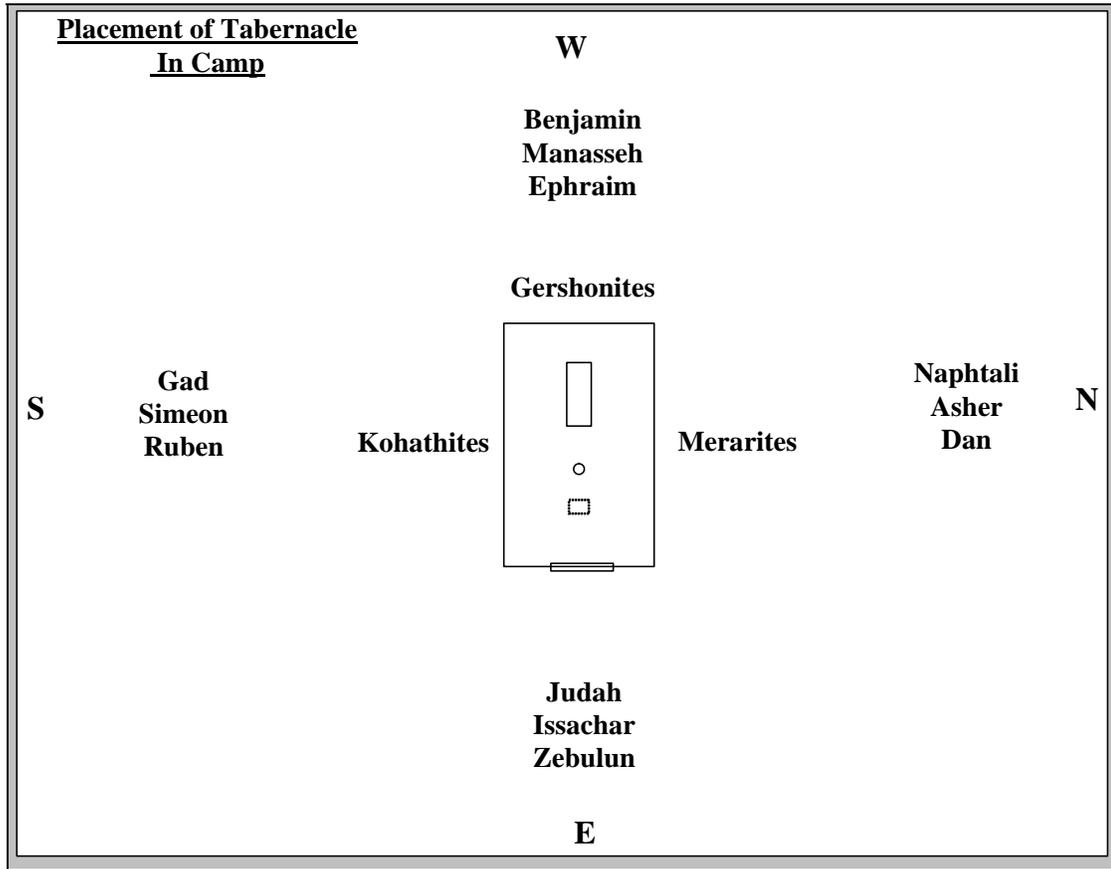
**God gave Moses specific instructions, even to the smallest detail, of how to arrange and build the tabernacle.** He even gave instructions as to WHERE the tabernacle would be placed in relation to the other tribes as part of the camp. He gave instructions how the tribes were to travel and camp in relation to the tabernacle as well.

**Num 1:1**

*Now the LORD spoke to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of meeting  
...*

**Num 2:2**

*Everyone of the children of Israel shall **camp** by his own standard, beside the emblems of his father's house; they shall camp some distance from the tabernacle of meeting.*



*Num 2:17*

*Then the tabernacle of meeting shall move out with the camp of the Levites **in the middle of the camps**; as they camp, so they shall move out, everyone in his place, by their standards.*



The construction, design, and placement of the tabernacle along with the rules governing its duties were to be a continuous daily statute in Israel. The duties were to be continuous as Israel followed God. All throughout the wanderings of Israel, even the 40

years (37 of which were spent at Kadesh), the tabernacle set up and its duties were accomplished carried out ALL during that time.

**Exod 27:21** *In the **tabernacle of meeting**, outside the veil which is before the Testimony, Aaron and his sons shall **tend it from evening until morning before the LORD**. It shall be a statute forever to their generations on behalf of the children of Israel.*

**Lev 6:20-23** *This is the offering of Aaron and his sons, which they shall offer to the LORD, beginning on the day when he is anointed: one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a daily grain offering, half of it in the morning and half of it at night. It shall be made in a pan with oil. When it is mixed, you shall bring it in. The baked pieces of the grain offering you shall offer for a sweet aroma to the LORD. The priest from among his sons, who is anointed in his place, shall offer it. **It is a statute forever to the LORD**. It shall be wholly burned. For every grain offering for the priest shall be wholly burned. It shall not be eaten."*

**Exod 29:38-46** *Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two lambs of the first year, **day by day continually**. One lamb you shall offer in the **morning**, and the other lamb you shall offer at **twilight**. With the one lamb shall be one-tenth of an ephah of flour mixed with one-fourth of a HIN of pressed oil, and one-fourth of a HIN of wine as a drink offering. And the other lamb you shall offer at twilight; and you shall offer with it the **grain offering and the drink offering**, as in the morning, for a sweet aroma, an offering made by fire to the LORD. This shall be a **continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the LORD**, where I will **meet you to speak with you**. And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and **the tabernacle shall be sanctified by My glory**. So I will consecrate the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. I will also consecrate both Aaron and his sons to minister to Me as priests. I will dwell among the children of Israel and will be their God. And **they shall know** that I am the LORD their God, who brought them up out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them. I am the LORD their God.*

**Sacrifices were a part of the "covering" of the tabernacle which God would dwell in.** However, the sacrifice was based on obedience to God and is at the heart of what God commands.

**1 Sam 15:22** *Then Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, **to obey is better than sacrifice**, and to heed than the fat of rams.*

**Rom 6:16-18** *Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, **you are that one's slaves whom you obey**, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.*

**It was to be a tabernacle of MEETING.** It would be a place where God would actually dwell **in the midst** of His people. The tabernacle represents the approved "COVERING" [it was a tent, after all] where God's presence would rest and abide. It was only through the fulfillment of their duties that God would BLESS the tabernacle with His presence and approval. The presence of the LORD indicates the approval of the LORD.

**Everyone had SPECIFIC duties in regard to the tabernacle proper.** Again we see that **obedience** is key...

*Num 3:25-26*

*The **duties of the children of Gershon** in the tabernacle of meeting included the tabernacle, the tent with its covering, the screen for the door of the tabernacle of meeting, the screen for the door of the court, the hangings of the court which are around the tabernacle and the altar, and their cords, according to all the work relating to them.*

*Num 4:4-15*

*This is the **service of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of meeting**, relating to the most holy things. . . And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is set to go, then **the sons of Kohath** shall come to carry them; but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. **These are the things in the tabernacle of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry.***

*Num 4:16*

*The **appointed duty of Eleazar the son of Aaron** the priest is the **oil** for the light, the sweet **incense**, the **daily** grain offering, the **anointing** oil, the **oversight** of all the tabernacle, of all that is in it, with the sanctuary and its **furnishings.**"*

**If Moses (and Aaron w/ his sons) did not follow the instructions, God would not have DWELT there!** So Moses finished the work.. THEN the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

*Exod 39:42*

*According to all that the LORD had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did all the work.*

*Exod 40:1-2*

*Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: On the first day of the first month you shall **set up** the tabernacle of the tent of meeting.*

*Exod 40:16-35*

*Thus Moses did; **according to all that the LORD had commanded him, so he did.** And it came to pass in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, that **the tabernacle was raised up.** So Moses raised up the tabernacle, fastened its sockets, set up its boards, put in its bars, and raised up its pillars. And he spread out the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent on top of it, as the LORD had commanded Moses. He took the Testimony and put it into the ark, inserted the poles through the rings of the ark, and put the mercy seat on top of the ark. And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, hung up the veil of the covering, and partitioned off the ark of the Testimony, as the LORD had commanded Moses. He put the table in the tabernacle of meeting, on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the veil; and he set the bread in order upon it before the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses. He put the lampstand in the tabernacle of meeting, across from the table, on the south side of the tabernacle; and he lit the lamps before the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses. He put the gold altar in the tabernacle of meeting in front of the veil; and he burned sweet incense on it, as the LORD had commanded Moses. He hung up the screen at the door of the tabernacle. And he put the altar of burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and offered upon it the burnt offering and the grain offering, as the LORD had commanded Moses. He set the laver between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar, and put water there for washing; and Moses, Aaron, and his sons would wash their hands and their feet with water from it. **Whenever they went into the tabernacle of meeting, and when they came near the altar, they washed,** as the LORD had commanded Moses. And he raised up the court all around the tabernacle and the altar, and hung up the screen of the court gate. **So Moses finished the work. Then** the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and **the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.** And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.*

*Num 7:1* Now it came to pass, when Moses had finished **setting up the tabernacle**, that he **anointed** it and **consecrated** it and all its **furnishings**, and the **altar** and all its **utensils**; so he anointed them and sanctified them.

**We see that instead of a thick dark cloud, now God moved into the actual camp of the Israelites.** He came off from the mountain and into their very midst with His presence and glory. The presence of LORD Himself brought guidance and direction. This idea was later translated into the tabernacle of David and the temple of Solomon. Again, God had direct inspiration of the content and pattern of HIS DWELLING place.

*Num 9:15-23* Now on the day that **the tabernacle was raised up**, the cloud covered the tabernacle, the tent of the Testimony; from evening until morning it was above the tabernacle like the appearance of fire. So it was always: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night. Whenever the cloud was taken up from above the tabernacle, after that the children of Israel would journey; and in the place where the cloud settled, there the children of Israel would pitch their tents. At the command of the LORD the children of Israel would journey, and at the command of the LORD they would camp; as long as the cloud stayed above the tabernacle they remained encamped. Even when the cloud continued long, many days above the tabernacle, the children of Israel kept the charge of the LORD and did not journey. So it was, when the cloud was above the tabernacle a few days: according to the command of the LORD they would remain encamped, and according to the command of the LORD they would journey. So it was, when the cloud remained only from evening until morning: when the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they would journey; whether by day or by night, whenever the cloud was taken up, they would journey. **Whether it was two days, a month, or a year that the cloud remained above the tabernacle, the children of Israel would remain encamped and not journey; but when it was taken up, they would journey. At the command of the LORD they remained encamped, and at the command of the LORD they journeyed; they kept the charge of the LORD, at the command of the LORD by the hand of Moses.**

**What was man's responsibility as part of the covering??** Moses had to **obey** in following the details given by God. The fixtures, ordinances, statutes, and rituals had to be followed precisely in order for God to allow His presence to dwell in the midst of the nation. Aaron and his sons had to obey the ordinances involved with the temple (which were many).

## **The presence of God in the Tabernacle of Moses was established by a covering of obedience.**

**God gave specific instructions, including what the Priests WORE.** . . . God even gave instruction about what type of cloth, the color of the cloth, what type of head gear, what type of ornamentation went on the clothing. The are very strong types represented in EVERY aspect of the Tabernacle, the duties of the priests, and the articles that went into the Tabernacle itself. God again provide His own COVERING, His own Tent (the Tabernacle of *Meeting*) and gives the instructions concerning that covering.

*Exod 28:4-8* And these are the garments which they shall make: a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a skillfully woven tunic, a turban, and a sash. So they shall make holy garments for

*Aaron your brother and his sons, that he may minister to Me as priest. They shall take the gold blue purple, and scarlet thread, and **fine linen**, and they shall make the ephod of gold blue purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen, artistically worked . . . And the intricately woven band of the ephod, which is on it, shall be of the same workmanship, made of gold blue purple, and scarlet thread, and **fine woven linen**.*

LINEN does not SWEAT, WOOL does. It is not by our might, our works, our toil that we REACH God or become righteous. Salvation is HIS work, surrender is OUR obligation. God always PROVIDES the COVERING by which we are to APPROACH Him. Our own covering will always be inadequate.

God established from the very beginning under the concept of COVERING, that redemption is His clothing:

***Eph 2:8-10***

*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. **For we are His workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

***Gal 2:16***

*knowing that a man is **not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.*

## Chapter 10

### The Tabernacle of David

Exodus 3:5

Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground."  
(NKJ)

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After the time of the conquest of Canaan and the period of the judges that concludes with Samuel, the next we hear of the tabernacle is at Nob, with Ahimelech as high priest. Nob was 4 miles to the North of Jerusalem and was more-over a high place, 30 ft. higher than Zion. It does not follow that the tabernacle was placed at the top of the hill. Here it remained a few years, till after the massacre by Saul of all the priests at Nob save one, Abiathar.

**1 Sam 21:1** *Now David came to Nob, to **Ahimelech** the priest. And Ahimelech was afraid when he met David, and said to him, "Why are you alone, and no one is with you?"*

Subsequently, possibly by Saul himself, the tabernacle was removed to Gibeon.

**1 Chr 16:39-40** *and Zadok the priest and his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the LORD at the high place that was at Gibeon, to offer burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of burnt offering regularly morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the Law of the LORD which He commanded Israel;*

**1 Chr 21:29** *For the tabernacle of the LORD and the altar of the burnt offering, which Moses had made in the wilderness, were at that time at the high place in Gibeon.*

Gibeon was 6 miles from Jerusalem, and 7 from Beth-el, and may have been chosen for its strategic advantage as well as for the fact that it was already inhabited by priests, and was Saul's ancestral city.

**2 Sam 5:6-7** *And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who spoke to David, saying, "You shall not come in here; but the blind and the lame will repel you," thinking, "David cannot come in here." Nevertheless **David took the stronghold of Zion** (that is, the City of David).*

On his capturing the fortress of Jebus (later Jerusalem), and building himself a "house" there, David prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched a tent on Zion in imitation of the tabernacle at Gibeon.

**2 Sam 6:1-3** *Again David gathered all the choice men of Israel, thirty thousand. And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale Judah to **bring up from there the ark of God**, whose name is called by the Name, the LORD of Hosts, who dwells between the cherubim. So they set the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and **Uzzah** and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, **drove the new cart**.*

*2 Sam 6:17* So they brought the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place **in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it**. Then David offered **burnt offerings and peace offerings** before the LORD.

*2 Chr 1:3-4* Then Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for **the tabernacle of meeting with God was there**, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness. **But David had brought up the ark of God from Kirjath Jearim to the place David had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem.**

- ◆ He must also have provided an altar, for we read of burnt offerings and peace offerings being made there.
- ◆ Meanwhile the ark had been brought from Kiriath-jearim, where it had lain so long;
- ◆ It was restored in the presence of a concourse of people representing the whole nation, the soldiery and civilians delivering it to the priests
- ◆ On this journey Uzzah was smitten for touching the ark. Arrived near Jerusalem, the ark was carried into the house of Obed-edom, a Levite, and remained there for 3 months.
- ◆ At the end of this time it was carried into David's tabernacle with all fitting solemnity and honor.

*1 Chr 15:1-3* David built houses for himself in the City of David; **and he prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched a tent for it**. Then David said, "No one may carry the ark of God but the Levites, for the LORD has chosen them to carry the ark of God and to minister before Him forever." And David gathered all Israel together at Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD to its place, which he had prepared for it.

Hence, it was that there were now **two tabernacles**:

- ◆ The original one with its altar at Gibeon,
- ◆ The new one with the original ark in Jerusalem
- ◆ Both under the protection of the king.
- ◆ Both, however, were soon to be superseded by the building of a temple.

The altar at Gibeon continued in use till the time of Solomon. Of all the actual material of the tabernacle, **the ark alone remained unchanged in the temple**. The tabernacle itself, with its sacred vessels, was brought up to Jerusalem, and was preserved, apparently, as a sacred relic in the temple. Thus, after a history of more than 200 years, the tabernacle ceases to appear in history.

*1 King 8:4* Then they brought up the ark of the LORD, the tabernacle of meeting, and all the holy furnishings that were in the tabernacle. The priests and the Levites brought them up.

Zion

King David commanded the priesthood to offer praise and worship continually on Mt. Zion. The spontaneity and intimacy of praise and worship were going on at Mt. Zion. Zion represented having a freedom of worship in the presence of God but with no order. David did not receive divine instructions about how to construct this tabernacle (that was recorded). God gave him no instruction as to how to place the Ark of the Covenant and there is no record of any instructions about leaving one room the way he did. There were no curtains, no holy place, no most holy-place. It simply contained the Ark of the Covenant. Why did David bring the ark into his tabernacle and not the one at Gibeon? David had longing for intimacy with God. Therefore, Zion represents the place of intimacy with God: the place where we experience the manifest presence of God. There was no form; there were no rituals. There were no sacrifices made except the initial ones. After that, it was a great place of spontaneity. It was a place of dancing and a place where the song of the Lord could be heard. It was a place where the prophetic flowed and where praise and worship continued day and night without the form and the ritual.

**1 Chr 15:16-24**

*Then David spoke to the leaders of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the **singers** accompanied by instruments of **music, stringed instruments, harps, and cymbals**, by **raising the voice with resounding joy**. So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, Asaph the son of Berechiah; and of their brethren, the sons of Merari, Ethan the son of Kushaiah; and with them their brethren of the second rank: Zechariah, Ben, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Elipheleh, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, and Jeiel, the **gatekeepers**; the **singers**, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, were to **sound the cymbals** of bronze; Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah, **with strings** according to Alamoth; Mattithiah, Elipheleh, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, Jeiel, and Azariah, to **direct with harps** on the Sheminith; Chenaniah, leader of the Levites, was **instructor in charge of the music, because he was skillful**; Berechiah and Elkanah were **doorkeepers** for the ark; Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, were to **blow the trumpets** before the ark of God; and Obed-Edom and Jehiah, **doorkeepers** for the ark.*

**1 Chr 16:1-7**

*So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before God. And when David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD. Then he distributed to everyone of Israel, both man and woman, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece of meat, and a cake of raisins. And he appointed some of the Levites to **minister before the ark of the LORD**, to **commemorate**, to **thank**, and to **praise the LORD** God of Israel: Asaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah, then Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, and Obed-Edom: Jeiel with stringed **instruments and harps**, but Asaph made music with **cymbals**; Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests regularly blew the **trumpets** before the ark of the covenant of God. **And on that day David first delivered this psalm into the hand of Asaph and his brethren, to thank the LORD:***

**1 Chr 16:37-38**

*So he left Asaph and his brothers **there before the ark of the covenant of the LORD to minister before the ark regularly, as every day's work required**; and Obed-Edom with his sixty-eight brethren, including Obed-Edom the son of Jeduthun, and Hosah, to be gatekeepers;*

***1Chr 16:41-42***

*And with them Heman and Jeduthun and the rest who were chosen, who were designated by name, to give thanks to the LORD, because His mercy endures forever; and with them Heman and Jeduthun, to sound aloud with trumpets and cymbals and the musical instruments of God. Now the sons of Jeduthun were gatekeepers.*

## Gibeon

King David continued to command the sacrifices be offered on Mt. Gibeon. The priests were commanded to continue their daily rituals and their daily responsibility of maintaining the statutes of Moses concerning the Tabernacle. The form and God-given rituals and ordinances were continuing. Gibeon represented having a form or a ritual without the presence of God (no ark). The legal, correct, God-given ordinances were still being followed in Mt. Gibeon, but God's presence was not there. In fact, when the Ark was originally stolen from the tabernacle, the priests continued to perform their duties and accomplish the ceremonial washings and sacrifices. Even though the tabernacle was empty and the presence of God was not there, they still continued to follow the form. They continued to go through all the form and all the ritual and all the requirements of the Law. They were united in making certain that the system continued to go. Gibeon was therefore a place of form, the place where the priests fulfilled the letter of the Law. However, it was not a place of intimacy.

And Zadok the priest and his brethren the priests, before **the tabernacle of the LORD at the high place that was at Gibeon, to offer burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of burnt offering regularly morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the Law of the LORD which He commanded Israel;**

1 Chr 16:39-40

## **The presence of God in the Tabernacle of David was established by a covering of praise.**

The order established by the tabernacle of David for worshipped forms the basis of the New Testament revelation that we find in the person of Jesus Christ: free access to God and intimate fellowship that produces spontaneity and life! The Mt. Zion form of worship would be incorporated and carried forth into the Temple of Solomon. The order on Mt. Zion came from the heart of David himself: a man who hungered and thirsted for God's very presence. Two distinct forms are represented: Old Testament and New Testament. One was based on the Letter, the other based on the Spirit.

## Chapter 11

### The Temple of Solomon

Exodus 3:5  
Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground."  
(NKJ)

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#### **It is in the Temple of Solomon that we understand God's true design for worship.**

The Temple represents the marriage of the Mt. Zion order and the Mt. Gibeon order. It represents the ideal environment for which God's presence will DWELL permanently. The glory cloud never descended upon the Tabernacle of David, although His presence was indeed there. It represents in many ways the fulness of God in both the letter of the Law to the fulfillment by the Spirit of the Law.

David could not build the temple, but he gave and provided the specific instructions (along with other prophets) to Solomon in HOW to build the temple and HOW to set up the ministry that surrounded the temple. With intimacy must come responsibility and accountability. True intimacy can be experienced only through an abiding love relationship:

**John 14:21** He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

**John 14:23** Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.

The glory cloud never came to Mt. Gibeon, but it never came to Mt. Zion either (at least that is recorded). Our love relationship with God and our desire for intimacy and spontaneity must produce in us a disciplined lifestyle and a responsibility that holds us accountable to God. David initiated a new Levitical system of worship while the OLD one was still in operation.

**This is known as the Davidic Revelation of Worship**, which we will discuss later in more detail. There was a conviction in David's heart that the LORD had revealed to Him new methods of worship and given him a vision of the potential of congregational worship in entering God's presence:

*1 Chr 28:11-13* Then David gave his son Solomon the plans for the vestibule, its houses, its treasuries, its upper chambers, its inner chambers, and the place of the mercy seat; and the plans for all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the LORD, of all the chambers all around, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries for the dedicated things; also for the division of the priests and the Levites, for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the articles of service in the house of the LORD.

*1 Chr 28:19-21* All this," said David, "the LORD made me understand in writing, by His hand upon me, all the works of these plans." And David said to his son Solomon, "Be strong and of

*good courage, and do it; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD God-- my God-- will be with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you, until you have finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD. Here are the divisions of the priests and the Levites for all the service of the house of God; and every willing craftsman will be with you for all manner of workmanship, for every kind of service; also the leaders and all the people will be completely at your command."*

*2 Chr 29:25*

*And he stationed the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with stringed instruments, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, of Gad the king's seer, and of Nathan the prophet; for thus was the commandment of the LORD by his prophets.*

Solomon begins to build the temple according to his father's wishes and direction:

***1King 5:5***

*And behold, I propose to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spoke to my father David, saying, "Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he shall build the house for My name."*

***1King 6:38***

*And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its details and according to all its plans. So he was seven years in building it.*

***2 Chr 3:1***

*Now Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.*

What do we consider when looking at Solomon's temple?

***2 Chr 5:1-14***

*So all the work that Solomon had done for the house of the LORD was finished; and Solomon brought in the things which his father David had dedicated: the silver and the gold and all the furnishings. And he put them in the treasuries of the house of God. Now Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel, in Jerusalem, that they might bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD up from the City of David, which is Zion. Therefore all the men of Israel assembled with the king at the feast, which was in the seventh month. So all the elders of Israel came, and the Levites took up the ark. Then they brought up the ark, the tabernacle of meeting, and all the holy furnishings that were in the tabernacle. The priests and the Levites brought them up. Also King Solomon, and all the congregation of Israel who were assembled with him before the ark, were sacrificing sheep and oxen that could not be counted or numbered for multitude. Then the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, into the inner sanctuary of the temple, to the Most Holy Place, under the wings of the cherubim. For the cherubim spread their wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubim overshadowed the ark and its poles. And the poles extended so that the ends of the poles of the ark could be seen from the holy place, in front of the inner sanctuary; but they could not be seen from outside. And they are there to this day. Nothing was in the ark except the two tablets which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they had come out of Egypt. And it came to pass when the priests came out of the Most Holy Place (for all the priests who were present had*

*sanctified themselves, without keeping to their divisions), and the Levites who were the singers, all those of Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, stood at the east end of the altar, clothed in white linen, having cymbals, stringed instruments and harps, and with them one hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets-- indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the LORD, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the LORD, saying: "For He is good, for His mercy endures forever," that the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.*

- ◆ The house of God has been built according to divine blueprint
- ◆ Trained priests stood ready to minister in music and prophecy
- ◆ The ark of God rested in the Holy Place of the temple
- ◆ Lavish sacrifices had been offered
- ◆ The path from the Tabernacle of David to the Temple of Solomon was only a few hundred yards away: the entire path was bathed with the blood of sacrificed sheep and oxen, of which there were so many that they could not be numbered. The spontaneity and vibrance and exuberance of Mt. Zion was now blood-splattered: coated or covered with blood. The road to fulness of God's presence is only by the blood of the lamb and by great sacrifice to us (our lives).
- ◆ There was only two tablets of the Law which Moses put there at Horeb in the Ark. What happened to Aaron's rod and the manna?
  - ◆ Aaron's rod represents our calling and ministry: we may be called to do any number of things, but these things in and of themselves will never keep us true or motivate us to serve God.
  - ◆ The manna represents God's miraculous provision: we may see the supernatural and we may see the provision of God in our life. His provision will not keep us serving Him.
  - ◆ Only a burning for Him by His grace that comes from our heart will keep us faithful to the Lord and His calling. Our heart must cry for God Himself. We will love Him and serve Him because our heart hungers for Him even if He never calls us to great ministry and even if He never provides miraculous favor for us. I serve Him because He is God and because I love Him
  - ◆ The only thing that will keep us faithful is God's word in our hearts enlivened by God's Spirit in our hearts. There can be room for no other thing in our hearts except His law.
- ◆ WHEN they lifted up their voices, WHAT happened??

*John 6:26*

*Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled."*

The Temple of Solomon represents God's ordained plan for His presence. It was a marriage of Mt. Gibeon and Mt. Zion. It included order and God's divine plan that He had given to David.

*1 Chr 15:13*

*"For because you did not do it the first time, the LORD our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about the proper order."*

*1 Cor 14:39-40*

*Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order.*

**1 Cor 14:26-33**

*How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret. But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God. Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge. But if anything is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged. And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.*

## **The presence of God in the Temple of Solomon was established by a covering of intimate order.**

We must marry the life and vibrancy of our experience of the Holy Spirit to the discipline, holiness, and doctrine of the Scriptures to experience the true fulness of God.

## Chapter 12

### Jesus the Messiah

John 1:14

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (NKJV)

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When God the Son became a man, John was inspired to use an interesting concept to describe this in his gospel. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, John wrote:

**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.**

*John 1:14*

*In the Greek:*

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**dwelt** = **4637** skenoo (skay-no'-o) from **4636**; to tent or encamp, i.e. (figuratively) to occupy (as a mansion) or (specifically) to reside (as God did in the Tabernacle of old, a symbol of protection and *communion*): **dwelt**.

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**4636** skenos (skay'-nos); from **4633**; a hut or temporary residence, i.e. (figuratively) the human body (as the abode of the spirit): **tabernacle**.

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**4633** skene (skay-nay'); apparently akin to 4632 and 4639; a tent or cloth hut (literally or figuratively): **habitation, tabernacle**.

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The God of the Universe "tabernacled" among us. He made His habitation among us...as and like one of us. It is in the context of this "Tabernacle", this "Covering", His sacrificial body that was broken and slain that again we find our access into God's presence. Jesus alluded to this picture in a discussion with a group of the Pharisees:

**John 2:19-21**

*Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" But He was speaking of the temple of His body.*

Jesus again is representative of our "Covering", our approach to God. Worship must be first based on that FINAL covering that was provided for our sins and our unholiness and unworthiness to approach God. God dwelt among us because we could not dwell with Him. He took the initiative...He made the preparation...He finished the work.

**Rom 3:21-22**

*But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;*

**Rom 3:26**

*to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has **faith in Jesus**.*

**Gal 2:16** *knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.*

**Rom 1:17** *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

## The presence of God in the person of Jesus Christ is established by a covering of faith.

Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life:

**In order to follow God's way, we must incorporate the Truth of His Word and the Power of His Life.**

The incarnation presents one of the most astounding and mind boggling facts to us: God dwelt among us:

**Matt 1:23** *Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."*

**1 Tim 3:16** *And without controversy great is the **mystery** of godliness: **God was manifested in the flesh**, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory.*

**II Jn 1:7** *For many deceivers have gone out into the world **who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh**. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*

**I Jn 4:2-3** *By this you know the Spirit of God: **Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God**, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.*

**1 Pet 3:18** *For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being **put to death in the flesh** but **made alive by the Spirit**,*

It was the "tent" of His flesh that was torn for our iniquities and our sin:

**Matt 27:50-53A** *and Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. Then, behold, **the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom**; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.*

**Heb 10:19-22** *Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, **through the veil, that is, His flesh**, and having a High Priest over the house of God, **let us draw near** with a true heart in **full assurance** of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.*

*Heb 9:7-8*

*But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance; **the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing.***

*Heb 9:11-15*

*But Christ came as High Priest of **the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation**. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? **And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant**, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.*

Jesus Christ represent the FINAL revelation of God's covering.

All others point to a fulfillment in His person.

Jesus was God "clothed" with flesh. He could be seen, touched, heard.

He dwelt AMONG us, in our midst.

God moved from a burning bush, to a cloud, to a tent, to a tabernacle, to a temple, and now to flesh and blood.

He became who I was so that I might become who He is . . .

## Chapter 13

### The Holy Spirit (Breath of God)

Genesis 2:7

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (NKJV)

John 20:22-23

And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." (NKJV)

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After the atonement was complete, (His death, burial and resurrection) the fulfillment of the Law was accomplished and a new blood covenant had been cut between God and man. Now, anyone could come to God on the basis of that atonement through faith, belief in action. We have come full circle in the revelation of God's presence through covering. We see a major part of redemptive history played out already for us.

*Gen 2:7*

*And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and **breathed into his nostrils the breath of life**; and man became a living being.*

*John 20:22-23*

*And when He had said this, **He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."***

*In the Greek:*

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**breathed = 1720** emphusao (em-foo-sah'-o); from 1722 and phusao (**to puff**) [compare 5453]; to blow at or on: KJV-- to blow or breathe upon. **This word used only once by the Septuagint translators in Gen 2:7 where God breathed on Adam and he became a living soul. 1722 = en- in, by, with, etc.**

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**Just as the original creation was completed by an act of God, so to the new creation was completed by an act from the Head of the new creation.** Life, the breath of life, the life of God, the life that Adam lost when he sinned, was restored to man. The ability and the desire to do God's will was imparted on the basis of the atonement, God's final covering. Through this covering, man could not covenant and partner with God in a living relationship through a new and living way!

**Once again, God moves ever so closer towards US.** In fact, God has moved as close to us as He possibly can! Now He says "COME to ME, the WAY is OPEN, the VEIL is TORN. . .ENTER IN by the NEW and LIVING WAY." By God's Spirit living INSIDE of us, we are now the HABITATION of God Almighty Himself. Jesus Christ lives IN US. We are IN HIM.

We have an interesting picture here. When we are made holy and righteous by God through the new birth, God comes to **live in us**. As we hunger and thirst for Him a promise is made that His presence would not only be IN us but would rest UPON us and IN THE MIDST of us. Not only is there a tangible difference in our character, there is now God acting in the midst of our situation, in the midst of our family, in the midst of our job, in the midst of our lives. The key to this is found through fellowship and discipling within the Body of Christ. As we

corporately come into agreement together, we with one voice praise and worship God. It is in the atmosphere of agreement that God manifests and dwells.

We are being made to be a dwelling of God by His Spirit INDIVIDUALLY and CORPORATELY.

**Eph 2:19-22** *Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, in whom the whole building, **being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.***

**1 Cor 6:19** *Or do you not know that **your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit** who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?*

The full revelation of God's covering tells us that He desires to:

**Be AWARE -> Be NEAR -> Be INVOLVED -> Be IN THE MIDDLE -> Be IN**

We can confidently declare:

**God wants to dwell in the midst of my life.**

**John 14:17** *the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He **dwells with you and will be in you.***

**2 Cor 6:16-18** *And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "**I will dwell in them and walk among them.** I will be their God, and they shall be My people." Therefore "Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."*

We are now the temple of the living God. His Spirit IN us makes us the tabernacle of the living God. If we use that as basis for worship that was designed and implemented from the temples and tabernacles of the Old Covenant, it tells us that we are mobile houses of worship! Collectively as the Body of Christ, we form a habitation of God by His Spirit.

**Your Heart =  
Christ's Home =  
The Spirit's Dwelling Place =  
The Tabernacle of the Living God**

**Eph 3:17** *that Christ may **dwell in your hearts** through faith . . .*

Faith pleases God.. it is when we build faith in our hearts that God has a dwelling He is pleased to inhabit. God is free to move in a heart full of faith; He is free to inhabit and indwell and abide in a place where He is freely welcome.

**Isa 57:15** *For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "**I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.***

The abiding presence of God WITH someone is for those who will be humble and contrite. A contrite spirit is a kind of spirit, or heart, pleasing and acceptable to God; The person with a contrite spirit weeps over wrongdoing and expresses genuine sorrow for his sin.

*Ps 34:18*                    *The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and **saves such** as have a **contrite spirit**.*

*Ps 51:17*                    *The sacrifices of God are **a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart**-- these, O God, You will not despise.*

*2 Cor 7:10*                    *For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.*

We are meant and destined to be a habitation of God Almighty Himself:

*John 6:56*                    *"He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and **I in him**.*  
*John 14:23*                    *Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and **We will come to him and make Our home with him**.*

*Rom 8:9-11*                    *But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed **the Spirit of God dwells in you**. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if **Christ is in you**, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead **dwells in you**, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who **dwells in you**.*

*Gal 2:20*                    *I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but **Christ lives in me**; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

*Col 1:27*                    *To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is **Christ in you**, the hope of glory.*

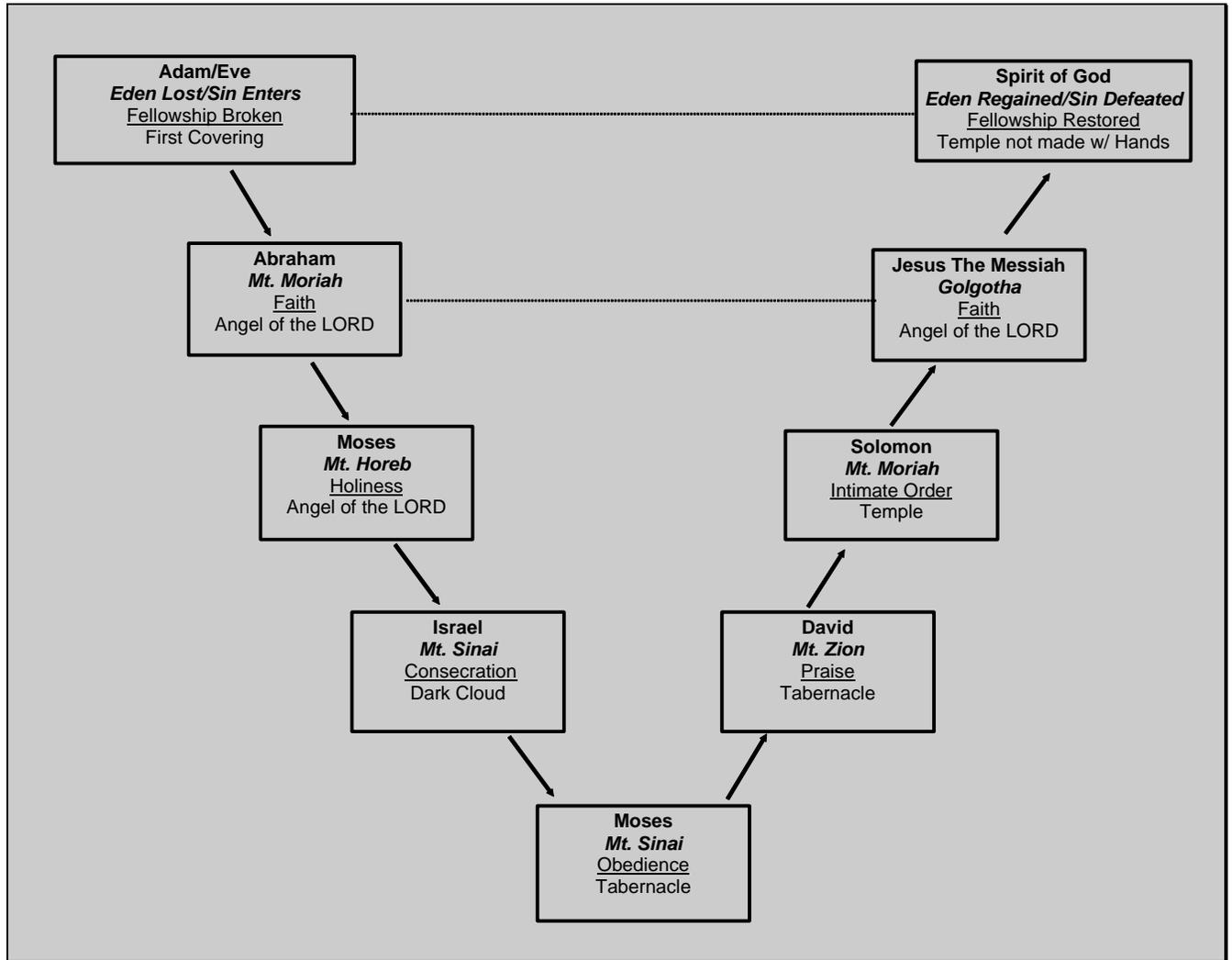
*I Jn 4:4*                    *You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because **He who is in you** is greater than he who is in the world.*

*I Jn 4:16*                    *And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and **God in him**.*

*Rev 3:20*                    *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, **I will come in to him** and dine with him, and he with Me.*

It is through the INDWELLING presence of Christ that we bear the fruit of Spirit from the inside out. Fruit grows from the inside out, from the root out to the branches and leaves, until fruit is produced. That fruit is fed and nourished by the root structure and arterials of the tree. The Body of Christ is our "root system" by which we are to become "living stones". As we grow together corporately and individually, God's character and nature will come from the INSIDE out and manifest in our outer actions.

The Progressive Revelation of God's Covering



## Chapter 14

# Seraphim and Cherubim

Revelation 4:6-11

... and in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"

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Cherubim and seraphim are winged angelic beings, often associated with worship and praise of God.

The cherubim are first mentioned in the Bible in Genesis. When God drove Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, He placed cherubim at the east of the garden, "and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life." If God had not done this, man ran the risk of eating of the tree and living eternally in a fallen state, unredeemed and without hope of redemption. Instead, God planted another Seed in the earth that would bear another Tree of Life, a stump out of Jesse, a root of David, a Branch out of Abraham.

**Gen 3:24**                      *So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.*

Symbolic representations of cherubim were used in the TABERNACLE in the wilderness. Two cherubim made of gold were stationed at the two ends of the MERCY SEAT, above the ARK OF THE COVENANT in the HOLY OF HOLIES. Artistic designs of cherubim decorated the ten curtains <Ex. 26:1; 36:8> and the veil <Ex. 26:31; 2 Chr. 3:14> of the tabernacle. When Solomon built the Temple, he ordered that two cherubim be made of olive wood and overlaid with gold. Each measured ten cubits (4.6 meters or 15 feet) high with a wingspread of ten cubits (4.6 meters or 15 feet) <1 Kin. 6:23-28; 8:6-7; 2 Chr. 3:10-13; 5:7-8>. These gigantic cherubim were placed inside the inner sanctuary, or in the Most Holy Place in the Temple. Their wings were spread over the ark of the covenant. The woodwork throughout the Temple was decorated with engraved figures of cherubim, trees, and flowers <1 Kin. 6:29-35; 7:29,36; 2 Chr. 3:7>. **It was between the cherubim that God met and spoke with His people. His glory RESTED in the midst of their outstretched wings on top of the Mercy Seat.**

**2 Sam 6:2**                      *And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, whose name is called by the Name, the LORD of Hosts, who dwells between the cherubim.*

**1 Chr 13:6**                      *And David and all Israel went up to Baalah, to Kirjath Jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up from there the ark of God the LORD, who dwells between the cherubim, where His name is proclaimed.*

**Psalms 80:1**                      *Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock; you who dwell between the cherubim, shine forth!*

4 key passages deal with cherubim and seraphim:

⇒ **Isaiah 6:1-7**

⇒ **Ezek 1:4-25/Ezek 10:1-18**

⇒ **Revelation 4:6-9**

**In some ways, the cherubim were similar to the SERAPHIM**, another form of angelic being mentioned in the Bible. Both were winged beings, and both surrounded God on His throne <Is. 6:2-3>. But the seraphim of the prophet Isaiah's vision were vocal in their praise of God, singing "Holy, holy is the Lord of hosts" <Is. 6:3>.

They appear to serve the purpose of:

- ⇒ magnifying the holiness and power of God
- ⇒ leading others in worship of God
- ⇒ serve as a visible reminder of the majesty and glory of God and **His abiding presence** with His people.

Our interest in them is based on the fact of their "covering". These beings are associated with the very presence of Almighty God and His throne. It is the presence of God in worship that we find the association with a "covering" a praise. Let's look at the instances of cherubim and seraphim and see how they relate to this function:

*Ezek 1:4-25*

*Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire. Also from within it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man. Each one had four faces, and each one had four wings. Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the soles of calves' feet. They sparkled like the color of burnished bronze. The hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides; and each of the four had faces and wings. Their wings touched one another. The creatures did not turn when they went, but each one went straight forward. As for the likeness of their faces, each had the face of a man, each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle. Thus were their faces. Their wings were stretched upward; two wings of each one touched one another, and two covered their bodies. And each one went straight forward; they went wherever the spirit wanted to go, and they did not turn when they went. As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of torches. Fire was going back and forth among the living creatures; the fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning. And the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning. Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, a wheel was on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces. The appearance of the wheels and their workings was like the color of beryl, and all four had the same likeness. The appearance of their workings was, as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. When they went, they went toward any one of four directions; they did not turn aside when they went. As for their rims, they were so high they were awesome; and their rims were full of eyes, all around the four of them. When the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, because there the spirit went; and the wheels were lifted together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. When those went, these went; when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. The likeness of the firmament above the heads of the living creatures was like the color of an awesome crystal, stretched out over their heads. And under the firmament their wings spread out straight, one toward another. Each one had two which covered one side, and each one had two which covered the other side of the body. When they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise*

*of many waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a tumult like the noise of an army; and when they stood still, they let down their wings. A voice came from above the firmament that was over their heads; whenever they stood, they let down their wings.*

**Ezek 10:1-8**

*And I looked, and there in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubim, there appeared something like a sapphire stone, having the appearance of the likeness of a throne. Then He spoke to the man clothed with linen, and said, "**Go in among the wheels, under the cherub, fill your hands with coals of fire from among the cherubim, and scatter them over the city.**" And he went in as I watched. Now the cherubim were standing on the south side of the temple when the man went in, and **the cloud filled the inner court.** Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, and paused over the threshold of the temple; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD'S glory. And **the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard even in the outer court, like the voice of Almighty God when He speaks.** Then it happened, when He commanded the man clothed in linen, saying, "Take fire from among the wheels, from among the cherubim," that he went in and stood beside the wheels. And the cherub stretched out his hand from among the cherubim to the fire that was among the cherubim, and took some of it and put it into the hands of the man clothed with linen, who took it and went out. The cherubim appeared to have the form of a man's hand under their wings.*

**Ezek 10:9-13**

*And when I looked, there were four wheels by the cherubim, one wheel by one cherub and another wheel by each other cherub; the wheels appeared to have the color of a beryl stone. As for their appearance, all four looked alike-- as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. When they went, they went toward any of their four directions; they did not turn aside when they went, but followed in the direction the head was facing. They did not turn aside when they went. And their whole body, with their back, their hands, their wings, and the wheels that the four had, were full of eyes all around. As for the wheels, they were called in my hearing, "Wheel."*

**Ezek 10:14-15**

*Each one had four faces: the first face was the face of a cherub, the second face the face of a man, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle. And the cherubim were lifted up. This was the living creature I saw by the River Chebar.*

**Ezek 10:16-18**

*When the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them; and when the cherubim lifted their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also did not turn from beside them. When the cherubim stood still, the wheels stood still, and when one was lifted up, the other lifted itself up, for the spirit of the living creature was in them. Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim.*

**Ezek 10:19-22**

*And the cherubim lifted their wings and mounted up from the earth in my sight. When they went out, the wheels were beside them; and they stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD'S house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them. This is the living creature I saw under the God of Israel by the River Chebar, and I knew they were cherubim. Each one had four faces and each one four wings, and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings. And the likeness of their faces was the same as the faces which I had seen by the River Chebar, their appearance and their persons. They each went straight forward.*

**Isa 6:2-7**

*Above it stood seraphim; each one had **six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.** And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!" . . . Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a **live coal which he had taken with***

*the tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth with it, and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your iniquity is taken away, and your sin purged."*

**Rev 4:6-11**

*Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures **full of eyes in front and in back**. The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. **The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"** Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created."*

What is the significance of these creatures?

They are responsible for an atmosphere of worship, continually, around the throne of God. They are associated with the manifestation of His glory and are charged with providing a "covering" or "carpet" of agreement. The imagery of cherubim as "covering" or "overshadowing" indicates that even in the position on the mercy seat and within the Holy of Holies, worship is a mandatory requirement for the glory of God to manifest and rest.

## Descriptions of the Living Creatures / Cherubim / Seraphim

Description/Appearance Office	Ezek 1:4- 25	Ezek 10:1- 18	Rev 4:6- 9	Isa 6:1- 7
Likeness of a man	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Four creatures present	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Each had four faces: man, lion, ox/calf, eagle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Each had four wings: 2(4?)for covering, 2 for flying	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Each had six wings: 2 for the face, 2 for covering, 2 for flying			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Legs were straight: soles w/ appearance of calves feet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Wings of each cherub touched each other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
The noise of their wings was like many waters, a tumult like the noise of an army	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sparkled as of burnished bronze	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Hands of a man were under the wings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
They went straight in one direction in unison	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
The living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
A wheel was on the earth beside each living creature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
The spirit of the living creature controlled the wheels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Do not rest day or night saying: "Holy, holy, holy lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Cried to each other: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!"			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Linked with the Glory of God	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Linked with the throne/ throne room of God	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wings full of eyes around and within		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Full of eyes (the rims) front and in back	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
They give glory, honor, and thanks to God: Others respond as a result. . .	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Coals of fire are amongst or near them [in the wheels]/ appearance of burning coals	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Engaged in purifying work (taking coals and giving/applying them to a man)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Involved in judgment		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

**What can we learn from these created order of beings?** God prizes worship. He created beings whose sole activity in created order is to lead and promote the atmosphere of worship, praise, and adoration. These beings are the worship leaders of heaven: they show us that a “canopy” of praise is the accepted “tent” by which God will meet and reveal Himself

## Lucifer: The Covering Cherub

In understanding the fact that cherubim provide covering for the presence of God, let us now consider who the Bible calls the “anointed cherub”:

**Ezek 28:1-3** *The word of the LORD came to me again, saying, Son of man, say to the **prince of Tyre**, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "Because **your heart is lifted up**, and you say, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, in the midst of the seas,' **yet you are a man**, and not a god, though you set your heart as the heart of a god (Behold, you are wiser than Daniel! There is no secret that can be hidden from you!*

**Ezek 28:6-10** *Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: "Because you have set your heart as the heart of a god, Behold, therefore, **I will bring strangers against you, the most terrible of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, and defile your splendor**. They shall throw you down into the Pit, and you shall die the death of the slain in the midst of the seas. "Will you still say before him who slays you, 'I am a god'? But you shall be a man, and not a god, in the hand of him who slays you. You shall die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of aliens; for I have spoken," says the Lord GOD.' "*

Ezekiel begins a word against the prince of Tyre. Tyre was the center of the Phoenician trading empire of that day. The prince of Tyre was probably Ittobaal II, whom Josephus said was king during the siege of Nebuchadnezzar. Tyre, because of its prominence in trade, had attained great splendor and wealth. His wisdom and his wealth have also brought pride, a deadly and destructive force in the face of an Almighty God who transcends human wisdom and man's wealth. He was in his own mind exalted as a “god”. He trusted and relied on strength and wealth and position. God was now going to bring judgment on his kingdom, just as He has done throughout history when men ignore Him and are infected with pride.

**Ezek 28:12-13** *Son of man, take up a lamentation for **the king of Tyre**, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your **timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created**.*

Here Ezekiel transitions to a lamentation against the “king” of Tyre. We already know that behind earthly political institutions that there are power and principalities in the heavenly realms that are actually at work behind the scenes:

**Eph 6:12** *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

Although this passage could be referring to Adam or the actual king of Tyre (a man), we can certainly draw general conclusions concerning the fall of any proud person, especially a ruler, from a high position. We may also interpret this passage, as many of the early church fathers

in the second half of the fourth century A.D. did, that this passage describes the fall of Satan himself. Satan personifies best what happens when we are beset by pride. (Pride goeth before the fall).

We understand that at a minimum this person (possibly the King of Tyre or Adam) or being (Lucifer):

Was the seal of perfection (perfect in creation)  
Destined to carry out God's plan and is placed in Eden in the presence of God

- ◆ It is unlikely the king of Tyre would be talked about in context of the garden of Eden, or in the context of being perfect in creation.
- ◆ Adam, as well, was not naked. This being was "covered with every precious stone" to denote his beauties and glories.
- ◆ This being or person was created with timbrels and pipes as part of their being.

**Ezek 28:14-16** "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you. By the abundance of your trading you became filled with violence within, and you sinned; therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God; and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the fiery stones.

- ◆ The strongest evidence that this points to Lucifer and his fall to Satan is found in v.14: the anointed cherub who covers indicates HIGH office with authority and responsibility to protect and defend (cover) the holy mountain of God, an allusion to God's throne.
- ◆ The high order and specific placement of Lucifer prior to his fall afforded unique opportunity to bring glory to God.
- ◆ The actual Hebrew reveals that built into his person was the capacity to make and create music. He would have been the ideal leader of all heavenly worship directed at the Almighty Creator.

Why was Lucifer cast down and why did he fall?

**Isa 14:12-21**

*How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit. 'Those who see you will gaze at you, and consider you, saying: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world as a wilderness and destroyed its cities, who did not open the house of his prisoners?' All the kings of the nations, all of them, sleep in glory, everyone in his own house; But you are cast out of your grave like an abominable branch, like the garment of those who are slain, thrust through with a sword, who go down to the stones of the pit, like a corpse trodden underfoot. You will not be joined with them in burial, because you have destroyed your land and slain your people. The brood of evildoers shall never be named. Prepare slaughter for his children because of the iniquity of their fathers, lest they rise up and possess the land, and fill the face of the world with cities.'*

I will: **ascend into the heaven**  
I will: **exalt my throne above the stars of God**  
I will: **sit on the mount of the congregation**  
I will: **ascend above the heights of the clouds**  
I will: **be like the Most High**

Of what we know of Lucifer who became satan:

- ◆ He is the father of lies and he has come to steal, kill, and destroy/ He blinds the minds of men so they cannot see God
- ◆ He is full of pride [he is probably the MOST beautiful of all God's creations]
- ◆ He wanted to receive worship that was due only to God /He wanted to ascend above the rule and power of God
- ◆ He has the capacity to manifest as an angel of light / His ministers may appear righteous
- ◆ He is the head ruler of the principalities and powers of this dark world / He schemes and plots and creates devices
- ◆ He is author of temptation, sin, and disobedience; he has nothing original except sin

**Satan is expert in drawing people AWAY from worshipping God: he understands the power of the presence of God and that is why he continually discourages people from worshipping God openly!**

## Chapter 15

# Establishing God's Covering Through Worship

Revelation 22:9

Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"

One very profound statement that God made to Asa is found when the King was seeking God. The prophet told Asa a very powerful principle which is reinforced with other Scripture. God dwells with those who dwell with Him. **God is found by those who look for Him. God is ready to be respond to those who are ready to draw near.**

**2 Chr 15:2**

*And he went out to meet Asa, and said to him: "Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD is with you while you are with Him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.*

We must learn to make the abiding presence of God a priority in our life. We will never see the true release of God's abiding in us corporately until we seek His abiding in us individually.

**John 15:4**

***Abide in Me, and I in you.** As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.*

**Psalms 61:4**

***I will abide in Your tabernacle forever;** I will trust in the shelter of Your wings. Selah*

**Psalms 91:1-2**

*He who **dwells** in the secret place of the Most High **shall abide** under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust."*

**I John 2:24**

*Therefore let that **abide in you** which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning **abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.***

**I John 4:13**

*By this we know that **we abide in Him, and He in us, because** He has **given us of His Spirit.***

**II John 1:9-11**

*Whoever transgresses and does not **abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God.** He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.*

God says that He will dwell in the midst of several things (and in the hearts of certain kinds of people):

- Agreement, Praise, adoration, and worship**
- Hunger and thirst for Him (Ask, knock, seek...)**
- Holiness and righteousness**

In fact, it is in the midst of us where God desire to live and move:

**Num 35:34**

*Therefore do not defile the land which you inhabit, in the midst of which I dwell; for I the LORD dwell among the children of Israel.*

*Psalms 48:9*

*Psalms 46:4-5*

*John 7:37-39*

*Rev 21:1-6*

*We have thought, O God, on Your lovingkindness, **in the midst** of Your temple.*

*There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. **God is in the midst of her**, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.*

*On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, **out of his heart will flow rivers of living water**. But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

*Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away. Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful. And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.*

### **Covering concerns OUR approach to God that is provided by God.**

In this context, we can now understand the true power and nature of worship:

- ❑ Praise and worship involves getting people to agree with God: affirm, pronounce, announce,
- ❑ and declare what God already says about Himself and, once they are in agreement, for them to adore, awe, reverence, love, and hunger for Him in response.

## **It is in the covering of *agreement* that God wants to come "buddy" with us.**

True Worship is the path to having the same mind and judgment with others in the Body:

*1 Cor 1:10*

*Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

The word *covering* invokes images of several things:

- ❑ Clothing (a place of provision)
- ❑ Shelter (a place of refuge and concealment)
- ❑ Dwelling place/tent (a place of meeting or fellowship)
- ❑ Shadow or overshadowing (a place of power)
- ❑ Shield (a place of strength and protection)

## Clothing: (A garment to be worn)

God's covering is meant to "clothe" us in order. His clothing covers us. Salvation is the work of God: it is His from beginning to end. From the very beginning of His revelation (Genesis 3), we can see that God wants and desires to clothe us. He wants to:

- ◆ Cover our sin
- ◆ Cover our shame

*Gen 3:7* Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and **made themselves coverings**.

*Gen 3:21* Also for Adam and his wife **the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.**

*Gal 3:27* For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have **put on Christ**.

If God has covered it, you don't need to be ashamed of it. God is pleased when we brag on what God has done for us. My past is gone, redeemed; my future is secure; my present makes sense.

*1 Cor 1:30* But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God-- and righteousness and sanctification and redemption--

Religion will always attempt to make its own clothing:

**When you make religion your god, God will not be in your religion.**

God clothes us with things we can't clothe ourselves with. We are IN Christ Jesus: It speaks of who we are in Christ and not of who we are in ourselves. We are a DIFFERENT person IN Him. We are 2 faced: we have the choice to either show our face or His face.

We must renounce and turn away from:

- ◆ What we feel
- ◆ What we think
- ◆ What I believe about myself

Instead we must change our thinking:

- ◆ In CHRIST
- ◆ In WHOM
- ◆ In HIM

**He became for us..** We must realize that we are clothed IN HIM; just as a baby is covered in the womb. We are in no worry of supply, protection, or sustainment.

Wisdom - knowing and understanding God's plan and purposes

---

Right Standing - free from guilt

---

Sanctification - being made holy

---

Redemption - being purchased back

There is a distinct difference in:

**Living FOR Him**  
vs.  
**Living IN Him**

God made covering for you. . . salvation was done by God . . . That means that when I fail God is for me!

**God is not AGAINST us for our sins . . . God is FOR us against our sins.**

We do not look for God to cover us because we are already in God's covering.  
A baby does not say "I sure hope my momma will be all around me!"

**We must PUT OFF in order to PUT ON. . . Many of us put on OURSELVES.** We must look at Him who called us from darkness into light. We must look at Him who was perfect. We must look at the one who never said, "Lord help my faith".

*Rom 13:14*                      **But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.**

You are covered, BUT PUT ON.. God says that He is the one who will clothe us. Redemption is God's clothing. He made it and provided it. Now, as an act of faith, believing that I can not cover my self, never could be able to and never will be able to, now PUT TO DEATH, PUT OFF, CAST AWAY, RECKON, TOSS OUT, UTTERLY DESTROY, CRUCIFY, all that is not pleasing to God:

*Rom 13:12*                      *The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us **cast off** the works of darkness, and let us **put on** the armor of light.*

*Eph 4:20-24*                      *But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that **you put off**, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that **you put on** the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*

*Eph 6:11*                      ***Put on** the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*

*Col 3:5-8*                      *Therefore **put to death** your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.*

*Col 3:9-11*                      *Do not lie to one another, since you have **put off** the old man with his deeds, and have **put on the new man** who is **renewed** in knowledge **according to the image of Him who created him**, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, **but Christ is all and in all.***

*Col 3:12-14*                      *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, **put on** tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things **put on** love, which is the bond of perfection.*

Get rid of it! It profits you nothing and will only lead to your destruction. Don't play with it. Don't even have the association with it. WE have to put certain things to death. Whatever you sell for God, you can't keep anyway. You must PUT OFF and you must PUT ON. God has provided it, from end to end. We must appropriate it: He can and not do that for us. That is an act of faith on our part.

Utterly destroy (What is this bleating of sheep in my ear ?) any kind of:

**uncleanness, sexual impurity, passion, evil desire, pride, boasting, disobedience**

**lust, coveting, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language**

**deceit, unrighteousness, envy, murder, strife, backbiting, hatred, violence**

Don't be:

**undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful**

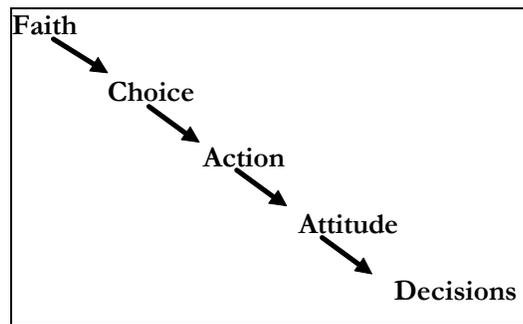
Instead of these things, put on:

**kindness, tenderness, lowliness, gentleness, patience, love, peacableness, humility**

**forgiveness, mercy, goodness, faithfulness, loyalty, encouragement, trust, truthfulness**

How do you do it?

In the dailies of LIFE, **by faith you say NO.**



What else does God want us to PUT ON?

**Ps 30:11**

*You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; **you have put off my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness,***

**Isa 61:10**

*I will greatly **rejoice** in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for **He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,** as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*

**Isa 61:3**

*To console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, **the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;** that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."*

- ◆ Praise is a garment that must be worn . . . we must put it and it can be taken off.
- ◆ This garment is worn in PLACE OF the spirit of heaviness: depression, anxiety, doubt, fear, panic, terror, uncertainty, nervousness, despondency, hopelessness, worry, apathy, weariness, etc. These all go along with HEAVINESS . . . Jesus promises us a LIGHT yoke.
- ◆ Sometimes only the anointing of God is strong enough to LIFT the yoke and take off our sackcloth. That is why we are to seek and thirst for His presence.

**Zech 3:1-7**

*Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD (Jesus), and **Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him.** And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?" Now Joshua was clothed with filthy*

*garments, and was standing before the Angel. Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, "**Take away the filthy garments from him.**" And to him He said, "See, **I have removed** your iniquity from you, and **I will clothe** you **with rich robes.**" And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a **clean turban on his head**, and they put the **clothes on him**. And the Angel of the LORD [Jesus] stood by. Then the Angel of the LORD [Jesus] admonished Joshua, saying, "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'If you will walk in My ways, and if you will keep My command, then you shall also judge My house, and likewise have charge of My courts; I will give you places to walk among these who stand here.'*

- ◆ The one who opposes the brethren, our accuser, stands ready to accuse and condemn us: even before God.
- ◆ God TAKES AWAY one garment and PUTS ON another one: one is condemnation, filthiness and unrighteousness. The other is rich robes, praise, forgiveness, cleanness and righteousness. Praise is the vehicle of agreement where we put on the new garments that are provided for us.
- ◆ We hear God speak to us in HIS GARMENTS.

*Ps 132:16*

*I will also **clothe her priests with salvation**, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.*

*Matt 22:11*

*But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have **on a wedding garment**.*

- ◆ God clothes us with salvation. We must receive HIS GARMENT provided for us.
- ◆ Our covering is HIS provision. Salvation appropriates what has been provided. Praise brings us into agreement with all that God has provided through Jesus Christ. We must accept God's covering; we must walk in the clothing that He provides for us.

*Matt 9:16*

*No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an **old garment**; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse.*

- ◆ We must seek a newness in our life and worship of God. We cannot rest on the OLD way of doing it.

*Matt 14:35-36*

*And when the men of that place recognized Him, they sent out into all that surrounding region, brought to Him all who were sick, and begged Him that they might only touch **the hem of His garment**. And as many as touched it were made perfectly well.*

- ◆ There can be a release of God's healing power in the covering of worship...as we put on His garment of praise. **Praise and worship is a vehicle of release...**

## A dwelling place or tent [place of meeting]

We have already looked at the fact that God dwells and takes up residence in the midst of His people. As part of redemption's plan, God's dwelling has moved from FAR AWAY to IN.

*Exod 25:18-22*

*And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat. Make one cherub at one end, and the other cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim at the two ends of it of one piece with the mercy seat. "And the cherubim **shall stretch out their wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings**, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the mercy seat. You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you. "And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.*

*Num 7:89*

*Now when Moses went into the **tabernacle of meeting** to speak with Him, he heard the voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the Testimony, **from between the two cherubim**; thus He spoke to him.*

*Isa 37:16*

*O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, the One **who dwells between the cherubim**, You are God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth.*

*Heb 9:5*

*and above it were the cherubim of glory **overshadowing the mercy seat**. . .*

*Matt 18:19-20*

*Again I say to you that if two of you **agree** [agree = Gr. sumphoneo = symphony, harmonize] on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, **I am there** in the **midst** of them.*

We are the dwelling place of God! A habitation of God individually and corporately in the Body of Christ.

**Worship uniquely allows our focus to be on God:  
in that environment, He can talk to us best.**

## A shadow (or overshadowing)

God's covering brings his "overshadowing" presence. A shadow is created when something or someone "blocks" or "covers" light or heat from reaching the object being covered. Shadows normally connote the sun beating down hard on someone or something.

- IKing 8:6-11*      *Then the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place, into the inner sanctuary of the temple, to the Most Holy Place, under the wings of the cherubim. For the cherubim spread their two wings over the place of the ark, and **the cherubim overshadowed the ark and its poles.** . . .*
- Heb 9:5*      *and above it were the cherubim of glory **overshadowing** the mercy seat. . .*
- Psalms 91:1-2*      *He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under **the shadow of the Almighty**. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust."*
- Psalms 17:8*      *Keep me as the apple of Your eye; **hide me under the shadow of Your wings**,*
- Psalms 36:7*      *How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under **the shadow of Your wings**.*
- Psalms 57:1*      *Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul trusts in You; and **in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge**, until these calamities have passed by.*
- Psalms 63:7*      *Because You have been my help, therefore **in the shadow of Your wings I will rejoice**.*
- Isa 49:2-3*      ***And He has made My mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of His hand He has hidden Me**, and made Me a polished shaft; in His quiver He has hidden Me. "And He said to me, 'You are My servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.'*

We are the people of God; we must reckon ourselves dead to sin and alive to God; we must reckon our old life gone and only our new life as the focus of our attention.

- Isa 51:16*      *And I have put My words in your mouth; **I have covered you with the shadow of My hand, that I may plant the heavens**, lay the foundations of the earth, and say to Zion, 'You are My people.'"*
- Col 3:3*      *For you died, and your life is **hidden with Christ** in God.*

The shadow of the almighty is also associated with God "overshadowing" us in His power:

- Luke 1:35*      *And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will **overshadow** you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.*
- Acts 5:15*      *so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might **fall on** some of them.*

In The Greek

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Overshadow/fall on = **1982** episkiazo- **to throw a shadow upon, to envelop in a shadow, to overshadow**. From a vaporous cloud that casts a shadow the word is transferred to a shining cloud surrounding and enveloping persons with brightness. Used of the Holy Spirit exerting creative energy upon the womb of the virgin Mary and impregnating it (a use of the word which seems to have been drawn from the familiar Old Testament idea of a cloud as symbolizing the immediate presence and power of God)

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**Worship can be a vehicle in which the overshadowing power of God is released to His people.**

## A shield (a covering of protection)

Covering as a shield is also closely related to the protection and favor of God. A shield is a common symbol used to show that God is intimately concerned and involved in protecting our life.

**Worship can be a vehicle of release in which God's protection over us is reaffirmed and revealed.**

- Gen 15:1* After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. **I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.**"
- Psalms 3:3* But You, O LORD, are a **shield for me**, my glory and the One who lifts up my head.
- Psalms 5:12* For You, O LORD, **will bless the righteous**; with favor **You will surround him as with a shield.**
- Psalms 18:2* The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; **my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.**
- Psalms 18:30* As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the LORD is proven; he is a shield to all who trust in Him.
- Psalms 28:7* The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoices, and with my song I will praise Him.
- Psalms 33:20-21* Our soul waits for the LORD; **he is our help and our shield.** For our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy name.
- Psalms 119:114* You are my hiding place and **my shield**; I hope in Your word.

**We must take up the shield of faith:** faith is based on the truth of God's word. We must cling to His word and realize that we cannot live by bread (physical food) alone!

- Eph 6:16* above all, **taking the shield of faith** with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.
- Psalms 91:4* He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; **his truth shall be your shield and buckler.**

## A shelter (hiding place, strong tower, refuge)

God is pictured as our refuge, PRESENT help in time of trouble.

***Psalms 61:3-4** For You have been a shelter for me, a strong tower from the enemy. **I will abide in Your tabernacle forever;** I will trust in the shelter of Your wings. Selah*

***Psalms 143:9** Deliver me, O LORD, from my enemies; **in You I take shelter.***

***Isa 4:4-6** When the Lord has **washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion**, and **purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst**, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning, **then the LORD will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night.** For over all the glory there will be a covering. **And there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime from the heat, for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain.***

**God's tabernacle of provision is** for a shelter and refuge from the storms and rains of life. The heat of the daytime will suck the life and energy out of a man. We must be renewed by the living water. In the struggles of life, we can trust God to be a place where we can run and find a peace that passes all understanding.

***Joel 3:16** The LORD also will roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; the heavens and earth will shake; but **the LORD will be a shelter for His people**, and the strength of the children of Israel.*

***Phil 4:6-7** Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

## Notes

### Chapter 1

<sup>1</sup> Please note a very well known story from Israel's history that bears on this concept of the "King taking on the role of a servant":

**1 Chr 15:27** David was **clothed with a robe of fine linen**, as were all the Levites who bore the ark, the singers, and Chenaniah the music master with the singers. **David also wore a linen ephod.**

**2 Sam 6:13-16** And so it was, when those bearing the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, that he sacrificed oxen and fatted sheep. Then **David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was wearing a linen ephod.** So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet. Now as the ark of the LORD came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and **saw King David leaping and whirling before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.**

What makes the statement that David wore a linen ephod so remarkable is that **KINGS** did not **WEAR** linen ephods. In fact, Uzziah died because he presumed that he could take on a priestly duty as a **KING** (2 Chronicles 6:16-19). So, in clear violation of Scripture, David danced **BEFORE** the Lord while wearing a linen ephod, in the role of a priest. What is even more amazing is that David walked **BEFORE** the party carrying the **ARK**. When it says that he danced with all his might and that Saul's daughter despised him, the intimation is that David had spun and whirled and leaped even to the point that his ephod and clothes came off. It was a common practice in that time that when a conquering army returned from vanquishing a foe, they would take the leader of the defeated force and put him in front of the "victory" parade. They would force him to dance and make a fool of himself, often times stripping him naked. This was to show that the king had been forced into the "servitude" of his new master—his position in the parade showed him as the "slave". This is exactly the picture of David that the Holy Spirit is painting for us. David took on the "role" of a servant when the Ark of God was brought to Mt. Zion. The "despising" from Michal was a disdain that a "**KING**" would do such a lowly and "slave-like" thing such as dance till he whirled all of his clothes off in the position of a slave in this processional. This is a picture of Jesus that we get in the person of David.. who represents the shepherd-warrior Lion of the Tribe of Judah in many aspects of his life. Do not miss the direct picture of David's humility here--- it is a picture of Messiah's humility in having the very nature of God but becoming "poor" for our sake.. of Him "stripping" off His kingly garments and taking the position of the "bondservant". Why? So that the presence of God (the Ark of the Covenant) could be **BROUGHT BACK** to the place that it had left—**IN THE VERY MIDST** of **GOD's PEOPLE!**

<sup>2</sup> This discussion should not confuse the fact that in the Person of Jesus Christ, divinity and humanity were perfectly combined. Theologians can't fully explain it, so I won't try either. However, the nature of Jesus as the divine Son of God is without question an established truth of Scripture. That God **BECAME** man (not man became God) is the foundational truth of the Gospel. The Son of God had **NO** beginning as He was eternally in the bosom of the Father, the Word who was with God, and was God (John 1:1). My discussion focuses on how the human being, Jesus of Nazareth, did have a beginning point in terms of His **HUMANITY**, though the spirit that indwelt that human body was the eternal Son of God. That Jesus' coming into the world was an **ADVENT** and not a **BEGINNING** is without question. The point is that the Gospels in many ways are so revolutionary because now a **MAN** is making statements that could **ONLY** be made by God Himself. The Son of God had all authority, power, and dominion **BEFORE** He came to earth. However, as a man, Jesus could not make that statement until His sinless life had made atonement for all mankind and after His resurrection from the dead. Now, as the sinless **GOD-MAN**, a **MAN** was now making the claim that "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given unto me!" This is very radical to the Jewish mindset. It would be blasphemous to think of such power given unto a **MAN**... however, we **KNOW** this **MAN** was God-in-the-flesh and that he was Emmanuel, God-with-us. Only this man **COULD** rightfully make this claim by living a sinless life and raising from the dead, thereby being granted that authority rightfully as a man.

<sup>3</sup> According to Daniel 9:20-27, there were to be 70 cycles of 7 weeks to fulfill and complete God's redemptive purposes for man (make reconciliation for iniquity and finish the transgression). The angel of the Lord told Daniel:

"Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and

prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the **going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks**; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. And **after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself**; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, and till the end of the war desolations are determined. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; but in the middle of the week he shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, even until the consummation, which is determined, is poured out on the desolate."

The holy city is Jerusalem, the people of Daniel are obviously the Hebrews. This prophecy came to Daniel in approximately 535 B.C., which corresponds to actual historical timeperiod of the Jewish dispersion to Babylon. The Hebrew definition of a day was 360 days, and the angel said that  $62+7 = 69$  weeks were to transpire from the time that the command to rebuild the temple occurred (Artaxerxes gave this command on March 14, 445 B.C., the first day of Nisan of that year) until Messiah would appear or come to His people. Each week is a 7 year period, giving  $69 * 7 * 360 = 173,880$  days. Using an actual 365 day calendar year and adjusting for leap years, from March 14, 445 B.C. to the appearing of Messiah gives us a date of around **April 6, 32 A.D.** The Hebrew word for "cut off" is *yikaret*, meaning a sudden, violent end. Daniel was told that Messiah would be CUT OFF, but not for Himself, meaning that His death was to atone for the sins of others, not His own. Then Daniel was told that the people of the prince to come (Rome) would come and destroy both the CITY (Jerusalem) and the SANCTUARY (the Temple). This was fulfilled in 70 A.D. when the Romans destroyed both the city and the temple! Just on this prophecy alone, we know that Messiah MUST appear and be CUT OFF (face a sudden death in His youth, like crucifixion) BEFORE the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D and must appear in Jerusalem around April 6, 32 A.D. Jesus began His ministry in the 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1), whose reign began in 14 A.D. By chronological deduction, a three year ministry would place Jesus in the year 32 A.D. at the time of His crucifixion. His entry into Jerusalem during His final week of life was the Sunday before Passover of that year. **April 6, 32 A.D.** was the Sunday before Passover, the same day in which ALL the Passover lambs were being brought into the city of Jerusalem for the Passover celebration. Messiah was cut off AFTER the 69 weeks of Daniel but BEFORE the destruction of the temple! This could ONLY point to one person in history who IS the Messiah of Israel, savior of both Jews and Gentiles: Jesus of Nazareth.

<sup>4</sup> **Psalms 24:3-6** Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your face. Selah

<sup>5</sup> I am reminded of a story about the early years of the Church on the Way in Van Nuys, CA. Pastor Jack Hayford was re-telling how early on in the life of the church the Lord established the fact that WORSHIP was going to be and needed to be a MAJOR focus of the life of the church. After worship one day, a person shared with him a vision into the spirit realm that they had been given during the worship service. They could see the presence of angels and seraphim, particularly the angelic beings that surround the throne of God in heaven. These beings were worshipping, which is what they do in heaven anyway night and day. However, their position relative to the church building itself would have placed the "throne" of God right at the focal point of where worship was being directed as part of the service that day. Pastor Jack, I remember, made the statement that when earth "aligns" with heaven, heaven and its purposes can "align" and enter into the realm of earthly existence. Worship was the key to this alignment, and was a clear indicator that he was to pursue worship to the Living God as a vital part of the life of the church. This is what I mean by "juxtaposition". The invisible supernatural realm and its location is orthogonal to (independent of) any particular location in the natural physical realm. However, Pastor Jack saw the realization that when we worship the Living God, we are "approaching" and "entering" into the presence of the throne room in the supernatural realm by virtue of this "juxtaposition" of the two realms with each other. This is the concept of the "manifest" presence of God, versus His omni-presence. I believe this reality exists and that worship is major key to "ascending" the hill of the Lord.

<sup>6</sup> **Eph 2:8-10.** "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

The fact that man plays a role in his salvation and cooperates with God in his salvation does not equate to the idea that man saves himself. The strict Calvinist would disagree vehemently with this, but Scripture is crystal clear in stating that God will not save man apart from the agreement of man's will. That was the whole point of the FALL... Adam and Eve chose their OWN will apart from God and died spiritually as a result. Repentance is something that

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God can grant, but it is still something that ONLY man can do! God cannot force you to repent and embrace Him as your Lord and Savior. God will not BEND your will... He expects you to use your will and align your will with His. God MUST give grace for all of this to take place, because mankind apart from God can never reach or attain to the righteousness of God. This principle is clearly seen throughout Scripture: "Without God we cannot. Without us He will not."

<sup>7</sup> **James 4:8** "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."

Notice that we play a role in drawing near to God... it involves cleansing our hands and purifying our hearts from double-mindedness to faith. If God was the one who did that, then EVERYONE in the world could draw near to God! However, God has provided an adequate "red carpet" so that anyone who will cleanse their hands and purify their hearts CAN draw near. To those who draw near on the terms that God lays out, God WILL draw near to them. The whole idea of covering is that God provides it and requires it in order for us to draw near to Him. If man cleanses his hands and purifies his heart but draws near to God via some "other" covering than the one God has provided, HE WILL NEVER REACH GOD. This is the concept that we can just be good people and do righteous acts and God will accept us. Far be it from the truth! We can not be religious and draw near to God on the basis of Buddha or Mohammed or Joseph Smith as well. No other prophet can pave the way. There is only ONE mediator between God and man, the MAN Yeshua the Messiah. We MUST still repent and come before God as holy people... but in the end, WE STILL NEED GOD'S GRACE and COVERING!

<sup>8</sup> God created the first Adam (both man and woman) to have intimate fellowship with Him, covered by the glory of God. They didn't even know they were naked. All they saw in each other was the image and glory of God! There was no place for fear, lack, sickness, death, anxiety, depression, corruption, or lust. God was the SOURCE of their life and their life was defined by HIM. Because of sin, man now seeks to define himself by his power, possessions, prestige, and pleasure. That is why the world is so wicked. It is a world left to the pursuits of human kind apart from the will of God and stirred onward by the prince of the power of the air, the one who works in the sons of disobedience. The glory of God WAS the covering which allowed this intimate fellowship and the open relationship.

<sup>9</sup> Several excellent books have been written on the divine romance and the Bridegroom God. Mike Bickle's **The Pleasures of Loving God** is a great start to further pursue the idea that God BURNS with passion for us. Covering in my mind provides the "mechanics" of how this ALL-CONSUMING fire can be near the one thing in this universe that His heart longs and breaks for: YOU!

Check out:

Sam Storms, *The Singing God*, (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House) 1998.

Mike Bickle, *The Pleasures of Loving God*, (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House) 2000.

Mike Bickle, *Passion for Jesus*, (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House) 1993.

<sup>10</sup> Consider these verses which hint to the fact that eternal life is BOUND up in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, the resurrected, exalted Son of the Living God. He is the ETERNAL redeemer, and therefore will always be the ETERNAL God-Man whose beginning (as touching man's nature) was in the womb of a virgin girl named Miriam who lived in Nazareth some 2000 years ago.

**Heb 7:25** Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, **since He always lives to make intercession for them.**

**Rev 5:12-14** "**Worthy is the Lamb** who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!" And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: "Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, **and to the Lamb, forever and ever!**" Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the twenty-four elders **fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.**

**1 Tim 2:5-6** For there is one God and **one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus**, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

**Acts 1:11** "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? **This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner** as you saw Him go into heaven."

- Rev 19:11-16** Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and **His name is called The Word of God.** And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. **And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.**
- I Jn 1:1-3** That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life-- the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us-- that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is **with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.**
- John 1:1-4** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God.** He was in the beginning with God. **All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.** In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
- John 1:14** And **the Word became flesh** and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.
- I Jn 5:20** And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. **This is the true God and eternal life.**
- <sup>11</sup> from *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1995.
- 3427 yashab { yaw-shab' }** a primitive root; **occurrences in AV - dwell 437, inhabitant 221, sit 172, abide 70, inhabit 39, down 26, remain 23, in 22, tarry 19, set 14, continue 5, place 7, still 5, taken 5, misc 23;** 1088 to dwell, remain, sit, abide; to sit, sit down; to be set; to remain, stay; to dwell, have one's abode; (Niphal) to be inhabited; (Piel) to set, place; (Hiphil) to cause to sit; to cause to abide, set; to cause to dwell; to cause (cities) to be inhabited; to marry (give an dwelling to); (Hophal); to be inhabited; to make to dwell
- <sup>12</sup> David performed this vow to the Lord as part of his worship in the tent he erected and where the ark of the covenant was placed.
- Ps 119:164-165** **"Seven times a day I praise You,** because of Your righteous judgments. Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble."
- Ps 65:1** "Praise is **awaiting** You, O God, in Zion; and **to You the vow shall be performed.**"
- <sup>13</sup> Some of the appointed Levites thanked, praised, AND recorded before the Ark of the Lord.
- 1 Chr 16:4** And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the LORD, and to record, and to thank and praise the LORD God of Israel: (KJV)
- <sup>14</sup> **John 19:25-27** Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.
- <sup>15</sup> **John 19:28** After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!"
- <sup>16</sup> **Mark 15:33-34** Now when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"
- <sup>17</sup> **Luke 23:34-38** Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do." And they divided His garments and cast lots. And the people stood looking on. But even the rulers with them sneered, saying, "He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of God." The soldiers also mocked Him, coming and offering Him sour wine, and saying, "If You are the King of the Jews, save Yourself." And an inscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew: THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

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<sup>18</sup> **Luke 23:39-43** Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us." But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, "Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? "And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong." Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

<sup>19</sup> Supernatural signs accompanied the last words and breath of Jesus. His vehement cry is noted by all four Gospel authors.

**Mark 15:37-38** And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last. Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.

**John 19:30** So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "**It is finished!**" And bowing His head, **He gave up His spirit.**

**Luke 23:44-46** Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two. And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, "**Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit.'**" Having said this, He breathed His last.

**Matt 27:50-53** And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and **yielded up His spirit.** Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

<sup>20</sup> **Rom 1:1-4** "Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, **concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.**"

Jesus did not BECOME the Son of God but rather was DECLARED TO BE the Son of God... namely because of His resurrection from the dead. It was the emphatic proof that He was indeed the promised Messiah and that every word He had spoken was TRUE! The Spirit of Holiness would not resurrect one who had lied or told an untruth! In fact, Scripture attributes the resurrection of Jesus to the Father, Son, AND Holy Spirit. The Triune God works together all that God does!

<sup>21</sup> *Spirit-Filled Life Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 770, "Kingdom Dynamics: Praise, the Pathway to God's Presence."

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 770, "Kingdom Dynamics: 'Establishing' God's Throne."

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 770, "Kingdom Dynamics: 'Establishing' God's Throne."

## Chapter 2

<sup>1</sup> **James 5:13-18** Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

The intimation here is clear: God did not answer Elijah's prepare because of his status as a prophet. He answered his prayer as a man, WITH A NATURE JUST LIKE OURS, who prayed EARNESTLY and believed.

<sup>2</sup> **a double portion.** lit. "two mouths," as in Dt 21:17

Jerome H. Smith, editor, *The new treasury of scripture knowledge [computer file], electronic edition of the revised edition of The treasury of scripture knowledge, Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1992 by Jerome H. Smith.

<sup>3</sup> **Deut 21:15-17** "If a man has two wives, one loved and the other unloved, and they have borne him children, both the loved and the unloved, and if the firstborn son is of her who is unloved, then it shall be, on the day he bequeaths his possessions to his sons, that he must not bestow firstborn status on the son of the loved wife in preference to the son of the unloved, the true firstborn. But he shall acknowledge the son of the unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his."

<sup>4</sup> Jerome H. Smith, editor, *The new treasury of scripture knowledge [computer file], electronic edition of the revised edition of The treasury of scripture knowledge, Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1992 by Jerome H. Smith.

<sup>5</sup> **2 Pet 1:2-4** Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as **His divine power** has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us **exceedingly great and precious promises**, that through these you may be **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

<sup>6</sup> We understand that God is sovereign in election, yet we also understand that man is free in his will to choose or reject God. Scripture clearly teaches that God's desire is that every single human being would be saved.

**1 Tim 2:3-4** For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

**2 Pet 3:9** The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Knowing that this is God's will, it is obviously apparent that something MORE than God's will is required if all men are to be saved. This is the paradox of a sovereign God who WILLS that His creation (mankind) exercise choice and the power of their own will. What power God has given us! We are the one of the few things (besides angels) in all creation who can say "NO" to God! By His grace, many of us are still alive even though we have done exactly that on numerous occasions.

<sup>7</sup> **Ps 115:16** "The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD'S; but the earth He has given to the children of men."

God has so arranged and ordered the creation of both earth and man so that if God's kingdom and reign are to be established on earth, man must participate and cooperate with God to see it happen. The prayer posture of Daniel is one of the most noted examples of how even a spoken, prophetic word of God required the partnership of a human being on earth in order to see that will established "on earth, as it is in heaven." The message was true, but Daniel knew the appointed time was long. It was in RESPONSE to Daniel and his prayer/fast/mourn that activity in the heavenly realm occurred.

**Dan 10:1-3** In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Beltshazzar. The message was true, but **the appointed time was long**; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision. In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

Many books on prayer focus on this aspect, more notably Dutch Sheets, **Intercessory Prayer** and Jack Hayford's **Prayer is Invading the Impossible** are excellent starting points for looking at the power of prayer.

<sup>8</sup> **Luke 15:11-24** Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants."' And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his

servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry."

<sup>9</sup> **Luke 10:30-37** Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

<sup>10</sup> **Josh 3:10-17** And Joshua said, "By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Jebusites: Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is crossing over before you into the Jordan. Now therefore, take for yourselves twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one man from every tribe. And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, that the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that come down from upstream, and they shall stand as a heap." So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest), that the waters which came down from upstream stood still, and rose in a heap very far away at Adam, the city that is beside Zaretan. So the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, failed, and were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho. Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

<sup>11</sup> **II Ki 5:8-14** So it was, when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, "Why have you torn your clothes? Please let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha's house. And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean." But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, "Indeed, I said to myself, 'He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.' "Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage. And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean?'" So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

<sup>12</sup> **Matt 3:1-6** In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight.'" And John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

<sup>13</sup> Jesus was of course not baptized for the remission of sins. He did not come for repentance. He came for OUTPOURING, in obedience to the Father. Once all righteousness was fulfilled in His obedience, the baptism of the Holy Spirit came from heaven to empower and infuse His ministry.

**Luke 4:1** Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

**Matt 3:13-4:1** Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?" But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

<sup>14</sup> Mike Bickle, in his book *The Pleasures of Loving God* (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, 2000), expresses this concept as our "Identity as a Lover". In essence, he says that "I am Loved, and I am a Lover" defines our success spiritually speaking... and for that matter, in every worldly sense as well.

<sup>15</sup> There can be no doubt about this issue: Paul dealt with a carnal group of Spirit-filled believers at Corinth. They were abusing spiritual gifts and had no concept of love. The 'love' chapter of the Bible is sandwiched between a discussion (the best and most extensive in the whole NT) on why believers should not be ignorant of spiritual gifts and how to use spiritual gifts properly. If there were ever any doubt as to Paul's commitment to the pursuit of the gifts of the Spirit, it is removed here. When many today see fleshly attitudes mixed with the spiritual giftings, they shut them ALL down and make doctrines that explain why the gifts of the Spirit were only designed for the period of the early church. There are also some who shove tongues into a corner of belief and make it a one time experience that you should never "bring out of the closet" in a public setting. Paul NEVER once chided the Corinthians for their zeal in seeking after or pursuing the gifts. He acted correctly: He shepherded the flock. He recognized a problem and pastored them out of it. That is how any abuse should be dealt with. It is important in this discussion to see what Paul DID say and DIDN'T say.

**1 Cor 12:31** But **earnestly desire** the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

**1 Cor 14:1** **Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts**, but especially that you may prophesy.

**1 Cor 14:39-40** Therefore, brethren, **desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues**. Let all things be done decently and in order.

**1 Cor 14:5** **I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied**; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.

In the end, Paul says that without an earnest desire, spiritual gifts do not just "fall on" someone waiting for God to show them whether they are real or not. I know many, and I was in this boat, who asked the Lord: "Father if you want me to have the gift of tongues then show me that it is a valid experience." God does nothing like this: we must come in full faith and belief FIRST, then God can answer us. Show me anything God answers in prayer when there is doubt on the part of the one asking. Of course Paul shows us the MORE EXCELLENT way, which is to pursue LOVE and to pursue SPIRITUAL GIFTS together. We are to PURSUE the GIFTS and PURSUE the GIVER. It does not have to be an either/or... it should be a both/and.

<sup>16</sup> Oswald Chambers, *God's Workmanship*, (HANTS RG23 7LP, UNITED KINGDOM: Oswald Chambers Publications Association and Marshall Morgan & Scott) 1996.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> **John 20:20-23** Now when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! **As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.**" And when He had said this, **He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.** If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

The question begs, did the Father send Jesus into this world without the Holy Spirit? I think not. The fact that Jesus was indwelt by the Holy Spirit from conception onward is without question. Though some see the "receive" as a prophetic view of Pentecost, many see it as the first installment of the Holy Spirit INTO the disciples. The fact that the disciples were already "CLEAN" before the crucifixion combined now with a resurrected Lord to whom all power in heaven and earth had been given would lead many to conclude that this was when the disciples were "born again" and they received the "indwelling" of the Spirit. Just as Jesus was "endued with power from on high" at the river Jordan, the disciples were to be endued with power from on high in Jerusalem not many days hence. The fact that Jesus was indwelt by the Holy Spirit but did not operate in the overflow or anointing of the Holy Spirit until His baptism at the Jordan does not contradict the Scriptural concept of a second operation of the Holy Spirit at all. This explanation fits better with the paradigm that the baptism of the Holy Spirit (as Jesus described, John the Baptist described it, and John the Apostle described it) is a distinct ministry of the Holy Spirit separate from the regeneration of a person's spirit that makes them alive to God or "born again".

<sup>19</sup> Many others have written far more eloquently on this idea that God is still speaking today. Jack Deere has two excellent books: *Surprised by the Power of the Spirit* and *Surprised by the Voice of God*. These are practical in terms

of understanding the voice and current-day working of God-- they also provide a scholarly rebuttal to the idea that God no longer heals or speaks to His people today. The Bible is ENOUGH to lead us and guide us into the knowledge of salvation and the person of God. However, the experience of the people of the Bible is that God directed and communicated and demonstrated His presence with them in supernatural ways over the course of their lives. When we read the Bible without the expectation that our experience will match THEIR experience, the Bible loses its power and becomes just a book of facts. The Bible is ENOUGH but we NEED to hear God's directive voice in our day to day lives. Although many factors will prevent us from hearing and walking with God in a conversational communion, it should be the desire of every earnest believer to discern God's voice today.

<sup>20</sup> **Heb 4:14-16** Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

<sup>21</sup> **Zeph 3:17** The LORD your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will quiet you with His love, **he will rejoice over you with singing.**

<sup>22</sup> **Exod 33:18-23** And he said, "Please, show me Your glory." Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." And the LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock. So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by. Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."

## Chapter 3

<sup>1</sup> To say that Adam and Eve were "sinless" would be incorrect. Adam and Eve were innocent until the time they sinned. Innocence is the child like state that we consider babies and young people before they reach an age of accountability to be in. Adam and Eve were "tested" and did not pass the test. Jesus was sinless- and he passed every test that would have disqualified Him from being sinless as well. The First Adam failed; the Second Adam, Jesus, passed every test.

<sup>2</sup> **From Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary:** [And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life]-- literally, lives: but though in the plural form, it is commonly rendered "life" (cf. <Gen. 3:14,17; Job 24:22>), breath, wind, "breath of life," the natural or organic life, as the phrase usually denotes <Gen. 6:17; 7:15>.

<sup>3</sup> **Enhanced Strong's Lexicon, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1995.**

**5590 psuche { psoo-khay' }** from 5594; AV - soul 58, life 40, mind 3, heart 1, heartily { yuchv } breath; the breath of life; the vital force which animates the body and shows itself in breath; of animals; of men; that in which there is life; a living being, a living soul; the soul; the seat of the feelings, desires, affections, aversions (our heart, soul etc.); the (human) soul in so far as it is constituted that by the right use of the aids offered it by God it can attain its highest end and secure eternal blessedness, the soul regarded as a moral being designed for everlasting life; the soul as an essence which differs from the body and is not dissolved by death (distinguished from other parts of the body)

**979 bios { bee'-os }** a primary word; AV - life 5, living 5, good 1; 11 GK - 1050 { bivo" } life; life extensively; the period or course of life; that by which life is sustained, resources, wealth, goods

**2222 zoe { dzo-ay' }** from 2198; AV - life 133, lifetime 1; 134 GK - 2437 { zwhv } life; the state of one who is possessed of vitality or is animate; every living soul; of the absolute fullness of life, both essential and ethical, which belongs to God, and through him both to the hypostatic "logos" and to Christ in whom the "logos" put on human nature; life real and genuine, a life active and vigorous, devoted to God, blessed, in the portion even in this world of those who put their trust in Christ, but after the resurrection to be consummated by new accessions (among them a more perfect body), and to last for ever.

<sup>4</sup> **From Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary:** [For in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die]-- Hebrew, 'dying thou shalt die,' which the Septuagint translates 'thou shalt die the death.'

<sup>5</sup> **Gen 5:5** So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.

<sup>6</sup> **1 Cor 15:47-49** The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.

**2 Pet 1:4** By which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

**I Jn 3:1-2** Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

We are and will be partakers of the divine nature of Jesus the Messiah... one day we will be as He is. These earthly sinful bodies will be redeemed and transformed into spiritual bodies. Unlike the wrong Mormon theology that assumes "being like God" equates to "we can gods too", this taking on the likeness of Jesus is a Scriptural understanding of God's purpose for mankind.

<sup>7</sup> Josh 24:15 And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, **choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve**, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

Deut 30:19-20 I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore **choose life, that both you and your descendants may live**; that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."

<sup>8</sup> This is a huge discussion area in and of itself. I actually believe that a strict young-earth creation with the 6-day creative week being the start of ALL things is probably the best rendering of Genesis 1. Though, I do consider that the idea of the 6-day creative week as being a RE-forming of previously created things (like the earth, stars, sun, and so on and so forth) is also supported from a SCRIPTURAL viewpoint *alone*. When we look at the fossil layers, however, we are looking at the results of the Great Deluge that occurred about 4000 years ago—and the geographic column, as it is so-called, can be completely reconciled with the Biblical account (as long as you abandon the circular reasoning between the age of its layers and the fossils the layers contain). In this perspective, I am in complete agreement with the young-earth creationists like Henry Morris, John Whitcomb, and Ken Hamm. I am also in agreement that the creative week as described in Genesis occurred roughly 6000 years ago and that there is no disparity between this and what we see from science or nature. There is much evidence to show a young earth and even a young universe... but in both of these cases I believe this evidence is the direct result of the creative week that began on Day 1. The question in my mind is whether there was something in terms of creation PRIOR to Day 1 as recorded in Genesis—meaning, is Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2-3 immediately linked or is there a causality to the earth that is described in Gen 1:2 with something we are not told about from the time that "In the beginning" refers. Even when God said "Let there be light" on Day 1, the earth was already in existence. Not only that, the earth was 1) covered with water and 2) covered with darkness. Day 2 and Day 3 were all about separating water—water from water and land from water. Day 1 and Day 4 were all about darkness and light being separated: spiritual possibly on Day 1 and physical darkness on Day 4. I believe that the LIGHT God spoke of on Day 1 could be one of two things. It could describe the initial creation of the entire LIGHT (i.e. electromagnetic) spectrum (of which visible light is only a very, very small portion). In this rendering, I would submit that Day 1 would be more likely the creation of ALL things and the absolute beginning of time, space, and matter. It could also possibly describe the re-establishment of the LIGHT of God into a universe that had BECOME darkened spiritually by the fall of Lucifer and 1/3 of the angelic realm. In this rendering, the initial state of the earth on Day 1 of creation week was FROM or CAUSED BY a fall of cataclysmic proportions of some of God's created order—namely the angels, and more specifically the devil. I could envision that the fall of Lucifer and his cohorts brought about several possible things: a flooding of the earth with water, the hitting of the earth with comets and/or asteroids, the darkening of stars and/or galaxies, the creation of black holes, the warping of time and space at some points in the universe, and any number of other universal cataclysmic/astronomical events. Angels are referred to and closely linked to STARS throughout the Scripture.. which may point to their original God-given role of oversight over some portions of the universe. It could be very possible (and I tend to believe this) that the original sun or solar system that the original earth was in is not the same as the one we see now. The sun, moon, and stars that we see were definitely created on Day 4, around 6000 years ago. That act does not preclude the possibility of a different ORDERING or ARRANGEMENT of planets, suns, stars, solar systems, galaxies, or cosmic bodies PRIOR to Day 1. The fall of Lucifer and his angels could have produced a universal cataclysm of sorts that our puny human minds can't even comprehend right now. In fact, I believe the

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"signs" that God placed in the Zodiac to speak forth the knowledge of the Gospel and of His Son Jesus were ordered and arranged on Day 4 as well. They were a message not only to the human race God would soon create, but also a reminder to the angelic realm of the fact that ONE DAY God would Himself restore and reconcile ALL things- even the rebellion of those angels who fell from their stellar assignments and were cast to the earth. In this sense, we look at a sun, moon, and stars that were "made" or "fashioned" in their current arrangement about 6000 years ago. This, I believe, is a reasonable middle-ground between a strict young-earth creationism understanding of the earth and a modified gap theory that does not exceed the reasonableness or boundaries of Scripture to fit current fallible scientific thought.

<sup>9</sup> God the Father intended that out of humanity a BRIDE or WIFE would be fashioned for His Son. All that pleases God is found perfectly in the manifestation of the person of His Son, Jesus. The union of Christ and the Church was pictured in the taking AND making of Eve from Adam. Eve was made as a help-mate for Adam. We are made to serve our Lord, created IN HIM for good works. This IS the mystery of the ages... God's ultimate purpose for mankind. This is known as the "BRIDAL" paradigm... and it makes perfect sense seen in the context of history. God is looking for those who will "LEAVE" their earthly fathers and mothers (which speaks of all that is OF THIS WORLD) and be joined in one flesh to His Son. We were TAKEN from the side of Jesus, by the shedding of His blood, and fashioned from His very being. What a mystery! He makes up for our failures and shortcoming.. He is our covering and authority.. just as God has so ordained the husband/wife relationship to be. We were CREATED, BORN AGAIN, for Him... Jesus was not created for us. What a mystery!

**Gen 2:21-25** And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

**1 Cor 11:8-9** For man is not from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man.

**1 Cor 6:17** But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.

**Eph 5:28-32** So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

<sup>10</sup> Remember that there was no law forbidding close relations to marry until the law of Moses was given.

**Lev 18:6** 'None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I am the LORD.

**Lev 20:17** If a man takes his sister, a daughter of his father or a daughter of his mother, and sees her nakedness, and she sees his nakedness, it is a shameful thing, and they shall be cut off in the sight of the children of their people; he has uncovered his sister's nakedness, he shall bear his iniquity.

**Lev 20:19-21** 'You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister nor of your father's sister, for that would uncover his near of kin. They shall bear their guilt. 'If a man lies with his uncle's wife, he has uncovered his uncle's nakedness. They shall bear their sin; they shall die childless. If a man takes his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness. They shall be childless.

**Deut 27:22-23** 'Cursed is the one who lies with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!' 'Cursed is the one who lies with his mother-in-law.' And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'

**Ezek 22:11** One commits abomination with his neighbor's wife; another lewdly defiles his daughter-in-law; and another in you violates his sister, his father's daughter.

One of the most asked questions about the accuracy of Genesis, according to Creation Scientists, is "Where did Cain's wife come from?" He married ONE of his sisters. This just shows some general Biblical ignorance, but more importantly, it does not show God to be double-minded. There was GOOD reason for God to ban close marriages around the time of Moses. We didn't understand the WHY until the 21<sup>st</sup> century with the advent of genetics and the

understanding of how human characteristics are transmitted. At the root of human pro-creation, chromosomes and genes are COPIED from parents to offspring... one is from the male, one is from the female. It is ERRORS in copying genetic information from parent to child that produce genetic defects and mutations. When God first created Adam and Eve, their offspring would have very little genetic drift or mutations... meaning they could marry and have children that would not have many defects jointly acquired from their parents. Inter-marriage of their offspring and the next generation of children would have more genetic copying errors, but still not be enough to drastically cause defects in their offspring. From the time of Noah and the seven that repopulated the earth after the DELUGE, there would have been more genetic deterioration from their offspring, but still not much assuming they had not intermarried. The REASON that close relations could marry in these times is because genetic mutations can ACCUMULATE and be transmitted further on down to offspring. Each generation can introduce new copying errors or new defects. The less COMMON the mutations are between the parents, the better chance that the offspring would not have the same mutations or defects (one parent's genes could override the corrupted one and be the dominant trait). Once you get into the 25<sup>th</sup> generation or so (which Moses was about the 23<sup>rd</sup> generation from Adam), the genetic mutations resident within a certain lineage and family are certainly increased and concentrated. God, in His knowledge, knew that continued marriage of close relatives would INCREASE the chance of offspring that have the same deformities and mutations as their parents. By forbidding marriage of sisters, aunts, uncles, and in-laws, the LORD was in essence lowering the odds that the SAME genetic defects would be passed on to children born from parents of the same ancestry and lineage. It was a GENETIC protection more than a MORAL law... yet it was INDEED a LAW given by God, which He expected to be obeyed.

<sup>11</sup> **John 8:44** You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

<sup>12</sup> There is NO OTHER!

**John 14:5-6** Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

**1 Cor 3:11** For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

**Acts 4:12** Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

**1 Tim 2:5-6** For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

## Chapter 4

<sup>1</sup> **Acts 17:26-28** And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'

<sup>2</sup> **1 Tim 6:15-16** ... He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

<sup>3</sup> **Exod 33:20** But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live."

<sup>4</sup> **John 1:18** No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

**John 14:9-11** Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father?' "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

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- Col 2:9-10** For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.
- Col 1:15-20** He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.
- <sup>5</sup> **1 Cor 2:9-16** But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him." But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For "who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him?" But we have the mind of Christ.
- Eph 3:14-19** For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height-- to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.
- <sup>6</sup> **Rom 1:16-17** For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

## Chapter 5

## Chapter 6

<sup>1</sup> One of my more favorite sayings from Jack Deere...

<sup>2</sup> Sid Roth along with Michael Brown are two of the best expositors in my opinion on how a Messianic Believers would characterize the rabbinical systems from the "other" side of the fence. Both have great books and audio teachings in this area. I would recommend *They Thought for Themselves* by Sid Roth, which is a compilation of testimonies and stories of Jews from a WIDE variety of lifestyles who all came to faith in Jesus.

<sup>3</sup> Mike Bickle, in his book *Passion for Jesus* (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, XXXX), expresses this concept that God has never called us to anything but "beholding him dimly."

<sup>4</sup> **Ezek 1:22-23** The likeness of the firmament above the heads of the living creatures was like the color of an awesome crystal, stretched out over their heads. And under the firmament their wings spread out straight, one toward another. Each one had two which covered one side, and each one had two which covered the other side of the body.

**Ezek 10:1** And I looked, and there in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubim, there appeared something like a sapphire stone, having the appearance of the likeness of a throne.

**Rev 4:6** Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.

<sup>5</sup> **2 Cor 12:2-4** I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago-- whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows-- such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man-- whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows-- how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

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<sup>6</sup> Enhanced Strong's Lexicon, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1995.

**8314 saraph (saw-rawf')**; from 8313; burning, i.e. (figuratively) poisonous (serpent); specifically, a saraph or symbolical creature (from their copper color): KJV-- fiery (serpent), seraph; a serpent, a fiery serpent; a poisonous serpent (fiery from burning effect of poison); seraph, seraphim; majestic beings with six wings, human hands or voices in attendance upon God

<sup>7</sup> **2 Sam 6:2-7** And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, whose name is called by the Name, the LORD of Hosts, who dwells between the cherubim. So they set the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart. And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill, accompanying the ark of God; and Ahio went before the ark. Then David and all the house of Israel played music before the LORD on all kinds of instruments of fir wood, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on sistrums, and on cymbals. And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzzah, and God struck him there for his error; and he died there by the ark of God.

<sup>8</sup> Yet another fascinating area of study is the "with", "upon", and "within" of the Holy Spirit. Though I don't care what people like the 'Bible Answer Man' say about this... this is more than just a relational difference. I can't explain exactly how the Holy Spirit is different towards us "positionally" in terms of our body, soul, and spirit in relation to these three Biblically found terms, but I do know that Scripture makes a clear distinction the three uses and meanings when talking about the dealings of the Holy Spirit. People who debate the issue otherwise are really just trying to defend how we get "all" of the Holy Spirit that we need at salvation and should never expect or seek for anything beyond that. All I know is that the INIFINITE and ETERNAL, LIMITLESS and BONDLESS, Sovereign Spirit of the Lord is not fully contained in any one of us as a believer! The Heavens of Heavens cannot contain Him, how much less us! So for me to say that there is a difference between the "within" and the "upon" of the Holy Spirit in relation to a person is to acknowledge that I don't have a clue except but by the divine word picture hints He has given us of His own activity! If the Spirit so chose to use those words, and I understand that I don't get "ALL" of Him when I am first saved, then I have no problem with believing that there are "separate" works of His grace and enduement of power apart and after salvation.