

FEAST OF TABERNACLES - DAY 4
“Christ Tabernacling Among Us”
Fred R. Coulter - September 24, 2002

And greetings, brethren. This is day number four of the Feast of Tabernacles, and here we are already halfway through. You know, time flies, and what it does, it tells us that since there is a beginning, there is an ending. And as we have seen, Christ says He is the beginning and the ending. So today what we want to do, if you want a title for this, it is “Christ Tabernacling Among Us.” And one of the whole themes of the Feast of Tabernacles is God dwelling with His people.

Now let’s go back to the beginning, and let’s just review a couple of things. God created and made man and woman in the image of God, male and female made He them, after His likeness, and after His image. And then right at first, right at the very beginning after Adam and Eve were created and the marriage took place, Adam and Eve were living in the paradise of God. They were living in the Garden of Eden. And God was living with them. God was dwelling with them. And you see, the whole - if you carry the whole theme of the Feast of Tabernacles and tabernacling, God has always wanted to dwell with His people, that they would know that He is their God, and they are His people. And so after Adam and Eve sinned, God couldn’t dwell with them any longer, because God cannot live where there is sin and unrighteousness. So what God did, He put them out of the Garden of Eden. And you can read the sentencing and everything that took place. And He placed there two cherubim to guard the way of the tree of life, and they could not go in to the Garden of Eden. Apparently, God still lived in the Garden of Eden all the time from creation until the flood of Noah. But as we have seen with the sin that took place with Adam and Eve, and then later with Cain, and later on with all mankind, then God could not dwell with human beings. So after the flood there was a change. Before the flood, God was the one Who made the judgment; God was the one Who executed the unrighteous, and so forth.

Now let’s come to after the flood. Let’s come to that time. Let’s come to Genesis 9, and let’s see that God changed the administration to where He did not execute the judgment. He left it to man to judge other men according to the principles that God has given. And so after the flood God withdrew a little further. He wasn’t dwelling with men as He did right after the creation. So after the flood, here’s what God did. Beginning in Genesis 9:1, “And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” So the same thing that God told Adam and Eve when He first created them.

Now then, there is a change in the nature of animals; there is a change in the nature of the earth; and also a change in the nature of man, that man now on an accelerating scale downward lives fewer and fewer number of years. No longer do they live into the hundreds and hundreds of years. So there was a change in everything - a change in climate, a change in the nature of man, a change in administration of the earth. Now God was going to leave it more and more in the hands of man, because that’s what man wanted. And as we saw yesterday, or the day before, rather, sometimes God will

give you what you want. And maybe it's really not the best for you, but God will give it. So here we find a change in administration.

He says, verse 2, "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth *upon* the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be [food] meat for you; even as the green herb have I given [to] you all things" (vs. 2-3). Now this means that there was a restriction with the green herb that it is, or it was, with the seed in it. And I think today with many of the modern genetics that we have in plants that we are eating a lot of things that are not as nutritional for us, nor give us as much life as it should, simply because we are eating so many things that have no seeds in them; or we are eating things where the seeds have been genetically engineered to be modified to serve man's purposes. And so that's another thing Christ is going to have to do when He returns, you see.

Now, there was a restriction on eating animal food. And we saw in past time that there was a category of clean and unclean meats, because after the flood Noah offered every clean beast. Which shows that before the flood they were also eating meat. And apparently they were eating a lot of blood with it, because the earth was filled with wickedness and sin, and the imagination of man's heart was evil from his youth. So here again He reiterates about eating the flesh. "But flesh with the life thereof, *which is* the blood thereof, shall ye not eat" (vs. 4). That's why we're not to eat blood. Now blood transfusion is not eating blood. There are many risks with that. We won't get into that, but just simply to mention that if you have a transfusion, you are not eating blood.

Now then, here comes the change of administration. Here comes the administration of death, now that God takes out of His hands and gives into the hands of men. This also carried over into the covenant that God made with Israel. So He says, "And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed:..." Now that's different than when we come back here to chapter 4. When Cain murdered Abel, God was the one Who found out the crime. God was the one Who administered the penalty. And in this particular case God chose not to execute the death penalty upon Cain. And sometimes that's the worst penalty, to not have the death penalty executed on you. So now this change of administration was there, "...for in the image of God made He man" (vs. 5-6).

And He said, "And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein" (vs. 7). And then God made a special covenant with the earth and all creation, which is the perpetual covenant of the rainbow in the clouds. Which is an absolute promise and guarantee that God gave that He would never, never again flood the world or destroy it with a flood. What He's going to do is destroy it with a fire.

So now God was removed even further. God was more remote. Because that's what man wanted. So man then now decided, "Now that God's a little more remote, let's go do our thing." And so that happen with the Tower of Babel. They went and built the tower and defied God. So what did God do? He came down and He confounded their languages and scattered them into the earth. Gave them their inheritance.

Then we rapidly come down through the genealogies and we come down to Abraham. Now God is dealing with one man, rather than dealing with all men. God left that administration to other men to take care of. Now what He was going to do is deal with one man, beginning with Abraham. And He knew that He would have to start His work all over again. And He knew that in Abraham He would bless all the nations. Since men were looking to men, then God said, "Alright, I'm going to bless Abraham. I'm going to be with him. I am going to show him My way, and if he loves Me and keeps My commandments I will bless his son, and his son's son, and in them the whole world will be blessed."

Then we come down to the time of the children of Israel. And now God was going to do something a little bit differently. Here we find with Abraham that God talked with him, that God appeared to him. Not to other people, just to Abraham. And we know through Abraham's life, when we come over here considering Sodom and Gomorrah, that God was able to talk with him, with Abraham. Abraham also fed Christ and the two angels that came to destroy the city of Sodom. And Abraham was even able to bargain with God, and kept pleading clear down to ten men. Just ten men. If there were ten righteous, God said, "Ok, Abraham. I will spare it." But there weren't ten, and so He had to destroy it. He saved Lot and his two daughters and his wife; and his wife loved the world and looked back, and turned into a pillar of salt.

Now we also find in this situation with Abraham, that Abraham had a special relationship with God, when God would appear to him as Melchizedek. And He was the priest of the Most High. Now in the Old Testament when it talks about the Most High, it's talking about God the Father. So here on the earth at Salem, Melchizedek then had, apparently, a place of worship. It was probably just an altar, just an altar made of whole stones, as He commanded the children of Israel on how to make an altar. And, verse 18 of Genesis 14, "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and He *was* the priest of the Most High God." Now like we have covered in the book of Hebrews, we covered about the meaning of Abraham so I'm not going to dwell on it.

And so He blessed Abraham; Abraham gave Him tithes of all that he had there, all of the spoil. And also it shows, then, a special relationship between God and Abraham. And now this special relationship continued on, not quite as personal with Isaac as it was with Abraham, but nevertheless, it continued. And on down into Jacob, and Jacob wrestled with God and his name was changed to Israel, which means "Prevailer with God." And out of Israel, then, came the twelve sons of Jacob, who then were the children of Israel. Now let's come here to Hebrews 11 and let's see something very important concerning Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their relationship with God. They were strangers and sojourners in the land that God had promised for an inheritance to them.

Though they dwelt there, they didn't own the land, because it was not yet time for them to possess the land, because God was going to give that to the children of Israel.

Let's come to Hebrews 11, and let's see the theme of the Feast of Tabernacles concerning that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob dwelt in tents, or in tabernacles, because they were looking for the coming kingdom of God. Now let's pick it up here in verse 8. "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed [he believed]; and he went out, not knowing whither he went [was going]." Much like us today. When God calls us, and by faith we believe and repent and are baptized, and begin walking in God's way, and, as it were, walking with God, we don't know where we're going. Just to prove a point: when you first came in the church, are you today where you thought you would be when you first came into the church? No. Not a single one of us, you see. So we didn't know where we were going. We had some general ideas, but we really didn't know. Just like Abraham.

"By faith he sojourned in the land of promise,..." And as we saw yesterday, we are called strangers and pilgrims, you see. Because, though we live in the world today we are not of the world. We're not part of the world, you see. We're just like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, dwelling in a strange land. "...Dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and [with] Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God" (vs. 9-10). Then it talks about how Sarah conceived and brought forth Isaac, and so forth.

Now verse 13, it says this: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." Just like we are today, you see. "For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that *country* from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned" (vs. 13-15).

So you see, there again is another lesson for us. If we go back into the world - we can have the opportunity to go back if we want. God will work with us that we don't do it. But if that is our desire, because we get our mind off the plan and goal of God, and we get our mind off the understanding of the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles that we are going to be dwelling with God, then we might, as they, could have had an opportunity to return if they desired. Verse 16, "But now they desire a better *country*, that is, an heavenly [one]: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city." Which is New Jerusalem, which we'll talk about on the eighth day of the Feast.

Now let's come back and let's understand the problem of God dwelling with His people. God always wanted to dwell with His people. And as we found concerning the tabernacle, one of the reasons that God wanted the tabernacle made was so that He could dwell with His people, and have His presence with them, that they would know He was God. But no, they didn't want that. They wanted God removed. So God removed. Let's come over here to Deuteronomy 5, and let's see something very interesting here. Let's

begin in verse 1, because there's quite a lesson for us. Quite a lesson. Beginning in Deuteronomy 5:1, "And Moses [God] called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them." And that's the whole thing that we need to do today. We need to learn the way of Christ, we need to keep the way of Christ, and we need to do the way of Christ in love, in faith, and in hope, and in understanding.

Now verse 2, "The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb." Now God made a covenant with us, at baptism. And that goes all the way back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. "The LORD made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us,..." So Israel had a different and a separate covenant that was given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. "...Even us, who *are* all of us here alive this day. The LORD talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire, (I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to shew you the word of the LORD: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount;) saying,..." And here's what God told them. And now he reiterates Ten Commandments. Now I'm not going to go through all of this, but I'm just going to cover a couple of things here that are important for us to realize. And here's how he starts: "...I *am* the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. Thou shalt have none other gods before Me" (vs. 2-7). And that, brethren, it is the most important commandment of all, because everything else falls on that; everything else hinges on that, you see.

Now what I want to do is come down here to verse 12. We'll cover just a little bit concerning verse 12 and the Sabbath. "Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it,..." So here's a direct command to keep it. "...As the LORD thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day *is* the sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. And [you shall] remember that thou wast a servant [or slave] in the land of Egypt,..." Now isn't that something? The Sabbath day not only is for fellowship with God, but also for us to remember that we were of the world. We were part and parcel of the world. And God has called us out of the world. And as it were, not exactly as the children of Israel, because He brought them out with a mighty hand and a stretched out arm. But in order for God to intervene in our lives, God had to work a miraculous thing for the Father to call us, and Christ to lead us, and to send the Holy Spirit. Quite a thing. "...Therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day" (vs. 12-15).

And so, also when we cover about the Feast of Tabernacles, we are to understand that the children of Israel could have had God dwelling with them in the tabernacle. God was dwelling in a tabernacle. And as we saw a little later in following the way of the Ark and so forth, God did not desire to live in a temple. And we're going to see in the ultimate fulfillment of the plan of God, there's not going to be a temple either. Because God is going to dwell with His people. So the whole desire of God with the children of Israel was that He would dwell with them by putting His presence in the tabernacle, and as we saw, later in the temple. And so God wanted them to understand how wonderful

and what a tremendous thing this was. But they didn't have the heart to do it. They told Moses, "Now, you go near to God, and you tell us what He says, and you come and tell us." So again, man wanted to push God out when God said, "I want to dwell with them." And so after giving the Ten Commandments, and them telling God that, God said what they spoke they were well intended, and what it really showed.

Now let's come down here to verse 29. In order for God to dwell with His people, there's a very important thing that has to happen. You have to have the heart and mind that you desire that God do it. God is not going to go where He is not wanted. God is not going to force His way upon anyone. Now He's going to judge everyone, one way or the other. But, you see, if people don't want God around, and they cast Him behind his back, God is going to go. And God is going to leave them to their devices. And then men wonder why that is so. Well here's the reason. Verse 29, God said to them, because they didn't want to hear the word of God spoken by God, He said, "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear Me, and keep all My commandments always,..." And that's another whole very powerful word, isn't it? Not some of the time; not part of the time, but all the time. Always. "...That it might be well with them,..." Because God wanted to bless them. "...And with their children for ever!" But they didn't have the heart. They couldn't do it. So God says, "OK. You keep My commandments, I'll bless you that it goes well with you."

Now let's come to Deuteronomy 6 and let's read a few more things here in Deuteronomy 6, because this is a very important section here. Even in spite of all that went on with Israel, God said, "Alright. Now I'm still going to use you to reveal to the rest of the world that I'm God. I'm not going to reveal Myself to the rest of the world. I'm going to dwell in Israel. I'm going to dwell there in the tabernacle." Now He didn't dwell among the people like He did when He first created Adam and Eve. But you see, ultimately that is God's desire, as we're going to see. So here's what He said. He said to Israel, "Now you've got a special mission." Now I want you to see how very closely this mission related to what we do; only we carry it out spiritually. They were to carry it out in the letter of the law.

And let's begin here in Deuteronomy 6:1. "Now these *are* the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, they ye might do *them* in the land whither ye go to possess it: that thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do *it*; that it may be well with thee,..." (Deut. 6:1-3). Now, I want you to understand all the way through here, God says that, "If you do these things it will be well with you. I will bless you. I will prosper you. I will be with you. Even though I can't directly dwell right in amongst you, I'm going to dwell, put My presence in the tabernacle, and I will place My angels about you, and over you, and bless you, and prosper you that way."

"...That it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.

Hear, O Israel:..." And we can say this too: Hear, O church of God, "...the LORD our God *is* one..." Yes, Christ and the Father are one. Together. Not numerically singular one, but are one, being united. "... And thou shalt love the LORD thy God..." Now you see how this is the same requirement that Jesus told us in the New Testament? "...And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (vs. 3-5). And brethren, that's what we need to do. Every fiber of our being we need to do that. And God will hear us, and God will bless us. And we're going to see tomorrow that God is dwelling in an entirely different place today.

But let's look at Christ dwelling among His people. Now verse 6, "And these [are the] words, which I command thee this day, [they] shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (vs. 6-7). You see, that's why God's way is a way of life. It's not a religion that you go to church on Sunday, or go to church on Sabbath and then, you know, you're out in the world the rest of the time. No. If you're going to love God with all your heart, and mind, and soul, and being, and you're going to teach them to your children, and you're going to talk about these things in your house, out of your house, wherever you are. It's a very part of your being. And in the letter of the law, that's what God wanted it to be with the children of Israel, that He could bless them.

Now notice, verse 8, "And thou shalt bind them for sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes." Now the Jews today, they take little pieces of paper and they write down things and they put it, they have a little - what do they call it? A phylactery - on their right hand and on their forehead. The Orthodox Jews do that. So they literally do it. Now God didn't want it that way. He wanted it in your heart and mind, not just on the outside of your hand, but in everything that you do with your hands. Not just on the outside of your forehead, but within your mind, you see. And that's what we find that God does through the New Testament.

Now here's where they were to write them. "And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." And so, you know, it's good to have the Ten Commandments posted in your house. "And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which He sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildest not, and houses full of all good *things*, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, [and] vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; *then* beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage" (vs. 9-12). And so He gives this warning all the way through. And all the way through, well, they really didn't listen to God in the way that they should have. They really didn't understand God at all. And they got all - how shall we say - all puffed up in their own vanity, as we saw yesterday. All the way of man is vain.

Now He said, "You go in the land, you utterly destroy all of their altars, all of their images, and cut down the groves, and cut down their high places." Now let's come

to chapter 7:6. “For thou *art* an holy people...” Now as we read this, I want you to think about how that applies to us today. Because Deuteronomy is the second giving of the law. And a lot of the things that we find in the book of Deuteronomy are the very foundational things and purposes that we find in the New Testament, you see. And we’re going to see why. But I want you to notice how God was pleading with the children of Israel, because He wanted to remain living with them in the tabernacle. Now He couldn’t come and dwell among them as He did with Adam and Eve before they sinned. And He’s not going to administer the commandments of God. He’s left that up to men now to do. And so the covenant with Israel, though it was a special covenant, and not like the one He made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they had the administration of death that God gave to all people beginning with Noah on this side of the flood.

So He says, “You tear them down, you burn them with fire. We don’t want any of those things and idols around.” Well, you know what happened with the children of Israel. They didn’t do it. Now let’s continue on here. Deuteronomy 7:6, “For thou *art* an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that *are* upon the face of the earth.” Now does that not apply to us? Now you see, we have much the same attitude, even with people within the church of God, don’t we? They don’t understand that they’re a special people. They don’t understand that they’re really called and chosen for a special purpose, for the first resurrection, and so forth. They still have too much of the world in them, and so they practice a religion. But you see, we’re a special people above all people that are on the face of the earth. Now let’s understand, that really applies to the church. It applied to Israel here, but especially to the church.

Now verse 7. Here’s another principle that is true too. And this follows right along in the New Testament: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on Him might not perish but may have everlasting life” (John 3:16, paraphrased), you see. Now notice how that’s contained right here in Deuteronomy 7:7. “The LORD did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye *were* the fewest of all people: but because the LORD loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers,...” (vs. 7-8). That is, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And please understand, we are the spiritual seed today of Abraham. “For if you are Christ’s then are you Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise” (Galatians 3:29) paraphrased, you see.

“...Hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.” And we’ve been redeemed from the hand of Satan the devil. Now notice verse 9. “Know therefore that the LORD thy God, He *is* God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations;” You know, it’s such a shame that the religions of this world have made God into a mean and nasty and hateful individual. Or that God is some great glob in the sky, the inanimate god, who is in everything and everywhere. “God is in the table. God is in the book. God is in the tree. God is in the rocks. God is in the animals. God is in you, so if you find yourself,”

according to Depak Chopra, the Hindu, “you’re going to find God, because you’re God.” No. That’s not God’s way. God has intervened specially in our lives.

Now verse 9, “Know therefore that the LORD thy God, He *is* God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations;...” Then He says, “I want you to learn a lesson here.” Verse 10, “And repayeth them that hate Him to their face, to destroy them: He will not be slack to him that hateth Him, [but] He will repay him to his face.” Now we need to understand that. We are not dealing with just fables and myths. We are dealing with the truth of the eternal life. So therefore, He said, because of this, “Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day, to do them...” Then he reiterates again, over and over again.

What I want you to do is take the whole book of Deuteronomy and just take that as a study project and read it through, and see how much God was telling them all the way through that He loved them; that He called them, that He would bless them, that He would protect them, that He would watch over them if they kept His commandments, if they kept His statutes, if they kept His judgments, you see. Just like with us if we are faithful to the end, God will bless us.

Now let’s come down here to verse 14. “[And] Thou shalt be blessed above all people:...” And isn’t that what people really - don’t they want the blessings of God? Yes, they do. But they don’t want to do it God’s way. So now we’re in a situation, as I wrote in the first chapter, which you received this past summer, that men, in a way, sort of challenge God. Because they have driven God away; they have removed God from their lives; they don’t want God around to talk to them, or give them commandments, or tell them what to do. So they may say something like this, as I wrote of: “Now, if God would talk to me as a man, not as God up in heaven talking down to me, but as a man, and I could hear what He would have to say then, I could believe Him, and I could follow Him, and I would do it.” Kind of the opposite of what the children of Israel said: “Well, we don’t want God to talk to us.”

Now let’s come to Deuteronomy 18 and let’s see that is exactly what God did, and that that is exactly what Christ did to dwell among men. Now let’s see the prophecy of it here in Deuteronomy 18, and let’s begin in verse 15. And here again, as we have seen off and on during the Feast of Tabernacles, God will give you what you want if you really insist upon it. That’s what happened with Balaam. He said, “O God! I know I can’t say beyond what You want me to say, but just let me have the money. Let me go with Balak.” And so Balak thought - see, Balaam wanted the money. He didn’t care what he said. But he knew he couldn’t go against the word of God. Balak thought, “Oh! He’s coming to curse Israel!” So he set him up on a mountain and said, “Go curse Israel.” And then Balaam got up there and what did he do? He blessed Israel. Seven times. So you see, if God can make a false prophet preach the truth because He’s going to make him preach the truth, because He’s going to hold up His word and not allow a curse to come upon Israel. Quite a thing, isn’t it? Balak kept saying, “I hired you to curse! What are you doing blessing?” And he said, “Well, I can’t do any more than what God allows.”

So we know the final thing that Balaam did after he got done blessing Israel seven times. He told Balak, he said, "Now look," he said, "I know a way that the children of Israel can be cursed. Now here's what you do: you invite them to a feast with your gods, and have your women out there to entice them. And then get them involved in eating things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication, and God will have to punish them and curse them." Now that's the doctrine of Balaam. So you see, because the children of Israel were not willing to listen to the voice of God, they left themselves open and susceptible to this kind of thing. So today people may say, "Well if God would talk to me I'll listen to Him." Well, we're going to see that's exactly what God did in the person of Jesus Christ.

(Turn Tape)

Now let's continue on. Let's go to Deuteronomy 18, and we will see that God is going to satisfy two things here. He's going to prophesy of it in Deuteronomy 18. Number one, He is going to speak to men as a man. Number two, we're going to see that He is going to dwell with men as a man. And that is the ultimate of God tabernacling with men. Quite a thing to contemplate when we understand it. So how much has God, shall we say, put Himself out for the sake of mankind? We can put it another way, as we'll see later on. How much has God humbled Himself to show His love for mankind?

Now let's come here to Deuteronomy 18:15, and here's the prophecy of it. "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me;..." In other words, just a human being. "...Unto Him ye shall hearken;..." And that means, "You shall listen to Him." Now here's why He said He's going to do it. Again, God took them up on their proposition. "...According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not" (vs. 15-16). More concerned of self than they were that God loved them. More concerned with their own flesh than they were how to live God's way. And then when things come on people today because they have the same attitude, then they wonder, "Well, why does God allow it? Why didn't God stop it? Why didn't God intervene?" Well, because you didn't want God to. And you didn't want to do God's way. So therefore you pushed Him out even further from your life. And like we've said before, if that's what you want, that's what God is going to let you do. Because He's given free moral agency, hasn't He? Yes indeed.

Now verse 17. So when Moses went up and talked to God, "And the LORD said unto me, They have well *spoken that* which they have spoken." In other words, "They're well-intentioned, but...they really don't want Me." Isn't that something? God, Who made and created mankind after His own image, male and female, blessed them with the ability to reproduce themselves, multiply and replenish the earth, God provides everything that there is, all things necessary for life and living on this earth, and man says, "God, I don't want you." Or, "God, I'm going to make my own god. I don't like

You as God. I want to have an idol. I want to see this big belly Buddha,” or whatever the idol may be. So mankind has done this to God over, and over, and over again.

So He said, “Alright. I’m going to take them up on their proposition.” Verse 18, “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him.” Now then, because God is going to do this, He is now going to hold every human being accountable in a special way that He hasn’t done in the past. “And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever will not hearken [listen] unto My words which He shall speak in My name, I will require *it* of him. But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die” (vs. 18-20). So God says, “Ok. I’m going to do the ultimate, and I’m going to require the ultimate.”

Now let’s see how this works out. How did God do that? Now let’s come back to Hebrews 2, because this ties in with what we talked about yesterday about “What is man, that You are mindful of him?” Now we’re talking about what God has done to come to men, to dwell among men, and to make the way of God known, spoken to people by God, Who became a man. Because, after all, that’s what people wanted, didn’t they? Isn’t that why they told God, “Stay up in the mountain, but, you know, Moses, you talk to Him and we’ll hear. We’ll listen to a man.” God said, “Alright. I’m going to take you up on your proposition. I’m going to come as a man, and now you better listen to Him. Because I’m going to require it of you a special way.” The ultimate thing that God can do is going to require the ultimate responsibility upon the recipients of it.

So here in Hebrews 2 we find, beginning in verse 6, and here’s a quoting of Hebrews - not Hebrews, but Psalm 8. “But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man, that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him all little lower than the angels; Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him” (Heb. 2:6-8). God hasn’t given the ultimate to man yet. But that’s the destiny that all things will be put under man. So what He did, He put it all under Christ.

Now in order for God to fulfill His promise to mankind He did a great and a marvelous thing. Now verse 9, “But we see Jesus,…” And we’re going to see He was God, as we’ve gone through the series, “Was Jesus God?” Yes He was. “...Who was made a little lower than the angels...” Because, see, if He came as an angel men would still say, “Well, You came as an angel. That’s still greater than a man. Why don’t You come as a man? Why don’t You meet us on our terms?” So He was made a little lower than the angels, “...for the suffering of death,…” To die. Because, you see, men say, “God, why did You make us die?” Well, it was because of sin. So He came for the very purpose of suffering death, and because of that, and the death that He suffered, “...crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became Him, for Whom *are* all things, and by Whom *are* all things, in

bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings” (vs. 9-10). So even God was then perfected by becoming a man to suffer the things of a man, and to die, and then be resurrected back to life by the power of the Father.

So let’s come to Philippians 2, and let’s see how God did this. Quite a phenomenal thing. And as we read this, let’s ask the question: for God to do this, does He love us? You bet He does. For God to do this, did He show and demonstrate His willingness? Yes He did. Does He also show that He, in doing this, is telling us that He wants us to live with Him? Yes He did. Now let’s pick it up here in Philippians 2:5. Let’s see what He did. “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God,...” Now that actually means in the Greek, “existing as God.” “Being” there comes from the Greek *huparchon*, which means, “a state of being.” And if He was in the state of being in the form of God, that means He was existing as God. “...Thought it not robbery to be equal with God:...” (vs. 5-6). Oh, but all the religious leaders thought that that was a terrible thing, that He was the Son of God, and made Himself equal with God, and sought to kill Him and to destroy Him!

But here’s what God did. Now notice, you go back and you read all of the things of the praise of God, “There’s none like Him; He’s greatest in heaven; greatest in earth; none in the universe; He controls and upholds all things by the word of His power.” And men say, “Yes, all that power but, you know, You don’t look upon us as little human beings squirming down here on this earth.” Yes, He did. Verse 7, “[He] made Himself of no reputation,...” And in the Greek this means, “He emptied himself.” Divested Himself. “...And took upon Him the form of a servant [slave],...”

Now there are a lot of people who are still today incensed at slavery in the United States in the 19th century. But you know, there are still slaves today. And the greatest number of them are in the same - are in Africa, by the way. So no one is going to tell God, “God, You never knew what it was like to be a slave.” Yes, He does. “...And was made in the likeness of men:” (vs. 7). That’s why God created man in His own image and His own likeness, so that God could do this. Because that was the very prophesy that was given back in Genesis 3:16, after Adam and Eve had sinned, that God was going to send a Man to be the sacrifice for their sins and to destroy the works of Satan the devil.

“...In the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man,...” That means, every function of the human body that human beings had, Christ had. And He gave all, being God, gave that all up to become a human being to fulfill the desire of the children of Israel, that “Oh, if a man would talk to us we would listen!” Now that’s something, isn’t it? And “...He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (vs. 7-8). There you have it. Did the ultimate, didn’t He? No question about it.

So He was born of the virgin Mary, came into the world. Let’s come to John 1. And isn’t it interesting, as we go to John 1, that when we consider, after Jesus, being born of the virgin Mary, growing up as a child, being taught by special vision and revelation

by God the Father, as we find in Isaiah 50. He wasn't taught of any man. He didn't learn the Jewish myths and fables. No, He wasn't like an ordinary Jew. He was like an ordinary man, but taught of God. Conceived of the Holy Spirit and filled with the Holy Spirit from conception. And He had a special mission to do, and He was going to keep the promise that He gave back in Deuteronomy 18.

Now let's begin right here in verse 1. We know these, and we've covered these verses, haven't we? But aren't these the same verses that Satan likes to come to and attack over and over again. And as we have seen, that men like to re-translate according to their interpretation of what God is, and what God should do, and what God should be. Because, "We don't believe that Jesus was God before He became human. We only believe that He was conceived at the time of His conception." So they have to come and change the words. And as I've mentioned before, this is the simplest Greek that could possibly be, and was written that way in a profound and direct way so that you know that Christ was God before He became human. And when He became human He was God manifest in the flesh.

Now let's read a couple verses here. "In the beginning was the Word,..." And that's where we started, isn't it? "...And the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John1:1). Now, you know, it's like Paul Harvey has said many times, because he believes in the Ten Commandments and he gets after people who say, "Well, you know, there are things hard in the Bible to understand." So he says, "Well, when you read the Ten Commandments," he says, "what's hard to understand about those?" And he says, "It's not the hard things that get them down, it's their lack of desire to keep the simple things that they know are clear." And so that's what we have here. This is clear.

"The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him;..." Now if He made them, everything, how could He only exist in a moment of time thousands of years later? See, it's incongruous. "...And without Him was not any thing made that was made. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in [the] darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not" (vs. 2-5). See, because men have darkness in their minds and they don't want to let the light of God come in. No, they love the darkness, because it says that their deeds are evil.

Now let's drop down to verse 9. "*That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." In other words, every human being that comes into the world has life because of Him. Now notice verse 10. "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." So even when He came in the flesh the world didn't want it. Well, that's what they said they wanted. Amazing, isn't it? Is human nature and human desire fickle and carnal? Yes. Without a doubt. The world knew Him not. Now, moreover, verse 11, "He came unto His own,..." Because He was of the brethren, as the prophecy was. "...And His own received Him not." Now to be received means to welcome Him like you would a long-lost family member. Well they rejected Him. Now because they rejected Him, then, verse 12, John writes, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power [authority] to become the sons of God,..." So see, you have the world over here that does all the rejecting and getting rid of God.

So God says, “Alright, as many as receive Me, believe Me, repent of their sins, and love Me, you’re going to be the sons of God.” Well, we covered that yesterday, didn’t we, concerning how we’re going to have a new body, a new mind, see.

“...*Even* to them that believe on His name: which [who] were born [begotten]...” It doesn’t mean born. “...[Who were begotten], not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (vs. 12-13). That means by the will of God. So you see, you are where you are today in the church of God because of the will of God. Now you have to provide your willingness to it. And if you do, then you can enter into a great and marvelous relationship with God, as we’re going to see tomorrow. One greater than other people do not even know or understand.

Now let’s continue, verse 14. “And the Word was made flesh,...” Because He was spirit before, and He was God before. In order to become a man He had to be made flesh, or became flesh. “...And dwelt among us,...” Now the King James Version here, in translating that “dwelt”, kind of missed the mark a little bit. Because the meaning of the Greek here is, “...and tabernacled among us.” That means, all the way through. Now you have the tabernacle of God. He wanted to dwell with men in the Garden of Eden, but they didn’t want Him. They sinned, so God put them out. God administered to them all during the time before the flood, and they didn’t want that. They went on their evil ways. God brought the flood. He changed the administration; He gave man the jurisdiction of judging men who killed men, and instituted the administration of death. And then they went even further and rejected Him in building the Tower of Babel, and saying, “We’re going to go our own way.” So God confused their languages. So then what did God do? Chose one man. One man was willing - Abraham. And then Isaac, and then Jacob, and then the children of Israel. And the children of Israel said, “Oh yes, we’re willing.” But they never really were. So now He comes, comes as a man and tabernacles among us. So all the way the whole theme of the Feast of Tabernacles is, “How is God going to dwell with His people?” And we’ll see a little bit more tomorrow on that.

So He tabernacled among us. “...(And we be held His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth. John bare witness of Him, and cried, saying, This was He of Whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me [or has precedence over me]: for He was before me. And of His fulness [John writes] have all we received, and grace for grace” (vs. 14-16). And that means, grace upon grace. Your whole relationship with God is based upon grace: the grace of the Holy Spirit of God, the grace of the love of God, the grace of Christ being in you, the grace of the forgiveness of your sins, the grace of being able to have direct contact and fellowship with God the Father through prayer and study; the grace of the fellowship with each other. And by grace are we saved. All of this. And all of these are the graces and gifts of God which He gives to us, which he says, “Grace for grace.”

Now let’s come down here to verse 19. “And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.” Now notice the questions that they asked him. “And they asked him, What [are you] then? Art thou Elias? And he

saith, I am not.” But Jesus said he was. Isn’t it interesting? That sometimes those that God uses, they don’t even know what they’re doing as far as how God is using them? He knew he was to prepare the way, but he didn’t consider himself Elijah. Jesus said he was. Now notice the next sentence. “Art thou that Prophet?” (vs. 19-21). Meaning, going back to Deuteronomy 18, they were looking for God to provide at that time the Prophet.

Now let’s come to Acts 3, and let’s see something very important. Because a couple of years ago I heard a man say, who is supposed to be a minister of God, that he was that Prophet. Now that’s not so. That’s a lie. And we can prove it right here by the Scriptures. Now let’s pick it up here, let’s pick it up here in verse 22. “For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the LORD your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the [his] people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and [even] those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities” (vs. 22-26). So here he is saying that Christ was that Prophet.

Now let’s come to the book of John, the Gospel of John, and let’s see that after the feeding of the five thousand there were many people who understood. This is John the sixth chapter, here, not the fifth chapter. They could see by what He was doing that He was that Prophet. Now we’ve got a tape on that, so if you want to write in for it you can receive it. So Jesus fed the five thousand, and let’s pick it up here in John 6:12. Now everybody ate and was full. And what was it that they fed them with? They fed them with five barley loaves and two small fishes to feed five thousand people. Now verse 12, “When they were filled, He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.” Now notice verse 14. “Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.” So then Jesus left and hid Himself, because, knowing that He was that Prophet they wanted to take and make Him king. Verse 15, “When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone” (John 6:12-15). So there we have, it’s really quite something.

Now let’s look and see how else Jesus fulfilled dwelling among men, teaching the word of God. Now let’s come here to the book of Luke. Let’s come to Luke. The book of Luke 4, and let’s see how He did. Jesus went around proclaiming the word of God. Now also, He had to meet, as we saw on the Day of Atonement, He had to meet Satan the devil and conquer him and overcome him. Now let’s continue on here in Luke 4, and let’s see how He spoke the word of God. It’s called the gospel, the good news, which is then the good news of God, the gospel of Christ; because God manifest in the flesh in the person of Jesus Christ, the one Who was Creator of everything, came to this earth to

fulfill the promise that God gave. That God would come in the flesh and to tabernacle and dwell among His people, and to teach them the word of God as man to man, rather than God to man. Very profound.

Now verse 14, after then He overcame Satan the devil and the temptations there, “And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all” (Luke 4:14-15). So He continued to preach and to teach and to go everywhere doing that.

Let’s come to Matthew 4 and see again where Jesus went everywhere and preached. He taught the word of God, He spoke of God; He showed them the love of God, the mercy of God, the commandments of God, and what God expected of them. Now let’s begin here in Matthew 4:23. “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And His fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers [different] diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils [demons], and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and He healed them. And there followed Him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and *from* Decapolis, and *from* Jerusalem, and *from* Judea, and *from* beyond [the] Jordan” (vs. 23-25), the whole area of what we would call Palestine.

Now then, remember - remember the promise that that Prophet, Who was Christ, would teach them the words of God. And God then was going to hold them all accountable for this, you see. So what do we have in Matthew 5? We have the Sermon on the Mount. You want to know the words of God unto eternal life? Read the Sermon on the Mount - chapter 5, chapter 6, chapter 7. And when He got done speaking all of that, we find here in chapter 7:28, “And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as *one* having authority,...” Which He did, from God the Father, “...and not as the scribes” (Matt. 7:28-29).

You see, because - let’s come to John 3 now, and let’s understand something here. Even John the Baptist knew this. John 3, and let’s pick it up here in verse 31. “He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: He that cometh from heaven is above all. And what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth; and no man receiveth His testimony.” So, see, even here people didn’t want to listen to Him. However, there are some few who do: those that He calls. “[And as many as] hath received His testimony hath set to His seal that God is true. For He Whom God hath sent [that is Christ] speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure *unto Him*. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on [upon] him” (John 3:31-36).

Just like Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees over, and over, and over again. Let's come over here, let's come over here to John 5, and let's pick it up in verse 17. "But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh..." That's after He did a miracle on the Sabbath, you know, this occasion here, John 5:17. "...My Father worketh, hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the Sabbath,..." which He didn't do. He loosed one of the traditional laws of Judaism. "...But said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God." Which He was. "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son [of man] can do nothing of Himself,..." In other words, it's not coming out from Himself. Because as a human being, doing that, if He took that of Himself, what would He be doing? Exactly the same as every other human being - sinning against God. Now notice this carefully. "...But what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth: and He will shew Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel" (John 5:17-20).

Now let's come over here to John 14. Isn't it interesting that all of these things in this particular way are found in the Gospel of John, who was the disciple that loved Jesus, and whom Jesus loved? Now let's come over here to John 14, and He says, let's begin right here in verse 26. "But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy [Spirit] Ghost, whom [which] the Father will send in My name, he [it] shall teach you all things,..." Now that's the way it should read. "...And bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth,..." because it gives it and takes it back, you see. "...Give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come *again* unto you. If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for My Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and [he] hath nothing in Me." Not a single thing against Christ. "But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do" (vs. 26-31).

Just like the prophecy of Deuteronomy 18. When God would come and dwell in the flesh and tabernacle among His creation, He was to bring the words of God, as a man to men. And now they were held accountable and responsible for it in a special and particular and profound way. Now let's come to John 12 and let's see that. Now let's begin here in verse 44. "Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on Me, believeth not on Me, but on Him that sent Me." So God the Father is also acting in this and concerned too, isn't He? "And he that seeth Me seeth Him that sent Me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." Now, He's coming to judge the world when He returns. "He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one that judgeth him:..." What is it that judges him? "...The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:44-48). To fulfill the prophecy that God, raising up this Prophet, Who was God manifest in the flesh, Christ tabernacling among us, coming to His own, teaching the way

of God, teaching the word of God. Now then, those words, because they did not want to listen to God as He spoke to them from Mount Sinai. So God took them up on their proposition and came as a man and says, "Now, you are held responsible for what you hear", because God has dwelt among us.

Now notice, verse 49, "For I have not spoken of Myself;..." He didn't do it of Himself. "...But the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto Me, so I speak" (vs. 49-50). So now that Christ has come into the world, God manifest into the flesh, because God has tabernacled among men, and has left His word for us to live by, and we know the words of God that He would speak to us as a human being, contained right here in the Bible, we are held accountable for it. Now if we accept it, believe in Christ, we receive eternal life and we can dwell with God. What a great meaning to the Feast of Tabernacles.

(End Tape)

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