

Overview of Dwelling with God I

(Day 1—FOT)

Fred R. Coulter—September 28, 2015

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles! Here is the beginning of the Feast, and it's going to be a wonderful Feast. We'll just give you the theme for the Feast this year: *to dwell with God!* That actually encompasses the whole Bible.

In Lev. 23 God has all the Holy Days listed in order. It's very interesting because, as I've pointed out many times, the Word of God is like a seed. That's what Jesus said, 'the Seed is the Word of God.' When you first look at a seed, unless you have a package that tells you what it is, unless you're an expert in seeds, you don't know what it will produce.

Likewise with the Word of God. The listing of the Feast days in the book of Leviticus does not make them ritual days to be done away with. These are days of time that God has commanded His *appointed times*, on which He also commanded certain other things to go with the day, including sacrifices and rituals.

Now the sacrifices and rituals have been replaced with the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the spiritual fellowship between the children of God and God the Father, which is a higher standard. Nevertheless, it all comes from *the Seed*.

Leviticus 23:33: "And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel, saying, "The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the LORD"' (vs 33-34). Remember, we're going to see that these are the Feasts of God, the *appointed times* of God.

Verse 35: "On the first day shall be a Holy convocation. You shall do no servile work therein. Seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD..." (vs 35-36). Go back to Num. 29 and you have all of the sacrifices for the Feast of Tabernacles. Those are the greatest number of sacrifices for any Feast of God.

Again, that is like a seed, because from there it goes from Israel to the Church and then encompasses the world, and then encompasses the universe. This is quite a thing!

"...On the eighth day shall be a Holy convocation to you. And you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. It is a solemn assembly. And you shall do no servile work therein" (v 36).

At the beginning of the Feasts of God we have the Passover, which is one day. Then we have the seven days of Unleavened Bread. With the Feast of Tabernacles, we have seven days plus one. The bookends of the Feasts of God are joining everything together beginning with Christ and ending with the great salvation of God. A marvelous thing, indeed, when you put it all together.

As the Seed is properly growing, and being watered with the Holy Spirit of God, and we have the Seed of God within us, the earnest of eternal life. That's supposed to be growing—isn't it? *Yes, indeed!*

Likewise, with the Feasts: every year we're going to go over the same Scriptures, we're going to learn and reinforce some of the things that we have already learned, and from the Scriptures we're going to learn new things, as well.

Verse 37: "These are the Feasts of the LORD... [this is a summary of all the Feasts] ...which you shall proclaim to be Holy convocations to offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, everything on its day; besides the Sabbaths of the LORD..." (vs 37-38). Every one of the Holy Days is called a Sabbath. They are Holy Days to God.

"...and besides your gifts, and besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings which you give to the LORD. Also, in the fifteenth day of the seventh month when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep a Feast to the LORD seven days. On the first day shall be a Sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a Sabbath" (vs 38-39).

Then the children of Israel were to make boughs and booths, because the children of Israel dwelt in temporary dwellings in their tents. We are also told that we are to come to where God chooses to place His name (Deut. 16). *Wherever two or three are gathered together, that's the place that God has chosen!*

We have a good number of Feast sites in the United States and Canada, and in different places in the world. Think what it's going to be during the Millennium when everyone is keeping the Feast of Tabernacles. Whoa! I don't think we have a clue as to how fantastic and awesome that's going to be!

God also gives us this promise: ***If we keep***

*His Word and obey His commandments, keep His laws, love God and Jesus Christ, and love each other, **He will bless us!** He also promises that **if we give of our physical substance for an offering to God**—today that is done in monetary means—that **He will bless us** and make sure that we have sufficiency for all things.*

(pause for the offering)

Let's begin at the beginning so that we understand that God has had in mind a great, fantastic and awesome plan. We're part of that in an absolutely unique and profound way today.

- God is Creator
- God is Lifegiver
- God created everything that is on the earth
- God created the heavens, the earth and all that there is
- He created man and woman in a special manner

Everything that He created in Gen. 1, except man and woman, He *commanded* to come into being. They were formed and made because of His command! Because God's plan involves a great and marvelous thing for each one of us as human beings, God wanted us to know that we are *special* when compared to the rest of the creation. None of the rest of the creation has been given the blessing of the creation of man and woman.

Genesis 1:26: "And God said, 'Let **Us** ... [the One Who became Jesus Christ and the One Who became the Father] ...**make man in Our image, after Our likeness**; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth.'" Isn't that something? What a fantastic blessing that is for mankind! God is not a curmudgeon; God is not cheap!

Think of it this way: the universe is an awesome and fantastic creation. What God has done in creating man and woman is part of that awesome **creation of the universe so** we can participate in with God! He had to make us *special*. He had to make us different than all of the other animals and the different things that He created. We're created after His image and likeness, and the rest of the Bible tells us **after His kind!**

Verse 27: "And God created man in His *own* image, in the image of God He created him. He created them male and female." Look what's happening in the world today when they get rid of God. They destroy everything! They have all kinds of sins and wretchedness that they have replaced:

- the Truth of God

- the love of God
- the Word of God
- the plan of God

They're out there driven by Satan the devil against God, but God is never going to allow that to succeed because He is God and He controls everything. He has called His people and given them His Holy Spirit. We have a great and wonderful purpose, a challenge and work to do today:

- to overcome in our lives
- to grow in grace and knowledge
- to preach the Gospel
- to make His Word available

That's our part today!

Look at what God gave: He gave the earth to mankind *as His gift with instructions and conditions!*

Verse 28: "And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it...'" That helps answer the question:

- Why has God allowed man to do all of these things?
- and
- How is He going to solve the problem?

The world doesn't know, but God knows! The Word of God reveals it to us, and that's why we're here at the Feast of Tabernacles, because we are studying that so we can see how we fit into the plan of God to help Him perfect human beings. ***Being made in the image of God is tremendous! That's a wonderful and fantastic thing!***

"...and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over every living thing that moves upon the earth" (v 28). That's what God ***gave!***

When we come to Gen. 2 we find the special care and creation of God in the account of when He made man and woman. Gen. 1 is not a different creation from Gen. 2. Chapter one is an overview; chapter two gives us the details. That's very prevalent in the Bible.

The seventh-day Sabbath God made Holy, Genesis 2:7: "Then 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." Again, I want you to notice the care and planning that God has. This is what He did for Adam and Eve"

Verse 8: And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man

whom He had formed.” A place to live; everything wonderful there.

Verse 9: “And out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The Tree of Life also was in the middle of the garden, and the Tree of *the* Knowledge of Good and Evil.”

- Why is that there?
- Why did God do it this way?

Because His plan is so important that He, not only in creating mankind and womankind, He also gave us free moral agency! In His plan He does not want mindless robots!

- He wants us *to develop character*
- He wants us *to think*
- He wants us *to build*
- He wants us *to do*
- He wants us *to make*

Mankind has done a pretty good job of that—haven’t they? But in their relationship with God they haven’t done so well. As a matter of fact, they have done a horrible thing.

God is greater than all men and women! And He’s going to solve the problem. We’ll see how the problem came about, and as we go through *how to dwell with God*, we will see how He’s going to solve it.

Verse 15: “And the LORD God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and keep it.” That also means *to guard* it. He did this with great purpose.

Verse 16: “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may freely eat of every tree in the garden...’” God is the One Who did the commanding. What is the summary of our relationship with God? *To obey the voice of the Lord God!* When He commands we are to choose to obey. That’s what God wants. He wants us to do it in an intelligent way. That is why we have the Word of God written down.

Of course, Adam and Eve didn’t have that back then, but they were right there with God present with them. Don’t you think that’s a little better than something written down? *In many ways it’s a whole lot better!*

Verse 17: “But you shall not eat of the Tree of *the* Knowledge of Good and Evil, **for in the day that you eat of it in dying you shall surely die.**” Meaning that you’re not going to die instantly, but you’re going to be *dying!* That’s called *aging* and *getting old!*

Now, if there’s an accident or something

that comes along, then that life is cutoff before time. We’ll see that God also has a plan to solve that.

Verse 18: “And the LORD God said, ‘*It is not good that the man should be alone...*’” Here God is looking out for the welfare of His creation that He made in His image.

“...I will make a helper compatible for him” (v 18)—counterpart, sustainer beside him. God didn’t make them equal. ***God did not*** take another clump of clay and form Eve and say, ‘Here’s Adam, here’s Eve, you’re equal and you fight it out.’ Kind of in a way that’s what they figured, but that wasn’t true.

Let’s see how God did this. He had a lesson for Adam. Miraculous in the creation of Adam and Eve, He gave them a language built in. They could talk, communicate, think, question—all of those things. So, they were fully equipped. One thing the Bible doesn’t tell us is how long they were in the Garden of Eden, because we have the summary.

Verse 19: “And out of the ground the LORD God *had* formed every animal of the field and every fowl of the air—and brought *them* to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called *each* living creature that *became* its name.”

- right away responsibility
- right away intelligence
- right away observing, analyzing and examining

Verse 20: “And Adam gave names to all the livestock, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field, **but there was not found a helper compatible for Adam.**” Here they come male and female coming right by Adam. ‘Adam, what are you going to call it?’ *How about if we call it this?* ‘Okay, that’s its name.’

Isn’t that something? God gave the responsibility to Adam to name them. He didn’t come along and say, ‘Adam, here’s an elephant, a giraffe, a dog, a cat, a bird, an eagle.’ ***NO!*** He let Adam name them, because He wanted Adam to understand His integral part in the earth and the great blessing that God had given to him. So, there wasn’t any helper “...compatible for Adam.”

Verse 21: “And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall over Adam, and he slept. And He took one of his ribs, and *afterward* closed up the flesh underneath. Then the LORD God made the rib (which He had taken out of the man) into a woman, and He brought her to the man” (vs 21-22). Guess what they had then? *Probably after some instruction, we had a marriage!*

Look at what they've done today, going their own way against God! Amazing, isn't it? If you're against same-sex marriage, whoa! you are politically incorrect today. God didn't make it that way! He made it *this way*:

Verse 23: "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.' For this reason shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife—and they shall become one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and they were not ashamed" (vs 23-25). Quite different from today— isn't it? God intended them to be clothed later on, and we see that He clothed them.

Now let's see what happened to Adam and Eve. We don't know how long they were there, but they must have been there plenty long enough talking to God every day, God teaching them, showing them about the plants, the animals, the birds and fowl, the livestock, the wild animals, showing the things that He had created and why He created them.

All the while here's this tree in the middle of the garden—two trees: the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Let's understand something very important with this: God did not have the serpent come into the Garden of Eden until Adam and Eve *were fully instructed* concerning the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Just like the children of Israel later: *God said*, and when the children of Israel did what God said, they were blessed. When they didn't do what God said, that automatically brought curses upon them. Likewise here: God instructs, He gives knowledge, they understood. So, when the serpent came in they were to choose to resist that.

Note sermon: *What Would the World have been Like if Adam and Eve had not Sinned?* because there was a possibility that they would not have sinned; it was up to them to choose.

Just like it is with us today: We have to choose. God made us to choose. God has given us everything to make the right choices.

Genesis 3:1: "Now, the serpent was more cunning than any creature of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, '*Is it true that God has said, "You shall not eat of any tree of the garden"?*' Eve had to correct him. Instead of saying, 'Who are you and what are you doing here?' We just talked with God and He said:

Verse 2: "And the woman said to the

serpent, 'We may freely eat the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the middle of the garden, God has *indeed* said, "You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die."' And the serpent said to the woman, 'In dying, you shall not surely die!'" (vs 2-4). Satan has his plan to take man and make him into little gods *his way*. We're seeing that big time today— aren't we? *Yes, indeed!* Notice that Satan always comes along and attacks God and he said:

Verse 5: "For God knows that in the day you eat of it, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be like God, deciding good and evil." We could do a little *suppose*: Do you suppose that God revealed to Adam and Eve that they would become like He was: *God?*

They probably didn't see any of God in His glorified form. God was appearing to them much like a human being. The serpent comes along and says, 'God doesn't know what He's doing?' Well, He's only the Creator of everything that there is. That should have been the answer.

'No, don't you let God decide anything for you. You partake of this tree and you can decide for yourself what is good and what is evil.' They did and that laid the foundation for everything from there on.

God also had a plan that *from the foundation of the world* that He would redeem mankind from their sin through Jesus Christ according to *God's* schedule. But one thing He needed and wanted, and caused to be, were vast numbers of human beings. Everything that Satan has done is going to be completely overturned! But God wants to know by our choices:

- Do you believe Me?
- Do you love Me?

That's what God wants to know!

- Will you keep His commandments?

They ate of it, their eyes were opened to understand evil. Their eyes toward the goodness of God were closed. God found out; of course, He knew what they were doing. Notice what happens here:

They hid themselves among the trees. How are you going to hide from God? It's like the six-year-old girl in her bedroom. Mommy says, 'You need to take a nap, God is watching you.' *How can God see through the ceiling?*

Adam and Eve thought they could hide, v 9: "And the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, 'Where *are* you?' And he said, 'I heard You *walking* in the garden, and I was afraid because I *am*

naked, and *so* I hid myself.’ And He said, ‘Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten of the tree which I commanded you that you should not eat?’” (vs 9-11). **Yes, he disobeyed the voice of the Lord God!**

Notice that Adam didn’t repent, he didn’t get on his knees and cry and repent and ask for God’s forgiveness. **NO!**

Verse 12: “And the man said... [it’s Your fault, God] ...‘The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.’ And the LORD God said to the woman, ‘What *is* this you have done?’ And the woman said... [don’t blame me] ...‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’ And the LORD God said to the serpent, ‘Because you have done this you *are* cursed above all livestock, and above every animal of the field. You shall go upon your belly, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life’” (vs 12-14).

Then came the first promise of redemption. The Creator Who made Adam and Eve was the One Who became Jesus Christ. The plan of God—with God the Father and Jesus Christ—before the reforming of the earth for mankind, knew what the choice would be, because *God gave them the powers of intellect and choice, free choice! They had to make the decision themselves!* Just like us today. We love God and keep His commandments by *free choice!*

When we do, God calls us. When we repent of our sins, we receive the Holy Spirit of God. But there has to be a Savior. That Savior is none other than the One Who created them and became Jesus Christ.

Here’s the promise, v 15: “And I will put enmity between you and the woman... [Eve and another symbolism: the Church] ...and between your seed...”

Not just the serpents, but between those men and women who would follow Satan the devil down through the ages. This is a prophecy going down in time.

“...and her Seed... [referring to Christ] ...He will bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (v 15).

Everything that we have in these verses—especially v 15—all the rest of the Bible is built on that. With the Gospels and the coming of Jesus Christ, that is the fulfillment of that. With His death and crucifixion, and Satan tried to kill Him all along the way.

There’s a penalty for sin, which is death; but if God would have carried out the death penalty right away, there would be no mankind. So, He did this:

Verse 16: “To the woman He said, ‘I will greatly increase your sorrow and your conception—in sorrow shall you bring forth children. Your desire shall be toward your husband, and he shall rule over you.’ And to Adam He said, ‘Because you have hearkened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree—of which I commanded you, saying, “You shall not eat *of* it!”—the ground *is* cursed for your sake. In sorrow shall you eat of it all the days of your life. It shall also bring forth thorns and thistles to you, and *thus* you shall eat the herbs of the field; in the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for dust you *are*, and to dust you shall return’” (vs 16-19).

- Is that a true statement? *Yes, it is!*
- Does that happen to every human being? *Yes, indeed!*

How did they die? *They received the law of death within their own genes! Sin changes everything!*

- the environment
- our human condition
- the animals

God set that as living laws. This is why our choices are so important, *free moral agency!*

Gen. 4—we find another great sin of men and women. What was the sin of Adam and Eve? *Right in the face of God they disobeyed Him!* After that God still had contact with them and they would come to the east of the Garden of Eden and there was an altar there and God could talk with them, instruct them, etc. They were not totally cutoff from God.

However, in the course of time we have born Cain and Abel, so let’s look at what God told Cain and Abel. Abel is listed as righteous, meaning that he obeyed the voice of the Lord God. They also had the laws of the sacrifices of animals.

Genesis 4:1: “Then Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, ‘I have gotten a man from the LORD.’” Maybe she was thinking this is the one that’s going to undo all of this, misinterpreting the Scripture.

Verse 2: “And she bore again, his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. It came to pass that Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground” (vs 2-3). We’re going to see that he didn’t do it God’s way. We are to bring things that God causes to grow: *firstfruits; tithes!*

Verse 4: “And Abel also brought of the firstlings of his flock *and* of the fat of it. And the LORD had regard unto Abel and his offering, but He did not

have regard unto Cain and his offering. And Cain was extremely angry and his countenance fell. And the LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you so angry? And why has your countenance fallen?... [God instructed him what to do; this becomes very important]: ...If you do well... [do things according to the commandments of God] ...shall you not be accepted?... [of course] ...But if you do not do well, **sin**... [right there in the 4th chapter] ...lies at the door....’” (vs 4-7).

- Sin is the transgression of the Law!
- Sin is also lawlessness!
- Sin comes from free choice to do things that Gods says do not do!

“...Its desire *is* for you, but **you must rule over it!**” (v 7). Isn’t that the whole story of all human life? *Yes, indeed!*

Cain did it *his* way, and that is the continuous great sin of human beings—men and women. That even in their attempts to come to God they come to Him on *their* terms rather than *God’s* terms. We have to come to God *His* way. We cannot add to the commandments of God.

How much of all the commandments of God did they know? *They knew a whole lot!* God is the ‘same yesterday, today and forever.’ We see from the firstling offering that Abel brought that there was the law of sacrifices. There must have been the law of tithing on the fruit of the ground and the firstfruits, otherwise if Cain had brought those he would have been accepted, because he would have been doing well.

These are great lessons for us. You can take this and look at everything in the world. You can look at every ‘religion,’ you and look at the Christianity of the world, and what is it that they do? *They come to God **their way** and **they tell God** what they will do!*

Look at all the ‘religions’ of the world. There’s a coming one-world religion. It’s kind of amazing the things that they are discussing. Every one of those discussions is ‘we’re going to do it for God *our way!*’ They reject the commandments of God, Who says, ‘Do it **MY** way!’

(go to the next track)

You know the rest of the story. Cain killed Abel and actually that was when they were about 135-years-old. So, there’s a lot of information that we are not told here concerning this account.

Then we come to Gen. 5 and we find that there was one righteous man: *Enoch!* Then we come to Gen. 6 and there was another righteous man: *Noah!* He walked in God’s way! That’s quite a

thing; Noah was righteous and *walked with God*; so did Enoch.

But look at the rest of the world! With free moral agency that God never takes away from a human being, they set up their own society, their own way and it was totally evil. God had to destroy it with the Flood.

It’s awfully hard to find someone who will obey God. Look what happened after the Flood, how things came about. After all that time—after the Flood down to Abraham was about 400-plus years—you don’t find any account of anyone obeying God until you come to Abraham, whose name when he was called was Abram. He was willing to do what God said.

Then we have the patriarchs and their lives. If you want a little understanding of it, even their children and the patriarchs themselves had great difficulties and great things to contend with. But they obeyed God and kept His commandments.

The first thing that God did in dealing with Abram, He said, ‘Get up out of your country and you go to a land that I will show you. I will bless you and make your name great, and you shall be a blessing to the nations. In you shall all the families of the earth be blessed.’ That’s quite a thing!

Gen. 15—we have another promise of the Messiah. Actually, when you study it thoroughly—which we have—is the beginning of the Passover, or you might say the ‘proto-Passover’ of Abraham, where God pledged to do what He had promised. He did it, and He blessed Abraham. Abraham had Isaac and God blessed Isaac. Isaac had Jacob and they had their children. You know the account all the way down and coming into Egypt.

Before we get there, let’s see why the promises of God to carry out His plan are being fulfilled *God’s way*, and because of what Abraham did.

Gen. 22—Abraham was told to offer Isaac, and he obeyed. We find in the New Testament that it says, ‘Abraham obeyed because he accounted God worthy of bringing Isaac back to life, because in a sense—since he was 100-years-old when Isaac was born—it was like receiving life from something that was dead. He knew that God could do it. But notice God’s promise.

Understand something very important: ***God’s promises will be fulfilled, because God cannot lie! It’s impossible for Him to lie!*** In the covenant and things that He has planned, and His great plan for all of mankind, and as many as who choose to go God’s way and:

- accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ

- repent of their sins
- receive the Holy Spirit
- grow in grace and knowledge

will dwell with God!

But notice how this promise was made sure: After Abraham took Isaac, laid him on the altar, took the knife and was ready to offer his son, ‘whom you love.’ These are very important Scriptures because they carry forward to New Testament times, as well.

Genesis 22:11: “And the angel of the LORD called to him from the heavens and said, ‘Abraham! Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I *am*.’ And He said, ‘Do not lay your hand upon the lad, nor do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me’” (vs 11-12). That’s quite a statement! Let’s apply this to us today:

- What does God require of us?
- Isn’t it much less than what He required here?
- Yet, in the same vain?
- *Yes, indeed!*

We’re not to offer our children, but we are—through the Spirit of God—to crucify the old self everyday, as Paul said: ‘I die daily!’ to overcome. ***That’s obeying the voice of God!***

Because Abraham did this, God said, “...‘Do not lay your hand upon the lad, nor do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me’ And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind *him* a ram was entangled in a thicket by its horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide; so that it is said *until* this day, ‘In the mount of the LORD it will be provided.’ And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, ‘By Myself have I sworn’...” (vs 12-16).

We need to understand the tremendous truth of this, because if God swears by Himself it’s going to come to pass. He didn’t tell Abraham much about His plan, but He gave a little hint of it here:

“...‘By Myself have I sworn,’ says the LORD, ‘because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son; that in blessing I will bless you, and in multiplying I will multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens, and as the sand, which is upon the seashore. And your seed shall possess the gate of his enemies. And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, **because you have obeyed My voice**” (vs 16-18).

How important is it to ***obey the voice*** of

God? *Life or death!* That’s how important! Because of what Abraham did, the very deed that he did, we become his children.

Galatians 3:29: “And if you *are* Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to *the* promise.” And we—those in the New Testament who come to God, and all of the prophets and righteous men of old—will become as the stars of heaven to shine.

In order to dwell with God forever, you have to be a spirit being. As a spirit being you have glory. All of that is to come.

Now God brings Isaac into this because of Abraham (Gen. 26). Not only that, we’re here because of Abraham and because of Isaac and because of Jesus Christ. Think on that!

Genesis 26:2: “And the LORD appeared to him and said, ‘Do not go down into Egypt. Live in the land, which I shall tell you of’”—and I will bless you.

Verse 4: “And I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens and will give to your seed all these lands. And in your seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, **because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws**” (vs 4-5).

Which laws? *Since God is the ‘same yesterday, today and forever,’* are those not the same ones that He gave to Israel? *Of course!* So, if we’re Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise, we have to do exactly what Abraham did:

- obey the voice of the Lord God
- obey the voice of Jesus Christ
- keep the words of God
- keep His charge
- keep His statutes
- keep His laws

You find that all through the New Testament. Quite a wonderful thing!

After the children of Israel grew to be a great multitude and God brought them out of the land of Egypt with signs and wonders and walking through the Red Sea on dry land, He brought them to Mt. Sinai to enter into covenant with them. To make them a *special people* to fulfill the promise of His blessing of ‘all the seed of mankind’; all nations!

Israel was to fulfill a wonderful mission from God, so He brings them to Mt. Sinai. He tells Moses to come up on the mountain and ‘I’ll tell you what I’m going to do.’

Exodus 19:3: And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, ‘Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob

and tell the children of Israel... [minimum of 1.8-million there; some think it's much more; could be] ...“You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you unto Myself. Now, therefore, **if**...” (vs 3-5). Free choice God never takes away!

- What about us?
- What do we do when we see the *if*?

“...**if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then**... [always conditional] ...**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” (vs 5-6). That was the mission statement for Israel. They were to go to the whole world and introduce them to the way of God. They never really did it, except they came close one time during the days of Solomon.

“...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.” This is the proposal, because the covenant of Israel was a marriage between God and the children of Israel.

Just like before you get married, there's the proposal. All the details of living and being married and children and all that sort of thing come later. It's all based on the proposal. Will you be my wife? When the woman says, ‘Yes, I'll be your wife,’ *hooray!* But that's just a start.

“...These *are* the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel” (v 6). Just like anything else in life, there are going to be ups and downs, good and bad, and the difficult things along the way.

So then, Moses came down and told the people. The people said, ‘Yes, we'll do it!’ Then they got ready, and on the third day God spoke to them from the top of Mt. Sinai giving the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are not the covenant, *they are the basis for the covenant*, and *all of the other laws that God gave come from the Ten Commandments!*

We won't get into a long discussion about that, because that could take a lot of studies and a very long discussion, indeed!

After they had sealed the covenant with the sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of the blood—half on the people and half on the words that Moses wrote down, that God gave to him to give to the people—then we have God explaining what He was going to do, beginning with a place of worship and sanctuary for God.

Just like in a marriage, the details come later. Here are the details, and we will see why God wants this to be:

Exodus 25:1: “And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Speak to the children of Israel that they bring Me an offering. You shall take an offering from every man that gives it willingly with his heart’” (vs 1-2). Again, God wants it *willingly, free choice!*

Verse 3: “And this *is* the offering which you shall take of them: gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and bleached *linen*, and goats' *hair*, and rams' skins dyed red, and tanned leather skins, and acacia wood, oil for lighting, spices for anointing oil and for sweet incense, onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate. And **let them make Me a sanctuary so that I may dwell among them**” (vs 3-8). God wanted *to dwell with* His people! *To dwell with God!*

Here are the conditions for it. They setup the tabernacle, they did everything, put it all together. You can read all the instructions. While God was giving these instructions to Moses, the children of Israel sinned and rebelled. Aaron made a golden calf and they broke the covenant promise.

Moses prayed for the people and for Aaron and God forgave them. They went ahead and built everything for the tabernacle. They set it up and had everything ready to go. Brought the ark, put it all there, everything was setup, Aaron was consecrated, all the courts were there.

Exodus 40:33: “And he set up the court all around the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the screen of the court gate. And Moses finished the work. And the cloud covered the tabernacle of the congregation...” (vs 33-34). They all saw this! This was the day of dedication!

“...and **the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle**” (v 34)—to show that His presence was there. He wanted *to dwell with His presence there*, not literally as His being right there dwelling in a tent, but spiritually speaking His presence was with them. That is called the *Shekinah of God*. “...**the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.**”

Verse 35: “And Moses was not able to enter into the tabernacle of the congregation because the cloud stayed on it, and **the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle**. And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel journeyed on in all their journeys. But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not journey until the day that it was taken up; for the cloud of the LORD *was* upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel

in all their journeys” (vs 35-38).

A nice summary of what God did. You would think that since God did this, and everybody saw it:

- every day they saw the cloud
- every night they saw the pillar of fire
- every morning they had manna
- ✓ you would think that the people would be happy and rejoice
- ✓ you would think that they would *choose* to love God

But free choice must be *free!* So, God—in spite of their sin of the golden calf—forgave it, forgave Aaron, set up the tabernacle and He put His presence there in the tabernacle.

Here are the special instructions, Deuteronomy 4:1: “And now, O Israel, **hearken to the statutes and to the judgments which I teach you**, in order to do them, **so that you may live** and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers gives to you.” They had to go fight, they had to work, but God gave it.

Here’s something that ties right back to Cain, v 2: “You shall not add to the word, which I command you; neither shall you take away from it, so that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you.”

Then Moses gives a warning. Go to the book of Numbers and read about all the things that happened to the children of Israel *because they didn’t obey God!* So, Moses reminds them:

Verse 3: “Your eyes have seen what the LORD did because of Baal Peor. For the LORD your God has destroyed from among you all the men that followed Baal Peor.... [Baal was the sun-god] ... And you who held fast to the LORD your God *are* alive, every one of you, this day. Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, so that you should do so in the land where you go to possess it” (vs 3-5).

That’s what God wanted. What a blessing that He was giving them! *The promise that He was giving them, that He gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but they never inherited themselves!* Now the children of Israel are going to inherit it.

Verse 6: “And you shall keep and do *them*, for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes and say, ‘Surely this great nation *is* a wise and understanding people.’” ***Wisdom only comes from God and His way!***

Here’s what else they would say, v 7: “**For what nation is so great whose God is so near to them...** [this becomes very important for us when we come to other parts of *To Dwell with God*] **...as the LORD our God is, whenever we call upon Him?**”

- God was near them!
- God was among them!

Verse 8: “And what great nation has statutes and judgments that *are so* righteous as all this law which I set before you today?” You can’t get anything better in the physical realm of living. Isn’t it amazing how that because of ‘the law of sin and death’ that goes back to Adam and Eve that human beings are so deceitful and destructive and are given to such terrible and evil things.

Look what happens when you don’t teach people the way of God; when they know nothing about God. Wouldn’t the world have been a different place if Israel would have done what God said? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 9: “Only **take heed to yourself and diligently keep yourself...**” That’s what we have to do; we have to watch out for ourselves that we don’t get caught in sinning against God:

- emotionally
- physically
- spiritually

All of these things! We have to have, *with the Spirit of God*, self-control! We need to grow in the grace and knowledge of God so that we can apply that in loving God and each other.

“...take heed to yourself and diligently keep yourself **lest you forget the things, which your eyes have seen...** [they had the witness of everything that went on for 40 years] **...and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life.** But teach them to your children, and your children’s children, to remember the day that you stood before the LORD your God in Horeb, when the LORD said to me, ‘Gather the people to Me, and I will make them hear My words so that they may learn to fear Me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and they may teach their children’” (vs 9-10).

Isn’t that where they went wrong? *Yes, indeed!* To have God dwell among you and to dwell with God are tremendous, wonderful and fantastic promises:

- in things
- in blessings
- in goodness
- in righteousness

All of that comes from God! Listen! Apart from God human beings are ‘desperately wicked and deceitful

above *all* things.’

So, Moses says, v 12: And the LORD spoke to you out of the midst of the fire. You heard the voice of the words, but saw no likeness, only a voice. And He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, *even* the Ten Commandments.... [and everything that goes with that] ...And He wrote them on two tablets of stone. And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments... [which are based on the Ten Commandments] ...so that you might do them in the land where you go over to possess it. Therefore, take good heed to yourselves, for you did not see any form *at all* on the day the LORD spoke to you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire, lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a graven image, the likeness of any figure, the likeness of male or female, *or* the likeness of any beast on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flies in the air, *or* the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground, the likeness of any fish in the waters beneath the earth; and **take heed**, lest you lift up your eyes to the heavens—when you see the sun, and the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven—lest you should be driven to worship them and serve them, which the LORD your God has divided *for signs and seasons* unto all nations under all the heavens” (vs 12-19).

Take this section right here and carry it right over to Rom. 1. That’s what mankind has done! They were not diligent to themselves, not diligent to God, so you have all the books of Joshua, Judges 1st & 2nd Kings, 1st & 2nd Samuel showing the children of Israel did good for a while, then they sinned. Then they were corrected by God and then He sent them judge or king.

Through every strata, whether from the least to the greatest, we are all—**all of us**—to take heed and diligently love and serve God. Even if it was done just in the letter of the Law, and if there was a great deal of obedience to God in spite of some of the sinners—if they were taken care of according to the way that God said to take care of sinner—would not the world be a better place today? *Yes, indeed!*

Now then, the children of Israel didn’t do what God wanted them to do, even when hearing the voice of the Lord God spoken from the top of Mt. Sinai. What was the first thing they did? *Oh, if God speaks to us anymore we’re going to die!* How many times did they accuse God of wanting to destroy them in the wilderness?

In some ways they were well-intentioned. They told Moses, Deuteronomy 5:27: “You go near and hear all that the LORD our God shall say. And you speak to us all that the LORD our God shall

speak to you, and we will hear *it*, and do *it*.” Well intentioned! Meaning well!

Verse 28: “And the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me. And the LORD said to me, ‘I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken to you. They have well *said* all that they have spoken.’”

Here is the whole lesson of the children of Israel unless they had diligently kept the commandments of God and taught their children, and their children; every generation going down the line. Human nature would get them carried away in worshipping and serving other gods and going after Satan the devil.

The only way—and He reveals it here, which is quite profound—that our heart and mind has to be changed and converted. That’s where the New Testament comes in.

Yes, people can obey in the letter of the Law. They can do it. There are a lot of people out there who have never committed adultery—today I don’t know about that, but at least there are some. There are some who honor father and mother. There are millions that have never murdered. So, it’s possible to keep the laws of God in the letter. If they would have done that things would have been much better. But notice what God says:

Verse 29: “**Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always...**” That kind of heart does not come naturally. It must be a choice of the mind and heart to do so. Then, as the Old Testament shows and the New Testament verifies, we need the Spirit of God to do it on a spiritual level.

Even if you keep the commandments of God in the letter of the Law, it does not convert the mind—though it does somewhat—spiritually as does the Spirit of God! That’s the important lesson of all the Old Testament. Even though they were commanded over and over again! Read all the Book of the Law all the book of Deuteronomy, God said:

- keep My commandments
- love Me
- serve Me
- teach your children
- don’t do like the heathen
- don’t go out after other gods and things
- when I’ve blessed you, don’t get lifted up and think that you are so good
- don’t think that the blessings I give you and the wonderful things I provide you
 - ✓ because you are good

- ✓ because you are great
- ✓ because you are something

NO! That comes from God!

In part two we will pick it up with how God dwelt with the children of Israel and we'll carry that on through to the New Testament.

Example: There's a minister who leads a Church of God who claims that he is the Prophet spoken of in Deut. 18:15, whereas, the Apostle Peter says in Acts 3 is that Jesus Christ is *that Prophet*.

But to show you how people get carried away and believe in a man, and thereby committing idolatry even within the Churches of God, they believe what he has said and that *is not true*. Likewise in the New Testament we have to be diligent with ourselves—don't we? *Yes, indeed!*

Let's read this promise, Deuteronomy 18:15: "The LORD your God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren, One like me...." Moses was:

- a lawgiver
- an intercessor
- over the high priest

"...**To Him you shall hearken**" (v 15). In other words, 'You listen to Jesus Christ, and if you don't *forget eternal life!*

Verse 16: "According to all that you desired of the LORD your 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, so that I do not die.' And the LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well what they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, *One* like you, and will put My words in His mouth. And He shall speak to them all that I shall command Him'" (vs 16-18).

To solve the problem of the disobedience of people, God came in the flesh and taught. His words are recorded. We are to keep those words, which raise everything that is done in the Old Testament to a higher spiritual level.

Verse 19: "And it shall come to pass, whatever man will not hearken to My words which He shall speak in My name, I will require *it* of him." Think about that in relationship to the New Testament. Think about that with all of those who say that the Law has been done away. That is the insane doctrine of cunning, clever, satanic reasoning and bad translations and poor interpretations and the rejection of the Old Testament.

Here is the Word against them, right here, "**...whatever man will not hearken to My words**

which He shall speak in My name, I will require it of him."

Verse 20: "But the prophet who shall presume to speak a word in My name which I have not commanded him to speak or who shall speak in the name of other gods, even **that prophet shall die.**" That lays the foundation for the coming of Jesus Christ—the Messiah!

We will cover in part two some other things as to what happened to Israel and how they did not do as God commanded in Exo. 19 to be a 'kingdom of priests' to the world.'

Scriptural references:

- 1) Leviticus 23:33-39
- 2) Genesis 1:26-28
- 3) Genesis 2:7-9, 15-25
- 4) Genesis 3:1-5, 9-19
- 5) Genesis 4:1-7
- 6) Genesis 22:11-18
- 7) Galatians 3:29
- 8) Genesis 26:2, 4-5
- 9) Exodus 19:3-6
- 10) Exodus 25:3-8
- 11) Exodus 40:33-38
- 12) Deuteronomy 4:1-10, 12-19
- 13) Deuteronomy 5:27-29
- 14) Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Numbers 29
- Deuteronomy 16
- Genesis 5; 6; 15
- Romans 1
- Acts 3

Also referenced: Sermon: *What Would the World have been Like if Adam and Eve had not Sinned?*

FRC:bo
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