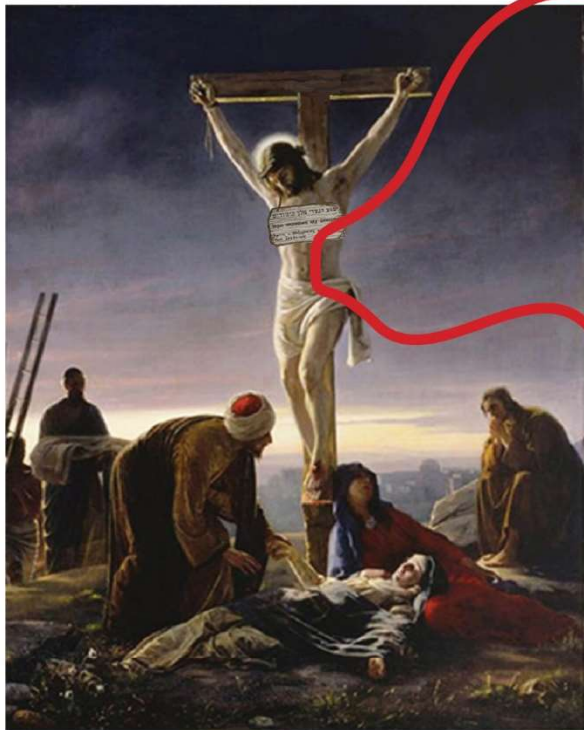


UNVEILING ISRAEL'S WILDERNESS JOURNEY



**The Revelation of God's Plan for
Humanity's Redemption**

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Have you ever questioned why there are so many Protestant denominations while we all worship the same God and basically use the same Bible? Are you aware that Christ is disappointed with this church age and our form of worship? Have you not observed that the Church is in a period of decline? It seems that after 2,000 years, we still do not understand what the Lord wants and needs from His redeemed. Welcome to Laodicea, the last church age of God's displeasure.

From the Teaching Ministry of
Robert Allen Epperson

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The author does not intend to profit from the distribution of this manuscript, either by electronic or printed media. It is the author's intent to make this manuscript freely available on the Internet for worldwide availability. ***The purpose of this manuscript is to re-educate today's church pastors, evangelists, Bible teachers and Christians with a new understanding of God's plan of salvation and incorrectly interpreted Church doctrines. It is to prepare the Church for revival before the pouring out of the promised Spirit of Elijah before the Lord's return.***

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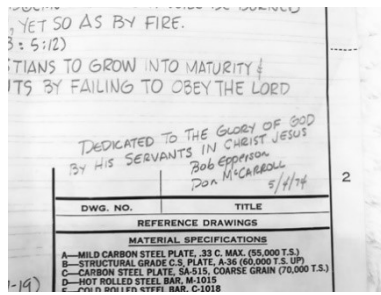
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to the Holy Spirit. It was He that provided the revelations and understanding that guided this manuscript. To assure the writer of the manuscript's heavenly origins, He left His fingerprints throughout to make known His authorship. This manuscript indicates that I am the author, but I was merely the vessel of use. The Holy Spirit humbled me many times during editing. As I reread several previously written passages, the Holy Spirit revealed His authorship and inspiration. Reading passages that I did not know were there or their origin, my eyes would fill with tears. It was both humbling and inspiring to realize that I was not the one that penned the words before me.

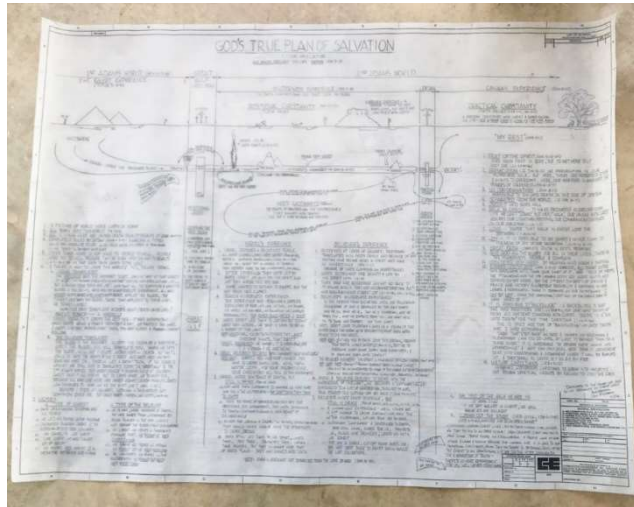
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I owe a debt of gratitude to a friend and former study partner, Donald Lee McCarroll. While studying in the Old Testament in the early 1970s, we discovered doctrinal implications for today's church cloaked within Israel's wilderness journey. We attempted to illustrate our revelations on a large mylar chart to use as a teaching tool. Little did I realize at the time; the illustration we made was merely a portal into vast treasures hidden for this last and present church age.



Donald Lee was both a helpmate and mentor to start me on this journey of discovery. Unfortunately, the Lord separated us from our joint studies into the ministries for which God called us. The Lord sent Donald Lee to DePauw, Indiana, to become the pastor of Blue River Baptist Church. Called to teach, the Lord sent me on a different path. He tasked me to document the revelations given to me and Donald Lee and the vast treasures hidden in that portal, yet revealed. Thus, in the ensuing years, a collaboration began between me and the Holy Spirit to document God's message for this church age. This task has taken many years.

This journey of discovery began at my home in Chattanooga, Tennessee, while studying with Donald Lee and our wives. Without his biblical insight, knowledge and contributions, this journey of discovery may have never happened. I truly wish the Lord would have let us complete this journey together. But in retrospect, I can now see that my study partner had to be the Holy Spirit.



Our original chart that started this journey of discovery dated May 4, 1974.

Photo is Don (L) and Bob at Don's 80th birthday, February 29, 2020



ENDORSEMENTS

I offer the Holy Spirit as the only endorsee of this manuscript. He alone directed and inspired the writing and composition. As the Lord promised when He called, "*The Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.*" Therefore, I need no other endorsements. No higher qualified endorsements are available.

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FOREWORD

In Protestant churches, we interchangeably use different words to describe the same event: salvation, redeem, redemption, and saved. In a broad sense, this is acceptable. However, in detail, some are more inclusive in meaning. The Merriam-Webster dictionary helps us understand the differences.

SALVATION - deliverance from the power and effects of sin.

REDEEM - to buy back, repurchase.

REDEMPTION - the act, process, or the instance of redeeming

SAVED - to deliver from sin.

Although not in the dictionary, we can add another term to those above, BORN AGAIN.

Redeem (redemption) and “born again” reference a single event in time. It is when one accepts Christ as Savior. The blood of Christ pays the penalty of sin and returns one to a state of grace with the Creator. It is unconditional and does not depend upon works. However, redemption does not impart righteousness. God makes this clear to a redeemed Israel in their wilderness journey.

Deuteronomy 9:5-6

⁵ Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ⁶ Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people.

In other words, a redeemed person can still live a worldly life in sin and not follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This is not pleasing to God as it hinders the work of the Holy Spirit.

The word SAVED is ambiguous. However, the word SALVATION is more inclusive in meaning. The words SALVATION and REDEMPTION appear throughout this study; however, each implies a different meaning. Redemption is the single act of reconciliation with God. Salvation is inclusive of redemption but provides additional instruction for the redeemed for deliverance from the power and effects of sin. In other words, they provide instructions for how Christians should live so they can be God’s earthly ambassadors.

As we progress along this journey of discovery, you will learn that redemption alone is insufficient for God’s needs. He needs spirit filled Christians that are wholly dedicated to His service. For this reason, He provided instructions for both redemption and service during Israel’s wilderness walk. Using the word SALVATION merely provides a word, herein, to describe all God revealed regarding reconciliation and requirements for His service along this journey.

James 2:14-17 (ASV)

*¹⁴ What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, but have not works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister be naked and in lack of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body; what doth it profit? ¹⁷ **Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself.***

Never underestimate the value God places on His need for service from His redeemed.

MY WITNESS

Two events happened in my life that defined my ministry, and they happened near the same time. First was my shielding by the Lord from serving in the Vietnam War, and the second was my call by the Lord to teach. Both were preludes to the writing of this manuscript. The first set me aside for the Lord's service. The second defined my service.

DEFERRED TO THE LORD'S SERVICE

At the age of 20 in 1963, the Vietnam War was in progress. I was a full-time college student and received a deferment with the reintroduction of the military draft. Later, the deferment rules changed, and I became eligible for the draft. As the war became more intense, the deferment rules changed to "full-time student and married." Luckily, by this time I was married and was able to retain my deferment and continue my education. In 1966 when the Vietnam War was at its peak, the War Department cancelled all deferments. Again, I became eligible for the draft. As a senior in 1966, I received my draft notice. I passed my physical and was given thirty days to get my affairs in order and report for duty. It was at this time that I began to see God's intervention. During these thirty days, the draft deferment requirements changed to "full-time student and married with children." I was married and had a little girl. I was very fortunate. I was able to keep my deferment and finish my education. Receiving my engineering degree mapped the rest of my life.

I always felt that God was involved in preventing me from serving in the war. I always regretted not being a veteran. At the same time, I somehow knew that if I had gone, I would not have returned. Several years later, God gave me confirmation that He was the author of my deferment. In my late 20s, I was walking in downtown Chattanooga, Tennessee, when an elderly woman walked past me, stopped, and asked if I was Bobby Epperson. I said "yes," and she asked if I recognized her. I had no clue, but somehow, she knew me. She said, "I am (unnamed)'s mother," and I used to come to her house and play with him when we were in grammar school. Unbelievable! I was now a grown man, and she had not seen me in 20 years. Yet, she recognized me. Then, she said something that greatly impacted my life.

This lady worked at the nearby Selective Service Office and processed draft notices during the Vietnam War. She told me that she was glad to see me because she always wanted to tell me something but never thought she would have the opportunity. Arriving at work one day, she had a stack of draft notices to process. On the top of the stack was my draft notice. She recognized my name. She said while no one was looking, she removed my draft notice and placed it in a folder for unqualified recruits. Thanks to her, I never received a draft notice when I was eligible for the draft.

What were the odds? This was no coincidence. This was the Lord confirming to me that He intervened to protect me from the draft. He would not let me die in a far-away war, because He had different plans for me. If drafted early in my education when eligible, I would either be dead or leading an entirely different life.

THE LORD'S SERVICE

This manuscript and my calling to the Lord's service are one entity. One led to the other. God called me to teach the Bible in preparation for writing the manuscript that follows. However, before starting this manuscript and define my calling, let me alert you that I am neither an elegant or spiritual writer. You will not witness the finesse of Billy Graham, the spiritual insight of Watchman Nee nor the healing faith of Smith Wigglesworth. I am merely an engineer who deals in logic and the laws of physics. You might say that I am the opposite of what one might expect God to choose for His service. With so many weaknesses and faults, I have no idea why God chose me to present this manuscript. Reading the works of Watchman Nee exposed my shallow spirituality. Reading the works of Smith Wigglesworth exposed my shallow faith. God could have chosen from numerous published authors of biblical theology with infinite spiritual insight. Why me? It is only through Paul's letters that I can begin to comprehend why God chose this weak vessel of service.

1 Corinthians 1:27

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

Unqualified as I feel, I know that God has qualified me for this task. Therefore, I will not dishonor Him by offering further excuses for my imperfections. For, I know that God saved me and sanctified me for His service.

1 Corinthians 15:10

By the grace of God, I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain...

If you can accept that God called me to His service to teach; then, you may accept that God sent this manuscript for your edification.

1 Corinthians 12:28

*And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, **thirdly teachers**, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.*

Ephesians 4:11-12

*And he gave some apostles; and some prophets and some evangelists; and some pastors and **teachers**; for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the Holy body of Christ.*

These scriptures tell of a fellowship of those selected for special services to edify the church. One cannot join this fraternity. Only God selects individuals for these assignments. Although not confirmed in scripture, I firmly believe those appointed by God can take you to an undeniable experience of their calling. These elects are the earthly voices of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, I submit my own calling for your reproof that you may judge this manuscript, whether it is of man or the Holy Spirit.

In the mid-1970's, I was in my early thirties and very involved in my church. I sang in the choir and taught Sunday school. I studied the Bible and had a great hunger for the Word of God. During this happy period of life, I felt God was convicting me about a place of service. For some unexplainable reason, I felt God was going to call me into the preaching ministry.

How does one know if called by God? Is it a feeling, a voice, or an event? I have heard Christians explain their calling by beginning with, "I feel like God...." Many confuse a calling of God with a conviction for a place of service. God has a place of service for all Christians. However, God does not call all Christians into His fellowship of special services. When God calls one into a fellowship of special service, I am confident it is not with a feeling that can leave doubts.

When I sensed that God was seeking me for a place of service, I did not want a feeling. I wanted something with sustenance that would bolster my faith. Most of all, I wanted my calling to be real with no lingering doubts. God gave His calling in a most unexpected way.

One night, God spoke to me in a dream. I found myself lost in a cavern with my young daughter. At the time she was about nine years old. However, in the dream, she was much younger. As we walked through the dim cavern, we suddenly came upon a precipice. The floor dropped steeply into a lower, large, and dim cavernous area. While viewing this dim scene, my daughter suddenly slipped and tumbled down the rocky embankment to the floor far below. I was terrified as I frantically struggled down the embankment to reach her. As I made my way below, I could see that she was alive and standing on the floor, but now farther away. As I struggled to reach her, rocks started falling from the ceiling and hitting all around her. As she cried for help, a large rock hit her on the head; and she collapsed on the floor, apparently dead.

As tears filled my eyes, I rushed to reach her. As I ran along the cavern floor, I was conscious that I was watching the floor and not straight-ahead. I suppose that I was trying not to trip on all the rocks that now littered the cavern floor. When I reached the area where she collapsed, I was still looking toward the ground; and I beheld the sandals of a man in a white robe. Immediately, I knew that I was standing in the presence of the Lord Jesus; however, I could not lift my eyes to look upon His face. I could only lift my eyes high enough to see that He was holding the lifeless body of my daughter across His arms with her head cradled gently against His chest. As I trembled in fear, my daughter suddenly became alive, turned in the Lord's arms, looked toward my face, opened a Bible, and said, "Dad, God has asked me to give you a message. It is Matthew 24:46 and Luke 12:12." My mind exploded. My daughter was dead, but now alive. Immediately, God brought this scripture to remembrance:

1 Corinthians 10:4

And did all drink the same spiritual drink for they drank of that spiritual Rock That followed them: and That Rock was Christ.

The Rock that struck my daughter was none other than Christ, himself, now standing in my presence. Through my daughter, He delivered a personal message, calling me into His ministry. At that instant, I awoke, never to be the same again. Christ miraculously anointed me into His ministry. I would never have to say, "I feel like God called me to ..."

Matthew 24:46

Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

Luke 12:12

For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

In my mind, the message was clear, "Have no fear of the task I have set before you. Be faithful to your calling; and in that hour, the Holy Spirit will teach you what to say." From that day, God's anointing was upon me. Veils lifted; and mysteries in God's Word became discernable.

I am both honored and humbled that God called me into an anointed fellowship. I am appreciative that God gave me a special task and empowered me with the gifts and talents needed for my ministry. I now realize that God used all the years of teaching and enlightenment to groom me for this manuscript. For it was here that the Holy Spirit taught me what to say. It has taken over forty years to complete this task, and I now offer it for your edification. I humbly return to others what the Holy Spirit so freely shared with me.

1 Peter 4:10-11

¹⁰ *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹ If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

A MYSTERY?

What is the message that the Holy Spirit shared for the Church? I must be careful how I present this answer in order not to create confusion and misunderstanding. Indoctrination is a powerful deterrent in accepting different views. If statements seem to challenge your doctrinal beliefs, be patient and open minded. The manuscript that follows will confirm the validity of the message.

The basis of this study is a latter-day revelation that God not only revealed His plans for humanity's redemption in Israel's Exodus story, but also doctrinal instructions for the Church. He disclosed this through three parallel and collaborating views along Israel's wilderness journey from Egypt to Canaan. Collectively, they provide details and understanding of salvation and Christian service that few have discovered or comprehended. Taken together, they follow God's plan from inception in Egypt through Jesus' role as High Priest in fulfilling the Law and completing the plan of salvation. These collective views, along with hidden treasures discovered along the way, provide a solid foundation for Christian biblical understanding of misinterpreted New Testament doctrines.

In the next chapter, we will discuss the present-day church age, the many problems it faces, and its declining influence. Many of those problems arise from a litany of conflicting doctrines. Numerous denominations are available to suit anyone's doctrinal beliefs. This alone tells us there are numerous perverted, misunderstood, or missing doctrines influencing the Church. This is a root cause of a weak church age. How can we be strong as a church and promote Christianity when we cannot even agree among ourselves?

Obviously, perverted doctrines arise from misinterpreting scripture. The New Testament, especially Paul's letters, gives us many instructions for Christians that are difficult to understand. We hear some preached in church services but many that pastors and teachers avoid. The core of many sermons seems focused on redemption for the lost and moral living for the saved. However, many biblical instructions seem lost to understanding and missing from sermons and teaching. Here are a few examples of scriptures that cause doctrinal problems or are just simply misunderstood:

Romans 6:16

*Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; **whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?***

1 Corinthians 9:27

*But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, **I myself should be a castaway.***

Romans 8:1

*There is therefore now **no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.***

1 John 5:16

*If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. **There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.***

Hebrews 4:8-11

⁸ *For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.* ⁹ ***There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.*** ¹⁰ *For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.* ¹¹ ***Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.***

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Hebrews 6:6

If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Galatians 2:20

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Since many scriptural instructions are difficult to understand, many interpret them differently. We must remember that Paul wrote most of the Christian instructions. He was both a Pharisee and an expert in the Mosaic Law and the Books of Moses. Since we do not have the same religious background as Paul, it is sometimes difficult for us to comprehend his messages to the churches.

These warnings from Paul and John should alert us that there is more to Christian service than attending church and singing in the choir. There is more required from pastor's sermons than a message of salvation and moral living. There is more required from Bible teachers than turning a few verses of scripture into a beautiful allegory for Christian living.

The plan of salvation, itself, appears misunderstood. Today, we use the words redemption and salvation interchangeably. However, when God revealed His plan for redemption through Israel, He also included His requirements for Christian service. Perhaps, we should look at the doctrine of salvation more comprehensively. Only the blood of Christ unconditionally redeems. However, our works, service and worship define not only us as Christians but also the effectiveness of the Church.

Many denominations comprise today's Church. There is basically only one Bible. So, why is there not just one denomination? The answer is quite simple. It seems today's churches do not fully understand God's plan of salvation. While the answer may be simple, the complexity is not. The Bible is the most complex book ever written. God cloaked things for different generations. Full understanding may require many verses and many books of the Bible. No human is intelligent enough to comprehend the whole Bible. Consequently, churches base beliefs and doctrines on what they can collectively comprehend. So, as you can see, all denominations operate on some degree of flawed or incomplete doctrines. So, what is the answer? The answer to that question brings us back to this manuscript. By understanding the instructions originally provided for the Church through Israel's wilderness journey, many doctrinal issues can find resolution and the church can become a united beacon of strength. Thus, the question: did God cloak the understanding of His plan of salvation as a mystery in the wilderness journey of Israel? This study attempts to answer that question.

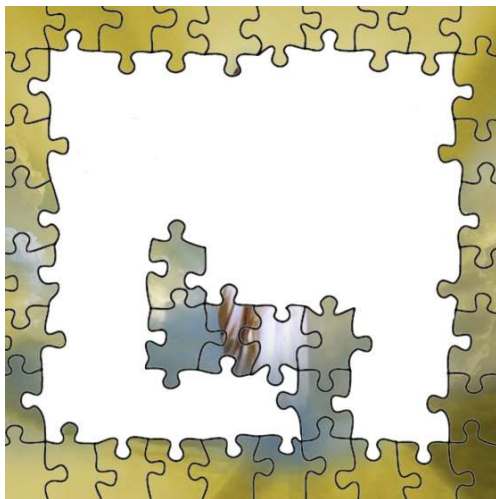
The wilderness journey of Israel is an old story we have all read or heard many times. It is so familiar we do not question what God is trying to tell us. We sometimes forget that God does not waste Bible space on frivolous stories. Every story has an underlying message, but familiarity with the story is a deterrent to finding God's true meaning. Perhaps God used this deterrent to reserve a mystery for this church age.

Why would God reveal an apparent mystery that in hindsight seems so obvious? A book by Herbert W. Armstrong provided the answer. While visiting my mother-in-law's room in an assisted-living facility, I saw a copy of Mr. Armstrong's book, Mystery of the Ages, on her nightstand. I picked up the book and started to read the author's statement. Undoubtedly, the Holy Spirit led to this passage because He answered the "mystery" question. It seems Mr. Armstrong dealt with the same issue. Why did he have understanding of a mystery when no one else seems to have seen it? Quoting from his book.¹

"I found the Bible to be a coded book, with answers to the paramount mysteries confronting all humanity. The revelation of these mysteries was lost, even to the Church of God, although the revelation of them has been preserved in the writings of the Bible. Why, then, has the world not clearly understood? Because the Bible was a coded book, not intended to be understood until our day in this latter half of the twentieth century. I learned, in this night-and-day study, why it is the most misunderstood book, even though it is the world's best-seller. The full explanation or truth of any one subject is seldom made complete and clear in any one passage. Other portions, factors, or phases of the subject are usually contained in one or several other passages in other parts of the Bible, either in the Old or New Testament. A true and full understanding of this subject is profitable only when these perhaps several other passages, scattered throughout the Bible, are put together."

"Vistas of knowledge and understanding that have remained the chief mysteries of life to most people were opened to my astonished eyes and mind. But it is recorded in that book that in these very days in which our generation lives, the great mystery would be cleared. And indeed it was to my astonished mind."

"I learned that the Bible is like a jigsaw puzzle, thousands of pieces that need putting together; and the pieces will fit together in only one way. Then the picture becomes crystal clear to the one willing to believe what God our Creator says."



Thank you, Lord. I believe Mr. Armstrong is 100% correct. Like his book, this manuscript merely connects the many pieces of a large puzzle. A doctrine's components scattered throughout the Bible sorely complicate establishing a doctrine that rightly divides the word of truth. This helps explain why we have so many denominations based on varying interpretations (or misconceptions) of the scriptures. The degree of completeness of the puzzle dictates what we believe. Today's doctrine of salvation appears so simple that we think we see a complete picture. Consequently, we do not realize the puzzle is much larger and rarely search for additional pieces. Our understanding of God's plan for the redeemed is like the picture of this incomplete puzzle. We cannot see the total picture that God is trying to show us. The missing

pieces represent a lack of knowledge and understanding. If this incomplete puzzle represents all we know about God's plan of salvation, we will never understand God's needs from the Church.

So, let us begin a journey of discovery to show what the Holy Spirit shared. It took over forty years to find and fit the pieces to complete the puzzle. Who could have guessed how much more all the missing pieces would reveal about our understanding of salvation and God's plans for His Church?

THE PRESENT CHURCH AGE

Before proceeding into this study, we must stop and take an in-depth look at the present-day church. In the previous chapter, we saw an illustration of an incomplete picture puzzle that represented the incomplete understanding of the doctrines regarding redemption and service. It makes sense that if we do not completely understand these doctrines, the church can become misguided, weak, and chaotic. Confirmation that these conditions already exist comes from Christ, Himself.

In the Book of Revelation, Christ instructed the apostle John to write letters to the angels (ministers) of seven churches. Today, we widely accept that the seven letters represented seven church ages. Accordingly, the last letter (to the church at Laodicea) would represent the present church age.

Revelation 3:14-22

¹⁴ And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; ¹⁵ I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. ¹⁷ Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: ¹⁸ I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. ²¹ To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.² He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

In this letter, Christ called out this church age as disappointing to His standards and requirements. This alerts us that the church's form of worship has perverted to doctrines inconsistent with the scriptures. Therefore, He admonishes us to open our eyes and ears to correct our form of worship or face consequences.

This letter should shake the foundations of the church and strike concern into every teacher and minister of the Word. Yet, it presents a strange paradox. While the evangelical church believes the letter represents this age, it seems to reject that it applies to their individual denominations. Consequently, the church's pastors ignore the letter and dismiss Christ's concerns as only applying to others. Yet, if we open our eyes and be honest in our appraisal of today's church, we can see Christ's concerns in almost every facet of our worship rituals. The challenge is to expose false doctrines so church leaders can see the church as Christ sees it.

I added this chapter to enlighten Christians that we live in an indoctrinated age that has rendered the church generally ineffective. This is difficult for the average parishioners, pastors, and teachers to comprehend. When raised in a distorted and indoctrinated environment, perceptions and beliefs are deeply rooted.

It is time that we opened our eyes to see what is so displeasing to Christ about this church age. We cannot continue believing this is the last church age while at the same time ignoring Christ's condemnation. That is spiritual insanity. To comprehend how we evolved to the present state of Christ's rebuke, we must look inside the church for answers.

PRESENT STATE OF THE CHURCH

I acknowledge that today's churches do some great work for God. There are many God-fearing prayer warriors and pastors dedicated to saving souls. I regard my personal church as a faith filled church that understands and executes the power of prayer. In doctrine, it mirrors a typical Baptist church but without hardcore, inflexible views. It is not the intention of this chapter to diminish the church but to expose its failings that may contribute to Christ's displeasure. I will start by revealing conditions that many may not know exist.

The views expressed, herein, will be offensive to some and enlightenment for others. Some of the views are personal perceptions of today's church. They are observations and experiences from many years of teaching and sharing with peers. Other views are references from Internet articles and publications of pastors and other teachers.

One of the most apparent problems facing the church is dwindling attendance. The "ChurchLeaders" website posted some interesting facts regarding church attendance in America.¹

SEVEN STARTLING FACTS: AN UP-CLOSE LOOK AT CHURCH ATTENDANCE IN AMERICA

- *Less than 20% of Americans regularly attend church.*
- *American church attendance is steadily declining.*
- *Only one state is outpacing its population growth.*
- *Mid-size churches are shrinking; the smallest and largest are increasing.*
- *Established churches 40-150 years old are on average, shrinking.*
- *The increase in churches is only ¼ of what is needed to keep up with population growth.*
- *By 2050, the percentage of the U. S. population attending church will be almost half of what it was in 1990.*

As membership declines, reduced offerings can force a church into bankruptcy. Recently, I witnessed three local community churches for sale.

A related article recently appeared on the Blogging Scripture His Way website.²

SIX PROBLEMS WITH THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH

- *79 percent of those identifying as "born again Christians" firmly believe the Bible is accurate in all its teaching.*
- *Only 46 percent of these "born agains" believe in absolute moral truth.*
- *Only 40 percent believe Satan is real.*
- *Only 47 percent strongly reject the idea that you can earn your way to heaven.*
- *Only 62 percent of the born-again Christians surveyed strongly believe that Jesus was sinless.*
- *"This data is very sobering. It indicts evangelicals, yes, but surely it also indicts the information centers they are learning from. It demonstrates that over the last generation, not only has America become less Christian, but also professing Christians have become less Christian."*

Just from these two sources, we can already see agreement that the church is in decline and in serious trouble.

False doctrines, fueled by scriptural illiteracy, have driven the church to its present state. Indocination fosters blindness, and blindness rejects Christ's warning. Colleagues share this view. Recently, I heard a respected Bible teacher make the comment, "this age is filled with preachers

and teachers who are biblically illiterate.” While I share this view, so do many enlightened pastors and teachers. They are taking to publishing and the Internet to warn the church of its blind direction. Here are typical examples of pastors and teachers attempting to awaken the church from scriptural blindness.³

IN PRISONS WITH STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

“It is truly grievous to see those who are devoted and committed to every word that comes forth from the mouth of their pastors - not from God. They will quote ridiculous things they honestly believe are in the Word of God - but are not. They will develop an entire theology based on some person's interpretation of a scripture, without ever once looking into the depths of that scripture for themselves. For that matter, most will not even pray to see if God concurs with that person's particular interpretation.”

“In this day and age of technological wonders, we have volumes of books and multitudes of software enabling us to access all of the Greek and Hebrew renderings of virtually every scripture in the Bible. Yet, with all this, we have the greatest amount of doctrinal chaos ever in history. Why? Because the church has grown fat and lazy - too lazy to obey the Word of God which commands all of us to “study to show ourselves approved,” people who need not be ashamed but can rightly divide the Word of Truth.”

Another condemning article appeared at the ChristianHeadlines website.⁴

THE SCANDAL of BIBLICAL ILLITERACY: It is Our Problem

“While America's evangelical Christians are rightly concerned about the secular world view's rejection of biblical Christianity, we ought to give some urgent attention to a problem much closer to home--biblical illiteracy in the church. This scandalous problem is our own, and it is up to us to fix it.”

“Researchers George Gallup and Jim Castelli put the problem squarely: “Americans revere the Bible--but, by and large, they don't read it. And because they don't read it, they have become a nation of biblical illiterates.” How bad is it? Researchers tell us that it is worse than most could imagine.”

“Fewer than half of all adults can name the four gospels. Many Christians cannot identify more than two or three of the disciples. According to data from the Barna Research Group, 60 percent of Americans cannot name even five of the Ten Commandments. “No wonder people break the Ten Commandments all the time. They don't know what they are,” said George Barna, president of the firm. The bottom line? Increasingly, America is biblically illiterate.”

“Multiple surveys reveal the problem in stark terms. According to 82 percent of Americans, “God helps those who help themselves”, is a Bible verse. Those identified as born-again Christians did better--by one percent. A majority of adults think the Bible teaches that the most important purpose in life is taking care of one's family.”

“Some of the statistics are enough to perplex even those aware of the problem. A Barna poll indicated that at least 12 percent of adults believe that Joan of Arc was Noah's wife. Another survey of graduating high school seniors revealed that over 50 percent thought that Sodom and Gomorrah were husband and wife. A considerable number of respondents to one poll indicated that the Sermon on the Mount was preached by Billy Graham. We are in big trouble.”

Scriptural illiteracy has plagued biblical interpretations since the days of the prophets.

Hosea 4:6

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

INSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE CHURCH'S PRESENT STATE

If this age is so biblically illiterate, how did we arrive at this state of affairs? I would personally say unqualified Bible teachers, indoctrinated pastors, and a congregation that does not study the Bible. If we can deduce a common thread from various opinions presented, Christians are not maturing spiritually, at least partially due to lack of study and shallow teaching. Lack of interest in learning is obvious when Sunday school attendance is a fraction of those attending the morning worship service. "The Sunday School Revolutionary!" blog posted a confirming article in 2012 based on the statistics of 1,983 Kentucky Baptist churches.⁵

STATISTICS ABOUT THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AND WORSHIP ATTENDANCE GAP

"I looked at the large group of churches (1,983) whose Sunday School attendance was less than their worship attendance to get an idea of the ranges. In summarizing this data, there is a fairly large gap in most Kentucky Baptist churches between Sunday School attendance and worship. Sunday School attendance is about 2/3 of worship. Or to look at it the other way, Worship has 1.5 times as many as are in Sunday School each week."

It is my opinion that many do not attend Sunday school because they feel it a waste of time. With biblically qualified teachers in short supply, Sunday school can be boring and ineffective. Asking new Christians to teach a class is a sad commentary for some churches. To circumvent this lack of teaching qualifications, many churches utilize Standard Lesson Quarterly Teaching Guides. In this manner, any unqualified person can teach a class. The problem is quarterly lessons are mini sermons for righteous living and produce little Bible knowledge. It is no wonder that biblical illiteracy permeates the church and weakens its foundations.

The problem does not stop with teachers. A fair amount of biblical illiteracy radiates from the pulpit. Many of today's pastors' biblical education consists of following the beliefs and doctrines of their mentors.

I once heard a pastor ask this question of his congregation during a Wednesday Bible study. "If they crucified Christ on Friday afternoon and He arose on Sunday morning, how can we account for the three days and nights He was in the tomb? Does anyone know the answer (this was a serious question because he did not know the answer)?" I thank this pastor for asking the question. Many do not but should. The numerous Easter sermons that I have heard give the universally accepted version that they crucified Jesus on Good Friday, and He arose resurrected from the grave Sunday morning. If these were the facts, the Law would remain unfulfilled and Christ's redemptive work would be incomplete.⁶ This is but a microcosm of today's biblical illiteracy woes. Where biblical illiteracy abounds, we can expect to find a spiritually weak and worldly church.

Recently, Shane-Idleman, a California pastor, posted his views on the declining condition of the church. In a blog titled "Has America's Form of Christianity Left the Church in a SPIRITUALLY DEAD Condition?" He voiced his concerns about the state of the church and believes that Christianity in America has shifted away from the Gospel and instead of being the light of the world;

Christians are beginning to look just like the world. In another blog, “An Indictment Against America,” he proclaims that church leaders have exchanged the truth for tolerance. He urges them and the rest of the Christian community to reflect on whether they are affecting the world or instead, infected by it.⁷

“The present condition of the church and America leaves one to wonder if this lack of fearing the Lord is contributing to her spiritually dead condition. A healthy respect of God is what our culture and the church desperately need.”

“If we continue down this slippery slope, there is little hope. Apart from a national spiritual awakening, it will be difficult to turn the Titanic around. The vessel has been struck. What is inside is spilling out.”

“But if God brings revival ... if we once again set our hearts and minds on Him ... there is tremendous hope. There will not be an end until Christ returns but we are not called to hide in the corner, we are called to engage the enemy.”

Weak spirituality, worldliness, and biblical illiteracy are not the only problems permeating today’s church. Complacency has fueled the church’s decline. It is an observation of several that many non-committed Christians fill the pews. When a significant portion of the congregation consists of complacent Christians, the church’s effectiveness greatly diminishes. The “ReligiouslyIncorrect” website posted an article identifying complacency as the number one deadly sin of today’s church.⁸

EPIDEMIC COMPLACENCY

“One of the most noticeable trends away from the ancient path of Christ’s will is complacency. In other words, many are simply lukewarm, unzealous, or uncommitted. I believe complacency in our churches has reached utterly pandemic proportions. I fear that many churches—and Christians—no longer mirror the faithful churches of the Bible in form and function. But the question is: What must we do to change?”

Where an uncommitted, shallow faith congregation thrives, petty discord and sinful living creep into the church. These foster splits and rifts that can destroy a church. I have personally witnessed these on a few occasions.

DOCTRINAL PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE CHURCH’S PRESENT STATE

As a church, we dismiss articles or opinions that reflect any suggested criticism of our form of worship. A church focused on saving souls is confident that they are following scripture and God’s will. Undoubtedly, this is the root cause why pastors give such little heed to Christ’s letter of warning. If they are saving souls, they believe Christ’s letter is surely speaking to others. This is classic indoctrination based on biblical illiteracy. It is time for pastors and teachers to realize that God wants and needs more than saved souls. He needs spirit filled, biblically mature believers who can serve as His Earthly ambassadors. He needs workers who understand His requirements and instructions for the redeemed. It is in this area that both pastors and teachers fail miserably. Many pastors focus primarily on evangelism and righteous living while the church starves for lack of direction.

A significant change to the church from times past is the congregation. The church that we older citizens knew in early life has disappeared. The local church always served the needs of the surrounding community. Before government welfare, the church assisted the needs of the sick

and destitute in the neighborhood. Today, that has all changed. A local church rarely serves a member's home community. Members have forgone their community churches to drive several miles to a church on the other side of town. When this happens, the transient congregation no longer feels empathy for their home neighborhood church; and community needs can go neglected.

Today, many churches are a place of ritual where you can go for both worship and entertainment. The church, for the most part, has an inflexible order of service, leaving little room for the work of the Holy Spirit. A member can listen to choir music and a sermon then leave without participating in any of the service. Without participation, there is little investment in the worship service. This is significantly different from the early church where everyone participated and thrived without the need for a sermon.

Lack of understanding of the doctrines for Christian service is apparent in how ministers deal with newly saved Christians. Recently, I had a conversation with a pastor friend regarding the newly saved. Usually after one accepts Christ as savior at a church service, the pastor introduces the new convert to the congregation. He then asks if God saved them and if they are going to live for Jesus. I told the pastor that at this point, he should shake the convert's hand and say, "good luck, you are now on your own." I certainly meant no disrespect for the pastor. It merely shows the emphasis the church has on winning souls while neglecting the development of new Christians for God's service. We lead people to Christ and then abandon them to find their own way. This illustrates that the clergy understands redemption but is clueless to the intended spiritual definition of salvation. Left to find their own way without Christian instruction and mentoring, many new Christians languish, seldom growing in faith or service. While some find God's path through determination, others give up and leave the church.

HOW DID WE DRIFT SO FAR FROM THE EARLY CHURCH?

The church did not get to this falsely indoctrinated condition overnight. It has taken from early in the 16th century to the present day. It began within the Protestant Reformation that sprang from the Catholic Church. The roots of today's doctrines proliferated from the Catholic Church through priests who broke from the church over disagreements with Catholic teachings. The "ProtestantErrors" website posted an enlightening article about the roots of the Protestant Church.⁹

THE ERRORS OF PROTESTANTISM

"In the early 16th century, the Catholic Church experienced a large separation which significantly changed Christianity. The separation, which became known as the "Protestant Reformation", was initiated when Martin Luther (1483-1546), a Catholic priest, began to publicly challenge numerous teachings of the Catholic Church. The Catholic doctrines that Martin Luther challenged had been taught unanimously by the Catholic Church for the 15 centuries prior, going back to the days of Christ and the Apostles. He was eventually excommunicated by the Catholic Church and afterward started the "Lutheran" churches."

"Years later, the protesting continued through a Catholic man named John Calvin (1509-1564). However, he could not come to complete agreement with Luther's ideas, and so began to form his own churches (the "Reformed" churches). Ulrich Zwingli was another reformer who surfaced around the same time, though he could neither come to agreement with Luther nor Calvin."

“The floodgates were now opened, and in the years and centuries following, numerous other reformation movements surfaced, such as that initiated by John Knox (starting the Presbyterian church in 1560), Robert Browne (starting the Congregational church in 1592), and John Smyth (starting the Baptist church in 1609), none of which could come to agreement on their doctrines. Protestant denominations have snowballed since, all which lack unity, and today there are literally thousands of them.”

The early Christian church had a very loose structure in services and meeting places. Meetings varied from one day per week to every day. There was no order of service, as seen today; and sermons were not part of the early church. This all changed with the Protestant Reformation. The priests that formed the Evangelical churches brought with them familiar parts of Catholic ritual worship such as a choir, a speaker, and a non-participating congregation.

The new church age began in chaos. The founding church fathers each had different interpretations of the scriptures. Martin Luther, alone, issued ninety-five theses challenging church doctrines. The early church fathers could not collectively agree on scripturally based doctrines, which led to the birth of many of today's church denominations. This should open eyes to alert us that many incorrect doctrines have passed from generation-to-generation and permeate today's church. Thus, we now have a weakened church divided by several false doctrines based on misinterpreted scriptures. While we can be grateful to the early church fathers for the Protestant movement, it is sad that they probably initiated the Laodicea church age. An article by brother-sofyeshua.com offers other concerns about doctrines permeating the Protestant Church.¹⁰

“There Is No Biblical Basis For Modern Christian Church Doctrine. The Doctrines Of All Existing Modern Churches Are Fatally Flawed Because they Are All Built Upon A Common Defective Foundation -- That Of Pagan Rome.” (The Catholic Church).“

It must be a true disappointment to Christ that the church is over 2,000 years old and still does not understand His instructions and doctrines. The proof is in Christ's warning to this church age.

WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

We have presented a rather disturbing view of this church age. However, it was necessary for Christians to open their eyes and see the church as Christ did in His letter to Laodicea. How did the church evolve into this state of confusion and ineffectiveness? The answer is quite simple. The church has staggered along since the Protestant Reformation without understanding the doctrines for Christian service. The church woes, previously presented, all have their roots in misunderstanding these doctrines. If this study can enlighten pastors and teachers on the doctrines as God revealed them, revival is possible for the church

I will trust the Holy Spirit to pen the words needed to teach and convict hearts for the Lord's manuscript that follows. I believe it will challenge your fundamental denominational beliefs and teachings. Please keep in remembrance that all scripture is open for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction.

2 Timothy 3:16

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

This verse alerts us that misunderstanding scripture can lead to false doctrines and beliefs. Therefore, always keep an open mind when reading or listening to a different viewpoint. God may be trying to open your eyes so you can better serve Him.

If you can accept that Christ's letter was for you and your church, you are ready for the Master's hand and prepared to begin this journey. It will open hearts to the understanding of what God wants, needs, and requires from every Christian. It will also confirm the causes of today's church woes and show us how to rise above Christ's displeasure of this church age.

We will look to the Apostle Paul to instruct us on how to begin our study. He will lead us to the Old Testament to seek answers regarding the doctrines of redemption and service. This may surprise some as one might naturally expect Paul to lead us to the New Testament for direction. However, it is in the Old Testament that God revealed His doctrines for redemption and service. At the time of the Exodus, the Church was still a hidden mystery.

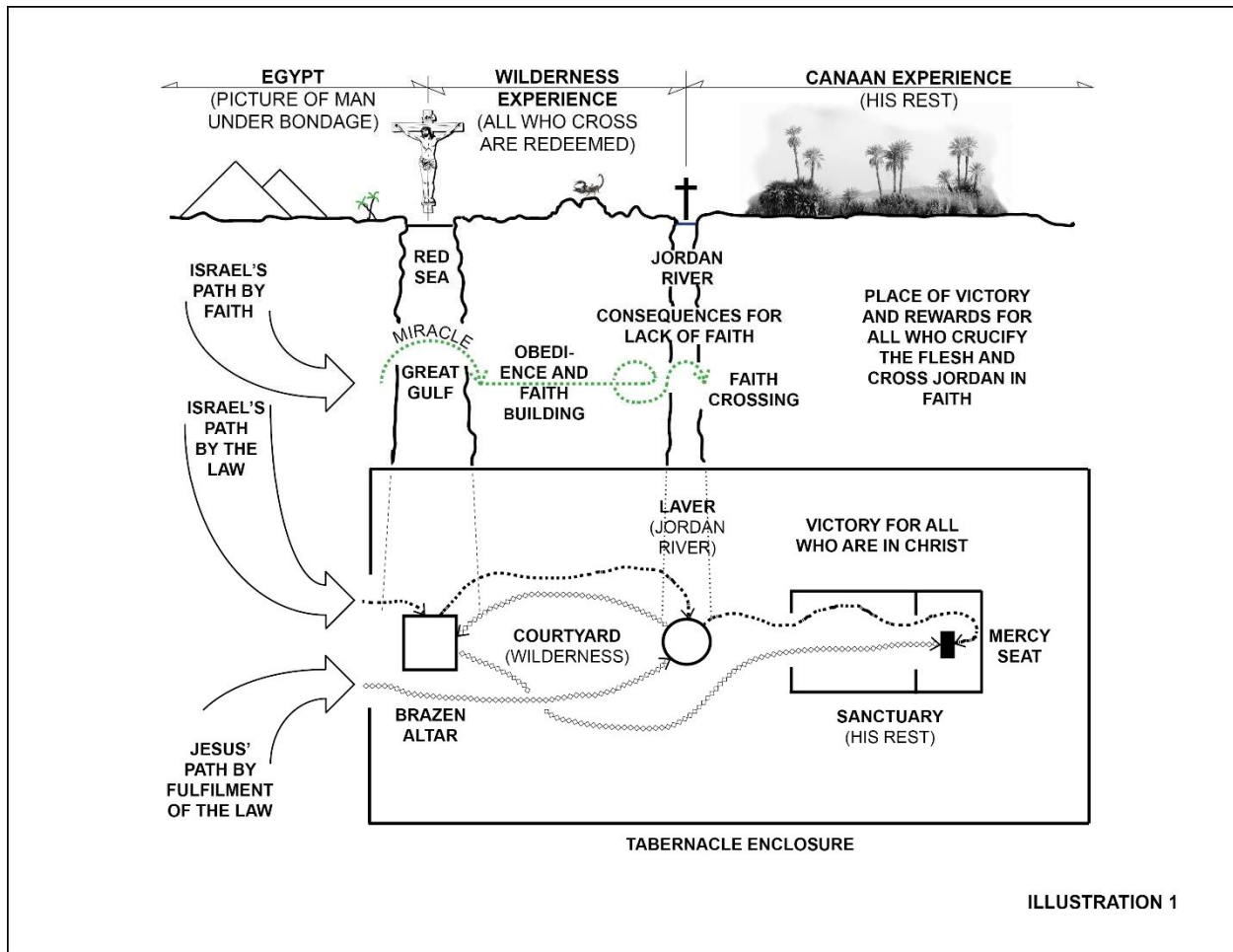
Conventional wisdom seems to believe that since Jesus' ministry fulfilled the Jewish Law, nothing in the Old Testament is now relevant. Consequently, Christians tend to direct their Bible study to the New Testament. We generally deem the Old Testament inconsequential and too difficult to understand. However, without an understanding of Old Testament Law, types and prophecy, there is no understanding of the New Testament or God's doctrines for His church. The apostle Paul understood this and gave us an apparent overlooked instruction to the church.

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things happened unto them (Israel's wilderness journey) for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon the end of the ages are come.

Paul is telling us that we must look to Israel's experience in the wilderness for an understanding of God's plan for man's redemption and service. Paul knew this truth because he was an expert in the Law and the Books of Moses. As a devout Pharisee, Saul sought salvation by keeping the Law. Whereas, a converted Paul realized redemption and service were only through faith in Jesus Christ. He understood that Israel's tests of faith and rituals of the Law veiled God's pathway for humanity's salvation. Christ's Earthly ministry of fulfillment later confirmed God's pathway to salvation as revealed through Israel's wilderness journey. Paul emphatically tells us the only way that we can understand this is by looking to Israel's wilderness experience. Therefore, that is where we will go to begin this journey through the scriptures. Always remember, Paul was the interpreter of **Old Testament shadows** and **types**. We can learn from these shadows and types how the living God operates His Church in the New Testament.¹¹

A ROADMAP FOR OUR JOURNEY



Understanding the entire plan of salvation (redemption and service), when scattered throughout the Bible, appears a daunting, impossible task. When I conceived this illustration, I had no idea why God cloaked such an important doctrine in so many places. I had no idea why He made understanding such an essential doctrine so complex. I can only surmise that God hid the complete understanding until the latter days for which purpose only He knows.

God's entire plan is not complex. He made the path to redemption easy and simple. Redemption to eternal life and an eternal place in God's family is simple as accepting Christ as Lord and savior. However, finding and understanding God's pathway for His redeemed seems missing from today's doctrines and apparently lost in translation. Consequently, the church has deteriorated to the point of Christ's rebuke.

Presenting God's pathway to salvation for this church age was a complicated task. This is because God revealed His plan through complementary but differing views of the same story. Therefore, all views had to mesh together to understand the complete plan God put forth. Yes, we must fit all the pieces of the puzzle to see the entire picture. It is apparently because of this complexity that so many have misunderstood and misrepresented God's plan for His redeemed. I first became aware of God's plan for redemption and service at mid-life. The problem was I did not know how to explain it in a simple manner so anyone could understand. After comprehending

God's plan, I was under conviction to document and share it. Unfortunately, every time I tried, I failed. I could not find a way to explain the story in a rational way. However, as I watched the church and our nation morally deteriorate, I realized the urgent need for bringing this manuscript to the church. It was at this time, God impressed me that the time for presentation was now. So, once again I attempted to explain God's plan in writing. Immediately, the Holy Spirit lifted the veil from my eyes and showed me how simple it would be.

The old saying "to see is to believe" holds true. When applying this axiom to understanding God's plans, the incomprehensible becomes understandable. The key to divulging this study was with the use of illustrations. When shown as visual aids, one can comprehend what is so difficult to see by merely reading the scriptural accounts. This manuscript contains several illustrations and pictures to aid comprehension of the message presented. As we proceed through the study, illustrations will accompany most chapters. Spend time to study these illustrations. They will greatly enhance your comprehension of these otherwise difficult-to-comprehend doctrines.

Illustration 1 will kick-off our endeavor. This is a simple but comprehensive overall picture of the plan of salvation as revealed through Israel. It is simply three ways of telling the same story from a different perspective. While this illustration seems simple, it took many years to conceive it.

The illustration depicts Israel's forty-year journey from Egypt-to-Canaan. You will note their journey consists of three distinct experiences: the Egypt Experience, the Wilderness experience, and the Canaan experience. Each part of the journey mirrors a Christian's journey.

While Israel toiled along their journey from Egypt to the Promised Land, a corresponding but unknown (to them) parallel journey transpired. This journey was through a portable temple of worship that God gave Israel in the wilderness, the Tabernacle. Note that the outline of the Tabernacle covers the same span as Israel's journey. That is because God is telling the same story, only from a different perspective. While the physical part of the journey to Canaan was a view of redemption taught through FAITH, the corresponding journey through the Tabernacle was a picture of salvation as mirrored through the LAW. Every major component of redemption revealed in the wilderness journey had a counterpart in the Tabernacle.

Both the first and second accounts of the plan for humanity's salvation point to a future third revelation of God's plan that ratifies the validity of the previous two components. The third account (at the bottom of the illustration) points to a future event. Here, Christ duplicates Israel's complete wilderness experience by taking a 3.5 years journey through the Tabernacle as the High Priest completing God's plan for the redemption for humanity.

This Illustration is merely an overview of the total story. It will take additional illustrations to present all the pieces of this seemingly convoluted puzzle. However, the rewards will be great. We will start in Egypt and end when our Lord and Savior presents His blood on the Mercy Seat in Heaven, thus completing the plan revealed through Israel in their wilderness experiences. If things start to get confusing, always come back to this Illustration. This is God's plan in its simplest form. It is the complete diagram of the plan of salvation.

While Illustration 1 portrays salvation in its simplest form, I always considered it strange that God revealed His plan in such a piecemeal manner. Why in three complementary ways? Then, one day while reading scripture, the answer became obvious. The revelation had to be in accordance with the Laws that He gave Israel.

Deuteronomy 17:6

*At the mouth of two witnesses, or **three witnesses**, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.*

Deuteronomy 19:15

*One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of **three witnesses**, shall the matter be established.*

Matthew 18:16

*But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or **three witnesses** every word may be established.*

2 Corinthians 13:1

*This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or **three witnesses** shall every word be established.*

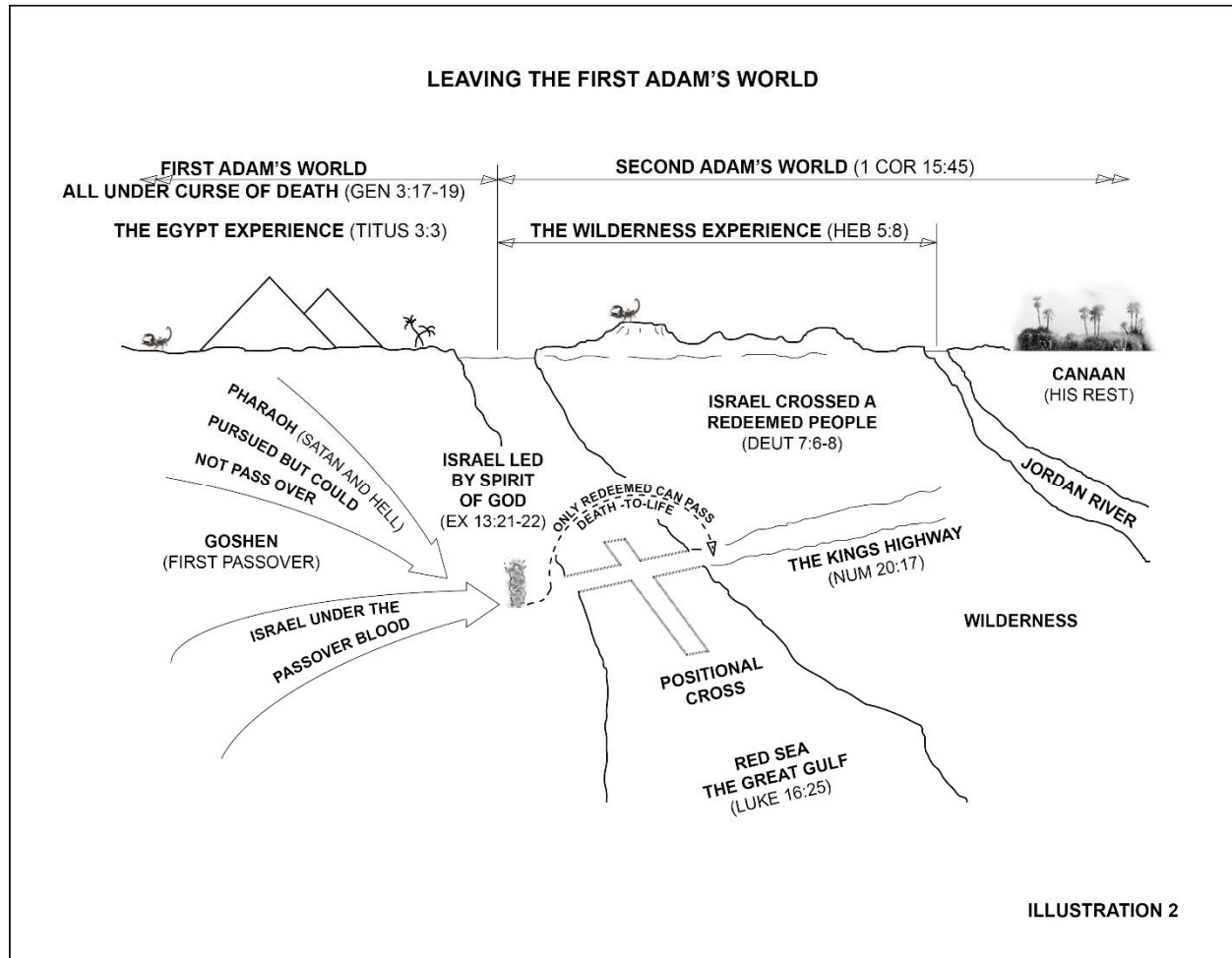
The Law itself proclaimed the answer to this mystery. The penalty of sin is death. To avoid the death sentence, two or three witnesses must testify in favor for the accused person. To remove all doubt, God gave three witnesses to validate His plan for the redemption of humanity to remove the death penalty.

While God has validated His plan through collaborating witnesses, be aware that you are about to enter a change in the basic assumptions of your core beliefs (a paradigm shift). You will read things that inspire yet challenge fundamental beliefs. Some will refuse to accept or believe. This is the problem with overcoming deep-rooted doctrines. But this is your challenge. Read the whole manuscript. See how God confirms everything. Then, go back and read Paul's letters once again. This time you will see his letters in a different light. You will see that he was instructing the church on the same things revealed herein. We were simply too indoctrinated in blindness to understand his instructions and warnings.

THE FIRST ADAM'S WORLD: The Egypt Experience

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.



If Israel's wilderness journey was an important example for us to follow, why was it necessary? Humanity's fall from grace provides the answer. God created man for His glory and pleasure.¹ Made in God's image, man was sinless and unique among all God's creations (Genesis 1:27). As such, God could be in Adam's presence and instruct him (Genesis 1:28). When Adam sinned by eating the forbidden fruit, he severed the fellowship bond with God. Since God is holy, He cannot tolerate sin (Habakkuk 1:13). Adam's sin created an impenetrable barrier between man and his creator. Adam's sin forfeited the gift of everlasting life for humanity (Genesis 2:17, Romans 6:23).

An excellent summation of man's falls from grace appeared in a 1994 "Life and Light" newsletter.²

"...the fall of our first parents (Adam and Eve) introduced conflict, suffering and death into the human scene. They lost the supernatural life of grace that made them children of God, and were reduced from a state of friendship with God to one of enmity with God. Not only could mankind do nothing, of itself, to regain the gifts that were lost, but heaven was closed to the human race.

In addition, our first parents incurred for mankind an infinite debt of punishment for which man was utterly helpless to make reparation.Had Adam not sinned, all the gifts he enjoyed before the fall would have been inherited by their descendants?"

The consequences of Adam's sin on humanity fostered a wicked and godless race of people. Made in God's image, man no longer shared a God-like attribute: a sinless nature. As such, it grieved God that He made man.

Genesis 6:6-7

⁶And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

⁷And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.

Taken at face value, this verse appears to indicate that God may deal with man as with the fallen angels (Jude 1:6). However, this was never His desire. Made in His image, God loved His human creation. He simply declared to destroy a wicked world. However, He could not destroy all humanity because of a promise made when Adam sinned.

Genesis 3:15

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

At the onset of sin, God immediately issued this pledge to restore man to a state of grace through a promised redeemer. The Light and Life newsletter quoted above also gave an excellent paraphrased interpretation of this scripture.²

"Since you have made use of a woman to lead mankind into sin, I will make use of a woman to bring about the redemption of mankind. The woman I will choose and prepare, inferior to you by nature, will be superior in grace and glory to what you were before your fall, and more powerful than you and all your rebellious followers. Never for a moment will you be able to seduce her as you did Eve, or have dominion over her. With the power of her divine offspring (her "seed") she will crush your head. She will be My instrument in your humiliating defeat, and your eternal shame and confusion."

Genesis 6:7 promised to destroy wicked man and Genesis 3:15 promised to provide a pathway for redemption. God accomplished both through Noah's flood (Genesis 7:1-15). Here, God saved a righteous remnant as the bloodline for the Promised One to come. However, man could not return inside God's protective veil of righteousness until resolution of the sin issue and its penalty. So, God mapped the pathway that man must follow for redemption and service. Then, through Israel, He disclosed the pathway through His Son to redemption.

STARTING OUR QUEST FOR UNDERSTANDING

The Apostle Paul tells us in scripture that there are two Adams.

1 Corinthians 15:45-47

⁴⁵And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. ⁴⁶Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. ⁴⁷The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

Referring to Illustration 2, you will note that the two Adam's divide Israel's spiritual world. The First Adam's World represents man living under the curse of Adam's sin and under the domain of Satan. The Second Adam's World represents a redeemed humanity living under the domain of Christ.³

We will start our quest for understanding God's plan for salvation in the First Adam's World. In type, ancient Egypt represented the world under the curse of Adam's sin. This afflicted place reflected a picture of life resulting from man's fall from grace. Here, a race lived in bondage as slaves with no hope of escape. Their fate was to serve their masters by the sweat of their brows. Their only reward was death.

Genesis 3:17-19

¹⁷ And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; ¹⁸ Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; ¹⁹ In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

We all enter the First Adam's World at birth, and we all enter lost.

Romans 5:18

Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.

All born into this world have a sinful nature.

Psalms 51:5

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Titus 3:3

For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

Satan rules this First Adam's World. He will do everything in his power to keep man blinded, lost, and under his control. The Apostle Paul confirmed this.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4

*³But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: ⁴In whom the **god of this world (Satan)** hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

We can see that Pharaoh was a type of Satan. He was ruler of this world. And just like Satan, he held God's elect in bondage and under his control. Just as Satan is god of our world, the Egyptians worshiped Pharaoh as god of their (First Adam's) world. Like Satan, Pharaoh tried to destroy God's elect. He held the power of life and death in his hands, and his will and rule were absolute.

All that live in bondage in this world have no physical way to escape. But, remember that God is revealing His plan of salvation through Israel's experiences. Therefore, God must provide a way to redeem Israel from the First Adam's World.

PREPARATION FOR REDEMPTION

It is important to note that God does not give us the Exodus story for our literary enjoyment. If He let Israel toil in slavery and misery for four hundred years (Genesis 15:13), He must have had a good reason. And, He did. He needed Israel's experiences in bondage for examples to demonstrate the utter hopelessness of life under Adam's curse. He knew that only through these continuous severe hardships and miseries would Israel seek reconciliation. God needed Israel to know they had no hope apart from Him. Only then could He deliver them from the curse of Adam's sin to a redeemed presence in the Second Adam's World. Then, after four hundred years of bondage, Israel cried unto God for deliverance; and God heard their prayers. When broken to hopelessness, Israel was ready for the Master's hand.

Judges 3:9

And when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer ...

The first hint of God's pathway to redemption was at hand. God was going to deliver His people from the First Adam's World. This begs the question, "who could God trust to deliver His people from a place with no way of escape?" We all know that God chose Moses as the deliverer. However, this was true only in a physical sense. You see, **God could use Moses as His deliverer only because He was the personification of Christ in TYPE!** Only Christ can lead us from the bondage of the First Adam's (Satan's) World to redemption in the Second Adam's (Christ's) World. Moses was the spiritual embodiment of Christ.

- Like Christ, Moses gave up a kingdom to suffer with his people.
- Like Christ, Moses led His people out of bondage.
- Like Christ, when a child, he was under the sentence of death.
- Like Christ, Moses was an Israelite.
- Like Christ, God called Moses out of Egypt.
- Like Christ, Moses was a mediator between God and man.
- Like Christ, Moses was born under an oppressive ruler.
- Like Christ, Moses took a gentile bride (referring to the Church, Christ's bride).

As we can see, Moses was merely Christ's proxy in delivering Israel.

FIRST REVELATION OF GOD'S PLAN

We have all read and heard the story of Moses and Israel's Exodus journey since our earliest days in Sunday school. It is such a familiar story that most no longer question the purpose or message. This is the root of indoctrination and complacency. When we think we already know the interpretation of a passage of scripture or associated doctrine, we cease seeking new enlightenment. We must accept the fact that God does not waste Bible space with frivolous stories. Every story or account has profound meaning. It is up to us to seek what God is trying to show us through study and prayer. This is how we grow in the Word and faith. No other story in the Bible has more profound meaning than the Exodus story. Recently, a pastor friend mentioned in a sermon *"sometimes a story is so familiar that we miss all the blessings that it contains."* Surely, Israel's wilderness journey qualifies as the "poster child" for that statement.

Israel's Exodus experience began when Moses returned from exile to Egypt. As God's Earthly embodiment of Christ, he unleashed wrath on the Egyptians through ten plagues (Exodus 7:14 through Exodus 12:13). While each plague had a different purpose and meaning, here, we are only concerned with one, the tenth and last, death of the first-born.

Exodus 11:4

And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts.

Through this plague, God laid the cornerstone of His plan for humanity's redemption that was to follow.

Exodus 12:3-13

³*Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house:* ⁴*And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb.* ⁵*Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats:* ⁶*And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.* ⁷*And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.* ⁸*And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.* ⁹*Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.* ¹⁰*And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.* ¹¹*And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover.* ¹²*Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD.* ¹³*And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.*

Simply stated, the Passover was the first solid clue that God gave for redeeming humanity. God said (paraphrased), "*kill the substitute, get behind the blood; and I will not execute the penalty of sin, death.*" All who believed Moses applied the blood. The pathway out of bondage was (and is) THE BLOOD of a substitute (Christ).

John tells us the same thing two thousand years later, only stated differently.

John 5:24

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

After the tenth plague, Pharaoh (Satan) relented to God's power and released Israel from bondage. So, approximately 603,550 aged twenty and up, along with their families and livestock (Numbers 1:46 and Exodus 12:37-38), departed their homes in Goshen (Genesis 45:10) for the promise

of freedom and a new beginning in the Promised Land (Genesis 12:7). With slavery behind them, they headed into the wilderness.

THE MARCH TO REDEMPTION

The journey from Goshen toward freedom was dangerous because they were still within Egypt (the First Adam's World) and the domain of Pharaoh (Satan). It is not in Pharaoh's (Satan's) nature to give up his relentless pursuit of those he claims as his own. So, God provided Israel protection as they fled bondage. The Lord appeared in a cloud of smoke and fire to lead them by night and day.

Exodus 13:17-18, 20-22

¹⁷ *And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: ¹⁸ But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt. ²⁰ And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness. ²¹ And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: ²² He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.*

Surprisingly, the Lord did not lead Israel in the direction they expected. The shortest route to Canaan was normally a mere eleven days (Deuteronomy 1:2). Instead, God led them on a route farther from Canaan into the wilderness.

Exodus 14:1-4

¹ *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, ² Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baalzephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea. ³ For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in. ⁴ And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I *am* the LORD. And they did so.*

The pillar of fire and smoke led Israel to an area near the Red Sea and instructed them to camp. Here, freedom was in sight but out of reach. A great, impassable gulf stood before them and a hardened Pharaoh behind them. To escape from Egypt (the First Adam's World) to freedom (redemption in the Second Adam's World) would require a miracle of epic scale.

THE IMPASSABLE GULF BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH

The dilemma Israel faced was analogous to the Bible story of the rich man and Lazarus.

Luke 16:26

And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

Between heaven and hell, there is no bridge. Passage from one to the other is impossible. Therefore, total transposition from the First Adam's World to the Second Adam's World was impossible. An impassible great gulf blocked the way. As Israel faced this dilemma, their worst fear arrived.

Exodus 14:9-10

⁹But the Egyptians pursued after them, all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen, and his army, and overtook them encamping by the sea, beside Pihahiroth, before Baalzephon.

¹⁰And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD.

Here, we start to see the next demonstration in God's redemptive work. Israel is on the cusp of transposition to the Second Adam's World. In other words, Israel is about to pass from death-to-life, from the bondage of Satan to the redemption of Christ. Only one way can accomplish this: in type, "redemption" in the same manner as we are today. The Holy Spirit must lead them to the cross of Calvary and then transpose them across the impassable gulf separating heaven and hell by the blood of Christ. There is no other path to redemption! Therefore, we must look beyond Moses' Exodus narrative to see God's underlying picture of redemption.

Looking to the Red Sea crossing, the process for redemption is there for all to see. First, the Holy Spirit must quicken the lost. And, that is exactly what He did. The pillar of smoke and fire leading Israel was none other than the Holy Spirit. Only the Holy Spirit quickens us to redemption. L. R. Shelton, Jr. provided a good explanation of the role of the Holy Spirit in salvation.⁴

"THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SALVATION IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY to us if we are ever to be saved. We read in John 6:63: 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. Listen again! '...the FLESH PROFITETH NOTHING.' The flesh has no part in the work of God. Listen to Jn. 3:6 where our Lord tells about the New Birth: 'that which is born of the flesh is flesh...' We must be born again by the instrument of the Word in the hands of the Holy Spirit. All fleshly activities amount to nothing where the regeneration of dead sinners is concerned. Neither the logical arguments advanced by the MIND, nor the hypnotic powers brought to bear upon the will, nor touching appeals made to the EMOTIONS, nor beautiful music and hearty singing to catch the EAR, nor sensuous trappings to draw the EYE are of the slightest avail in stirring DEAD SINNERS. It is not the choir, nor soloist, nor the preacher, but the SPIRIT that quickens."

Just as the Holy Spirit works today, He worked in the same manner with Israel. He did His part in redemption by leading them to the great gulf separating the worlds of Satan and Christ. Then, He demonstrated a further work in redemption. As the satanic forces of pharaoh drew near, the Holy Spirit (in a cloud) turned to provide a shield of protection for Israel. So does the Holy Spirit protect those seeking Christ.⁵

Exodus

14:19-20

¹⁹And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: ²⁰And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.

As Israel stood on the shore of the Red Sea, the Holy Spirit shielded and protected Israel until the miracle of redemption was complete. This completed the role of the Holy Spirit in the redemption process.

The time to cross the great gulf had arrived.⁶ God commanded Moses to open a miracle passage between the First and Second Adam's Worlds: a pathway from death-to-life.

Exodus 14:16

But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

Exodus 14:21

*And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong **EAST** wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.*

Here, we find another one of those “sometimes a story is so familiar that we miss all the blessings that it contains” that we talked about earlier. Moses could only perform the miracle of providing a passage between two worlds because he was Christ’s proxy. In the background, Christ performed the miracle; and God provided the confirmation: He parted the sea with an EAST wind (Christ).

Ezekiel 43:2

*And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the **EAST**: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.*

Matthew 24:27

For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

The prevailing winds on mother Earth are from the west. This is because of Earth’s east-to-west rotation. God sent the winds from the east to demonstrate an undisputed work of the Lord Jesus.

Scripture provides further confirmation that the Lord Jesus opened the Red Sea passage. Moses tells us that it was not his rod that parted the sea but the Lord’s.

Deuteronomy 9:29

*Yet they are thy people and thine inheritance, which **thou broughtest out by thy mighty power and by thy stretched out arm.***

Since Moses was a type of Christ and His earthly proxy, Moses outstretched arms to open the sea were those of Christ.

THE MIRACLE OF REDEMPTION

As Moses (Christ) stood on the shore of the Red Sea with outstretched arms, he tells Israel that the miracle of the redemption process is about to unfold. The crossing would reveal how God would redeem man from the penalty of sin.

Exodus 14:13

*And Moses (Christ) said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and **see the salvation of the LORD**, which he will shew to you today: for the Egyptians (First Adam’s World) whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever.*



Christ opened the great gulf and God's people stood ready for redemption. However, crossing required a supernatural bridge to pass from death-to-life. Since the scriptures tell us Israel crossed a redeemed people, we know that bridge was Christ. Redemption can only come through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross.

Deuteronomy 7:6-8

*⁶For thou art an holy people to the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God has chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people on the face of the Earth. ⁷The Lord did not set His love on you or choose you, because you were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people. ⁸But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which He has sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and **REDEEMED you out of the house of bondage**, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.*

Israel, in type, crossed the Great Gulf by way of a bridge spanned by the cross of Calvary (see Illustration 2). Redemption into God's family is only possible by way of the cross. Israel met all the criteria for redemption and crossed a redeemed people. Covered by the blood of Christ (the Passover Lamb), they transposed from death-to-life by way of the cross of Calvary. As you can see, in type, God redeemed Israel in the same manner we are today.

Colossians

1:12-14

¹² Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: ¹³ Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: ¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

A REVELATION OF IMMENSE MAGNITUDE

Pharaoh (Satan) and the hordes of hell tried to follow and destroy God's elect, but they could not. The path to redemption is narrow and crossed only by those behind the blood of a substitute. Hell (Satan) cannot follow:

Exodus 14:23-28

²³And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. ²⁴And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, ²⁵And took off their chariot wheels, that they drove them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians. ²⁶And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. ²⁷And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. ²⁸And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them.

Once across the Red Sea, Israel belonged to God. Now, nothing in the First Adam's World had dominion over them. After God's great miracle of redemption, the GREAT GULF between the two worlds returned....*"so that they who would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence."*

In other words, once transposed, one cannot return to Satan's domain and authority. What God has purchased (redeemed) belongs to him, ETERNALLY! There is no going back

Israel's experience of redemption was the perfect picture of the believer's redemption. As shown on Illustration 2, the bridge across the great gulf that separates the First Adam's World from the Second Adam's is symbolic of the cross of Calvary. Only the Holy Spirit can lead us to a decision of redemption. Note, however, that God's Spirit did not cross the Red Sea in front of Israel. God's Spirit only leads us to conviction. The decision to trust God's sacrifice of His Son is entirely by faith. Like Israel, we can only cross behind the blood of the Lamb (Jesus Christ). The blood is our passport to a new world. When we accept the death of our substitute and apply His blood, God miraculously transposes us across the impassable great gulf separating the two worlds. Once we come by way of the cross, God redeems us; and we belong to Him. We have passed from death-unto-life. We are joint heirs with Christ and have a permanent position in God's family. Nothing in the First Adam's World will ever again have dominion over us. Because Christ died in our place, He paid our death penalty.

John 5:24

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is **passed from death unto life**.*

Romans 8:16-17

¹⁶ The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: ¹⁷ And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

John 10:27-30

²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: ²⁸ And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. ³⁰ I and my Father are one.

In the Book of 1 Corinthians, the Apostle Paul confirmed that the miracle crossing was a representation of redemption and baptism.

1 Corinthians 10:1-4

¹ Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; ² And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; ³ And did all eat the same spiritual meat; ⁴ And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

Contributed by Michael White, an ordained minister in Chattanooga, Tennessee:

"Passing through the Red Sea was a metaphor for both redemption and baptism. In the Greek, water BAPTISM always means full emersion. The meaning morphed only to water sprinkles for "dead bed baptisms" in 757 AD. Paul argues that the walls of water, above the heads of the Israelites on both sides during passage through the Red Sea and the mist of the Holy Spirit,

above, was a metaphor for water baptism by full emersion. Paul says that just as God redeemed Israel when baptized into Moses, so are we redeemed when baptized into Christ."

Other scripture also supports the metaphor of baptism during the Red Sea crossings. Spirit, water, and blood, all present in the crossing, support Mr. White's conclusions.

1 John 5:8

And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Our journey has just begun. We have crossed the great gulf, redeemed, but standing in a vast wilderness. We are in the same position as a newly born-again Christian, looking for guidance of where to go next. Here is where the church teaching on Christian service fails. But as you will discover, we have just made baby steps in the journey God has set before His redeemed. We will discover a journey filled with blessings and perils, but the Holy Spirit will be with us every step of the way.

Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

However, be aware that God requires every Christian to take this journey. Only by completing the journey can you discover the riches of redemption and the power offered to those who abide in Christ. This missing element in today's concept of salvation manifests itself in Christ's letter of rebuke to this church age. Thus, the warnings:

Hebrews 10:38

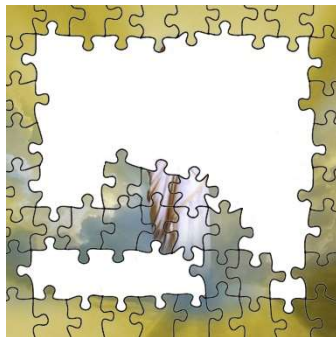
The just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Romans 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.



Philippians 2:12

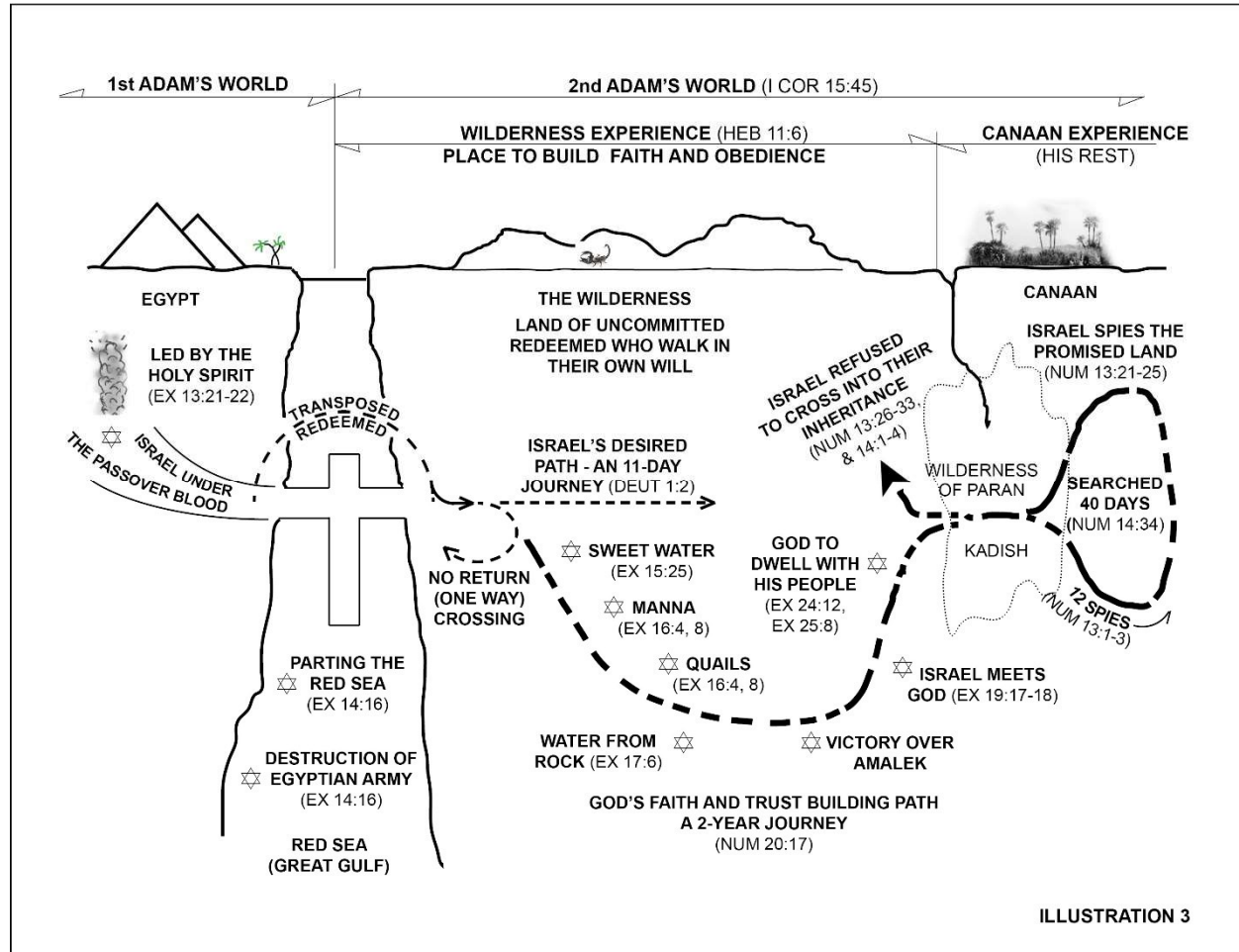
*Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*** As this part of our journey closes, we have discovered additional puzzle pieces helping us discover more of God's picture of salvation. We have discovered the Holy Spirit's role in redemption. We have discovered that redemption is through the blood and death of a substitute on the cross of Calvary. We have discovered that redemption is eternal and never lost.

These newfound pieces of the plan of salvation now fit into the puzzle and the picture is starting to be more revealing. Let us now continue our journey to discover more of God's treasures.

THE SECOND ADAM'S WORLD: The Wilderness Experience, A Faith Walk

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the end of the world are come.



A redeemed people now stood in the Second Adam's World, separated and isolated from the First Adam's World by an impassable great gulf, the Red Sea. Christ transposed Israel from death-unto-life, freeing them from the bondage of the First Adam's World. They now belonged to God. There is no going back. The miracle bridge that connected the two worlds no longer existed. Led by the Holy Spirit, there is now only one way to go, forward into the wilderness. At this point, Israel understood only five things about the journey before them:

- They were going to the land promised to the descendants of Abraham.
- They were standing on the cusp of a vast, inhospitable wilderness.
- Moses will lead them.
- The column of smoke and fire (the Holy Spirit) will guide their way.
- The trip should take about two weeks.

Deuteronomy 1:2

It is eleven days journey from Horeb by the way of Mount Seir unto Kadesh-Barnea.

Keep in mind that God plans to reveal His plan of salvation through Israel's wilderness experiences. So, He will take Israel on a journey of discovery to teach them faith, trust, and obedience while revealing His Son as the architect of salvation. Therefore, this teaching journey will take much longer than Israel can possibly envision. As they should have realized, the camp moved only when the Cloud moved.

God has mapped a path for Israel to follow to reach the Promised Land. The destination God will lead Israel is, to their belief, Canaan. To God and His purpose, however, it is also a spiritual destination the writer of Hebrews calls HIS REST.

Hebrews 4:9-11

⁹There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. ¹⁰For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. ¹¹Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

In all my years of attending church, I have never heard a pastor, preacher, nor a teacher teach on the REST that the Apostle Paul describes. Later, however, the subject will receive a great deal of attention. Here, we are still in our wilderness walk. When we reach that destination, we will learn a great deal about this place. Mostly, it is a spiritual place of residence of the redeemed. Those who dwell here walk in the light of the Holy Spirit sharing the fruits of the Spirit. They are God's ambassadors exercising obedience to His Earthly will. It is the place of earning rewards for service to God. In simple terms, His Rest means turning everything over to God and rest in the assurance that He will supply all the needs of life.

THE KING'S HIGHWAY

While focused on Israel, we must not lose sight that Israel's redemption experience mimics those of a born-again believer. When redeemed, just like Israel, we start in a wilderness without a road map to follow. However, God would never redeem us and expect us to arrive at a destination without directions. Therefore, just like Israel, He sets a path for us to follow. It is analogous to what the scriptures call the King's Highway.

Numbers 20:17

Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country: we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells: we will go by the king's high way, we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders.

We do not choose our own path along this journey of faith building after redemption. We must follow the path God has set before us. Just as the scripture says, we cannot deviate to the right or left. It is only by following the path God has chosen that we can have the faith building experiences we will need to enter His Rest. For Israel, there are many obstacles ahead and an occupied land to conquer. Israel will need to build complete faith, trust, and obedience in God along this journey. How do we recognize the path to follow? We must follow Israel's example. We must trust God's Holy Spirit to lead our way forward. We will not make this journey alone.

Ephesians 1:13-14

¹³*In whom ye also trusted, after ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.*

Romans 8:14

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

We have the promise of the Holy Spirit. However, the key to accepting His guidance along God's path of discovery is prayer, reading the Bible, and studying the scriptures.

Psalms 119:105

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

THE FAITH WALK ¹

After only a short time in the wilderness, as we will shortly see, Israel was already irritated, thirsty, and desired to return to Egypt. Not only were they going in the wrong direction to Canaan, they were heading into a vast wilderness. It surely became apparent that the journey perceived to take about two weeks would take much longer. God was leading them on a path to His destination, not on the path they would have chosen.

God promised Israel Canaan as their ultimate destination. However, there was a catch. The land belonged to other peoples. If they wanted to possess the promise, they would have to fight for it. Therefore, God set Israel on a long journey with many faith and trust building tests to teach the obedience they would need to possess their inheritance.

We will now discuss these faith, trust, and obedience-building experiences of Israel. Be very observant. Remember what Paul told the Corinthians, *"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon the end of the ages are come."* Israel's experiences mimic the Christian experience. The faith building experiences that Israel is about to embark upon are just like a new Christian's faith and trust building experiences. For a Christian to do God's will and serve Him as He desires, the new convert must learn faith and trust. When a person is redeemed, God lays out teaching experiences along a pathway led by the Holy Spirit. Like Israel, God leads every new Christian to a destination that will require faith and trust to serve as His earthly ambassadors.

THE FAITH BUILDING JOURNEY BEGINS



It is time to leave the Red Sea and head into the wilderness (the adjacent image is an actual photo of the Sinai wilderness). It is a sand and rock, desert-like place with few trees, scarce water, and little grass for their flocks.² God knows that what they are about to experience and encounter will be beyond their physical limitations and endurance. But they were not starting the journey unarmed with no faith. They had already witnessed more power of God than we will see in a lifetime. God had previously demonstrated His power and might via the ten plagues inflicted upon the Egyptians. Through these, God de-

feated all ten major Egyptian gods that Egyptians perceived to supply all their physical and spiritual needs.³ Conversely, along Israel's wilderness journey, God will provide ten miracles to

demonstrate that He alone provides every physical and spiritual source of need for Israel. Now, standing on the far shore of the Red Sea, Israel had already witnessed three faith-building miracles.

THE FIRST THREE MIRACLES

- The presence of the Holy Spirit (column of smoke and fire), **demonstrated God's willingness and ability to lead and direct His elect.**
- The parting of the Red Sea **demonstrated Christ's power to transpose us from death-to-life (redeem).**
- The destruction of the Egyptian Army **demonstrated victory over the First Adam's World. Nothing in Satan's realm had any more dominion over us. We now belonged to the Second Adam. For Israel, it demonstrated that God had truly delivered and redeemed them from bondage.**

Each miracle had a different purpose to demonstrate God's ability to supply all Israel's physical and spiritual needs. Now, seven additional miracles awaited Israel along the pathway through the wilderness to the Promised Land. Collectively, they teach faith, trust, and obedience for the test that they must face to enter Canaan. Each lesson is also an instruction to a newly redeemed Christian. Like Israel, they must follow the Holy Spirit's leadership to build faith and trust to be obedient to God's will. A Christian will need this level of spiritual maturity to enter the place of service God has prepared for His redeemed.

THE FOURTH MIRACLE

With all the miracles from Egypt to the Red Sea crossing fresh in their minds, Israel appeared ready to step out in faith. They sang praises unto the Lord and testified there was nothing He cannot do.

Exodus 15: 1-3

¹Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. ²The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. ³The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name.

It took only three days for Israel to forget all about what God had done and can do.

Exodus 15:22-24

²²So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. ²³And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah. ²⁴And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?

Here, we have a redeemed people that really know nothing about God, His ways, or what He is trying to accomplish. Redeemed from bondage and headed for the land of promise, their hearts and minds were still on the worldly comforts of Egypt. The place God selected for faith building did not meet with their approval or expectations. No drinkable water! The rejoicing stopped; the complaining and murmuring began. After ten miracles before the Exodus and three miracles afterwards, the collective miracles did not instill any faith or trust in God. Israel mimicked what

we call, today, “wilderness Christians:” people who walk in the flesh, their own will, and not in faith.

Exodus 15:25

“..and the Lord showed him (Moses) a tree, which when he cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet.”

In the space of less than a week after crossing the Red Sea, God revealed His fourth faith and trust-building miracle: He made drinkable water from polluted water. One would think this latest miracle would bolster Israel’s faith that God could provide all their needs. But that was not to be. You see, these are a stiff-necked people. **Israel could not understand that God gave them drinkable water to demonstrate that he could provide an essential element of life where none existed.**

Exodus 32:9

And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff necked people:

THE FIFTH MIRACLE

Two months into the journey, Israel encountered the fifth test of faith and trust building.

Exodus 16:2-3

²And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³And the children of Israel said unto them, would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

NO FOOD! ⁴ Forgetting and ignoring the miracles they had witnessed, Israel again showed they had no faith in God or His power. This worldly, faithless people wanted to go back home to Egypt. They had not signed-on for these hardships. They still had not learned any lesson God was teaching. But, keep one important fact in mind. Although they would have returned to Egypt, they could not. God closed the miracle bridge across the great gulf that separated the First and Second Adam’s worlds. Those in Egypt could not follow. Those in the wilderness could not return. A redeemed Israel now belonged to God. The only direction was forward, along God’s chosen pathway.

In the previous miracle, God gave them drinkable water to demonstrate that He could provide an essential element of life, all they needed where none existed. **Now, He demonstrated that He could provide another essential element of life: food, all they needed where none existed.**

Exodus 16:4

Then said the Lord unto Moses, behold, I will rain bread (manna) from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain amount every day that I might test them, whether they shall walk in my law or not.

THE SIXTH MIRACLE

This miracle appears to be the same as the last, food. The miracle is similar in purpose; but the message is different. God provided manna for their everyday sustenance, but Israel complained because they tired of eating only manna and wanted meat. Their complaints irritated God as meat was not required or needed for their everyday sustenance. But a disappointed God relented

and gave them quail to eat. This action tells us more about the character of God in dealing with His redeemed. God does not want His redeemed to complain about their circumstance but petition Him in faith for wants other than their needs. **Here, He confirmed that not only can He provide for our every need, for those of faith, He is ready to supply life more abundantly.**

Numbers 11:31-32

³¹ *And there went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the sea, and let them fall by the camp, as it were a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits high upon the face of the earth.* ³² *And the people stood up all that day, and all that night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten homers: and they spread them all abroad for themselves round about the camp.*

THE SEVENTH MIRACLE

After God fulfilled Israel's need for food and water, they traveled onward to their seventh test of faith. They reached the region of Rephidim; and this time, there was no water.

Exodus 17:3

and the people there thirsted for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, why hast thou brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst.

Again, a worldly, faithless people tested God and His patience. After all the miracles and His presence among them, they still did not believe or trust God. These redeemed people belonged to God and have an inheritance in His family. Yet, they showed no faith or trust. Have you started to make a parallel between Israel's wilderness journey and the "wilderness Christians" you may know, today?

This time God gave Israel a very special miracle. God previously provided the miracle of drinkable water from polluted water on the third day into the wilderness journey. The seventh miracle, however, provided water where none existed. Moreover, it was not for the same reason but something infinitely more important. This miracle revealed the source of salvation and faith itself, the Lord Jesus.

Exodus 17:6

Behold I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb, and thou (Moses) shall smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink.

Yes, the ROCK that Moses struck was none other than the Lord Jesus, Himself.

I Corinthians 10:4

And did all drink the same spiritual drink for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and That Rock was Christ.

This time, God gave Israel LIVING Water, a portrayal of future redemption through His Son. **By this miracle, He demonstrated the way to satisfy their spiritual thirst.**

John 4:10, 14

¹⁰ *Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living*

water. ¹⁴*But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.*

However, a worldly person does not understand spiritual things. A redeemed person does not equate to a spiritual person. Spirituality comes only through faith and trust in God. Learning to trust God is an ongoing growth process. God will not ask us to step out in faith until He has revealed His ability to provide all our needs of life.

THE EIGHTH MIRACLE

With food to eat and water to drink, the spirit of God moved and Israel followed. Along the spiritual King's Highway, the eighth test of faith and trust awaited. God had demonstrated His power to provide their essential physical and spiritual needs. Now, by this miracle, **He demonstrated that through faith, He would give them victory over any adversary that would prevent them from claiming their inheritance. It demonstrated that through faith, we could overcome any barrier in our journey through life.**

Exodus 17:8-9, 11, 13

⁸*Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. ⁹And Moses said unto Joshua, chose us out men and go out, fight with Amalek: tomorrow I will stand on top on the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. ¹¹And it came to pass when Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed. ¹³... and Joshua vanquished Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.*

With God leading the way, we are invincible. The key to this invincibility is faith that He can provide all the needs of life. We must trust the Spirit of God to lead us in the way of His protection. When we leave the righteous pathway of the Holy Spirit, we walk in our own strength and not His.

THE NINTH MIRACLE

In the third month after leaving Egypt, the Spirit of God moved and Israel followed. This time the Holy Spirit led Israel to Mount Sinai where Israel camped. At this point in Israel's Exodus journey, God has revealed eight faith and trust building miracles. Now, God would teach obedience and meet His people. On the third day after arriving, Jehovah descended on Mount Sinai so that the people could meet Him.

Exodus 19:1-11, 16

¹*In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai. ²For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount. ³And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; ⁴Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. ⁵Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: ⁶And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel. ⁷And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him. ⁸And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD. ⁹And the LORD ⁵said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee forever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the LORD. ¹⁰And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify*

them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes, ¹¹ **And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.** ¹⁶ *And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.*

Exodus 19:17-19

¹⁷ *And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount.* ¹⁸ *And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.* ¹⁹ *And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.*

What did God tell us through this miracle? **He demonstrated that we have access to Him for all our spiritual and physical needs. However, we only have access to Him through a mediator; and that mediator is Christ.** You may say Christ was not present at this appearance of God. Oh, but He was. Remember, Moses was a type of Christ and was Christ's proxy along this journey. This was the only reason Moses could stand in God's presence without dying.

What did God demonstrate to Israel through this frightful miracle? **Frightful obedience!** It is one thing to see a miracle. It is an entirely different experience to meet the author of those miracles. One can no longer attribute the miracles to natural events. It is one thing, through faith, to believe in God. It is an entirely different experience to actually meet Him. Surely, with the miracles witnessed and the fear of God in their minds, one must believe that Israel would be obedient to anything God asked.

THE TENTH MIRACLE

The tenth miracle manifested through a portable place of worship that God instructed Moses to build. The writer of Hebrews says it mimics a structure that exists in Heaven. Some believe that structure patterns God's dwelling place.

Hebrews 8:1-2

¹ *Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;* ² *A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man*

The Tabernacle was a place of worship that Israel constructed to God's exacting instructions to Moses. It was a portable building easily disassembled and reassembled. When the Holy Spirit in the cloud of smoke and fire moved, Israel disassembled the Tabernacle and the camp moved to God's next appointed location. When the Holy Spirit stopped, they reassembled the structure and made camp. The Tabernacle was the blueprint for God's revelation of the plan of salvation through His Son and Christian service. However, that is for a later discussion in another chapter. Here, we are focusing on ten miracles to prepare Israel for the faith, trust, and obedience needed to enter Canaan, the Promised Land (His Rest). What is the miracle? **God has moved to Earth to dwell with His people!**

Exodus 25:8-9

⁸ *And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.* ⁹ *According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.*

Exodus 29:45

And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the LORD their God.

This was the last of God's ten miracles to teach Israel the faith, trust, and obedience they would need to possess their inheritance. In the first eight miracles, God taught faith and trust. Through these, they witnessed that God could feed, protect, and supply all their physical and spiritual needs. **Miracles 9 and 10 were different. Their purpose was primarily to instill obedience.** In miracle nine, they met Jehovah, the author of the miracles, on Mount Sinai and witnessed His holiness and supernatural presence to instill the fear that they would need to be obedient. Now, in miracle 10, Jehovah moved to Earth to dwell among them for the same purpose. We have a good analogy in our children. When our parents are away, we test their limits. When they are home, we are obedient or face consequences. Having God live next door must have been a sobering and frightful experience. It is one thing to pray to a heavenly Father who you must accept in faith. It is entirely more sobering and real when He lives next door. How can you not step out in faith if God is standing behind you?

TEN WASTED LESSONS

Exodus 24:16-18

¹⁶ *And the glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud.* ¹⁷ *And the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.* ¹⁸ *And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.*

As Moses was away on the mount forty days, Israel reasoned that Moses was dead and committed a great sin.

Exodus 32:7-9

⁷ *And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves:* ⁸ *They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.* ⁹ *And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people:*

Exodus 32:19-20, 26-28

¹⁹ *And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount.* ²⁰ *And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it.* ²⁶ *Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the LORD'S side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.* ²⁷ *And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour.* ²⁸ *And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.*

Here, we have the ultimate example of a redeemed people living in the flesh and not the spirit. These are people redeemed by the power of God but living in their own will and pleasure. God is leading them to a destination where they cannot enter in the flesh but only in the spirit. What happens to those who refuse to conform to God's purpose for His redeemed? What happens to those who refuse to walk by faith and enter His Rest? We shall soon see.

LEAVING SINAI

Exodus 32:34-35

³⁴Therefore, now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, **mine Angel** shall go before thee: nevertheless, in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them. ³⁵And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made.

As instructed, the Holy Spirit moved toward Canaan and a shaken Israel followed. A faithless people moved toward the defining moment in their history unprepared for success and destined for failure. Without faith and trust, there can be no obedience. But the Lord will give Israel one last chance to exercise faith and possess their inheritance. In preparation, He sent Mine Angel before them in anticipation of receiving an obedient people who stepped out in faith.

Exodus 23:20-23

²⁰Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. ²¹Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. ²²But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. ²³For **mine Angel** shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off.

This Angel (Strong's reference 4397) is none other than the Lord Jesus.⁶ Appearing here, the reference to Mine Angel can be confusing. It implies that He may take over the leadership of Israel from the Holy Spirit. That is not the case. The Holy Spirit will continue to lead Israel to the brink of the Promised Land. Here, Mine Angel will go before Israel into Canaan, not alongside them. He will await them in Canaan to lead their conquest of their inheritance and take over leadership from the Holy Spirit. Later, we will meet Mine Angel, the Lord Jesus, face-to-face, in the Book of Joshua, on the west side of the Jordan River.

DECISION TIME

After two years of deprivation in an unforgiving wilderness, Israel arrived at the brink of the Promised Land. They completed their faith and trust building journey and can now look upon the beautiful, fertile land before them. However, upon arrival, a sobering reality replaced the euphoria of a dream fulfilled. An inhabited land laid before them. Those peoples would not surrender their lands without a fight. This was not what they expected. The reality of why the trip took two years of faith and trust building emerged. They would have to be obedient to God's instruction to possess the land.

With faith and trust-building lessons completed, God now would test Israel's obedience to see if they have learned trust in Him. He instructed Moses to send out spies to reconnoiter the Promised Land of inheritance.

Numbers 13:1-3

¹And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, ²Send thou men, that they may search the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel: of every tribe of their fathers shall ye send a man, everyone a ruler among them. ³And Moses by the commandment of the LORD sent them from the wilderness of Paran: all those men were heads of the children of Israel.

Numbers 13:17

And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan...

Here, we must ask ourselves why God sent spies to reconnaissance the land. He could have just directed the cloud of the Holy Spirit into the Promises Land and commanded Israel to follow. He did not. Here, the Holy Spirit stopped and went no farther. The time for Israel to step out in faith had arrived. He sent out the spies for two reasons. First, He wanted Israel to know that the land was the paradise they expected. Second, He wanted them to see that they could not possess the land without His power.

Numbers 13:26, 28-33

²⁶And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and showed them the fruit of the land. ²⁸Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. ²⁹The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan. ³⁰And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it. ³¹But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people. ³²And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. ³³And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

Two years of faith and trust-building miracles shrank to this moment in time. Israel, do you believe that God can deliver on His promise?

Numbers 14:1-4

¹And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. ²And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! ³And wherefore hath the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? Were it not better for us to return into Egypt? ⁴And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.

ISRAEL REFUSES TO POSSESS GOD'S PROMISE

Again, Israel wanted to return to the comfort and protection of Egypt. Sorry, the way back no longer exists. A great gulf now separates you from the First Adam's world. You may be a rebellious and faithless people, but God redeemed you and you forever belong to Him.

After two years of witnessing God's power in proving that He could feed, clothe, protect, and safely guide them through any danger, Israel still did not believe or trust. They were a faithless,

worldly people who relied on their own strength and not God's. Israel's lack of faith displeased God. Because of this lack of faith, they lost their reward.

Numbers 14:22-23

²² *Because all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice;*

²³ *Surely they shall not see the land which I swore unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it:*

Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Through lack of faith, Israel failed to conform to God's image. God redeemed Israel and us to be a holy people so that we can be the instruments of His Earthly ministry. Without faith, we cannot exercise God's will, which makes us useless to His needs and purpose. Only by making God first in our lives is His power manifested in us.

Ephesians 1:4

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

Israel exercised God's Laws but did not understand their meanings.

Mark 12:30

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

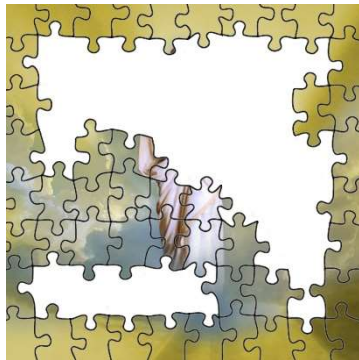
In simplicity, the sin that prevented Israel from entering the Promised Land (His Rest) was unbelief on the part of a redeemed people.

Hebrews 3:18-19

¹⁸ *And to whom swore he that they should not enter into His Rest, but to them that believed not?*

¹⁹ *So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*

THIS PART OF OUR JOURNEY COMES TO A CLOSE



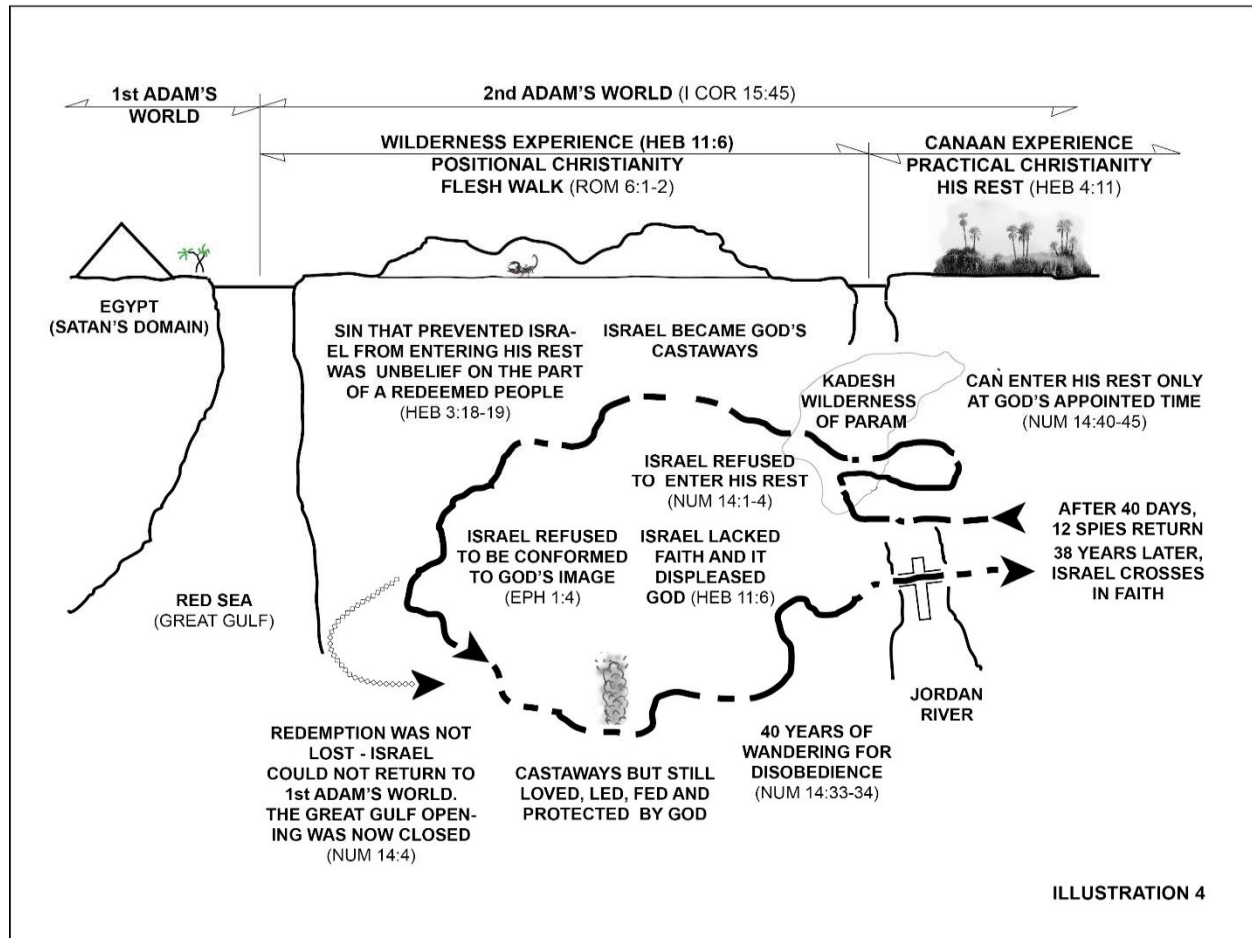
As we complete this part of our journey, we have discovered more puzzle pieces helping reveal God's picture of salvation. We have discovered that there is a destination for every Christian to seek after redemption. We have learned that if we follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit, He will lead us on a faith and trust-building journey to a place that God requires all Christians to seek, His Rest. We have learned that if we follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit, God will supply all our physical and spiritual needs. We understand that He will lead us to a place of decision in our Christian lives. When we fully trust and know God, He will ask us to step out in faith to serve Him and trust Him for every need of life. Soon, we will see that there are consequences for those failing to conform to His will and standards.

These newfound pieces of the picture of salvation now fit into the puzzle and the picture is starting to be more revealing. Let us now continue our journey to discover more of God's treasures.

THE SECOND ADAM'S WORLD: The Wilderness Experience, A Flesh Walk

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things happened unto them for examples, and they are written for our admonition, upon the end of the ages are come.



DISOBEDIENCE HAS CONSEQUENCES

Israel was not obedient to God and refused to possess the inheritance promised to the descendants of Abraham. Because they refused to claim their inheritance, God's wrath was hot against them. For their lack of faith and obedience, He proclaimed that this generation would not possess the Promised Land. Disregarding God's declaration, on the next day and with a change of heart and against Moses' warning, Israel crossed into Canaan. This was not a step of faith, but a realized necessity. Without the Holy Spirit to lead them, a return to Egypt was impossible. Without God supplied food and water for several million Israelites, the only way to go was forward to a land rich with provisions.

Numbers 14:40-45

⁴⁰*And they rose up early in the morning and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the LORD hath promised: for we have sinned.*

⁴¹*And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the LORD? but it shall*

not prosper. ⁴²Go not up, for the LORD is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies. ⁴³For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the LORD, therefore the LORD will not be with you. ⁴⁴But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out of the camp. ⁴⁵Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah

Calamity befell them because they did not exercise faith when God asked them to cross over and possess their inheritance. Does this imply that we Christians must cross over into His Rest when God's Spirit reveals that it is time to be obedient and step out in faith? God did not give Israel a second chance. Does He give Christians a second chance? Ponder that while we proceed on our journey.

There are consequences for lack of faith and disobedience toward God. Israel lost their inheritance anticipated since Abraham. Now, they learn the true severity of God's wrath against a redeemed people refusing to enter their inheritance (His Rest).

Numbers 32:13

And the LORD'S anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation, that had done evil in the sight of the LORD, was consumed.

Numbers 14:25

Tomorrow, turn you, and get you into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea.

GOD'S CASTAWAYS

Because of their lack of faith, disobedience, and refusal to serve God, Israel became a nation of CASTAWAYS and denied their reward. Because they refused to trust and serve Him, God could not use them. They were a faithless, worldly generation that walked in their own will and not His. Consequently, God sentenced Israel to another thirty-eight years of wandering because they refused to cross into Canaan (His Rest) when the Holy Spirit beckoned. Only Joshua and Caleb of this generation escaped this penalty. Those over the age of twenty would never see God's promise fulfilled. Only after all the rebellious generation died would God give Israel's next generation an opportunity to demonstrate their faith. This worldly generation could never again have the opportunity to enter the place of service and reward God had prepared for His redeemed.

Although the Exodus account does not mention Israel as a nation of castaways, the Apostle Paul revealed what befell them. As an Israelite, Paul feared through weakness or failures to do God's will, he might befall Israel's fate and become a castaway, cut-off from God's service and use.

1 Corinthians 9:27

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

A SIN UNTO DEATH

Why was Paul so terrified of becoming a castaway? He was frightened because he knew the character of God and understood the consequences.

1 John 5:16

*If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a **sin unto death**: I do not say that he shall pray for it.*

The underlying reason Israel became a nation of castaways is because they committed a “sin unto death.” I am sure this declaration will raise eyebrows. There are so many opinions of what this term means. It is difficult to comprehend and is one of the most misunderstood verses in the Bible. Ask five Bible scholars and you will get five different answers. Therefore, I use the term with caution. To show my point, here are two different views by respected Bible scholars.

The Complete Word Study Dictionary for 1 John 5:16.

“A sin unto death is a sin which should a believer continues to engage, may lead to a premature death.”

The Adam Clark Commentary offers a different perspective of the same scripture.

*“The sin unto death means a case of transgression, particularly of grievous backsliding from the life and power of godliness, which God determines to punish with **temporal** death, while at the same time he extends mercy to the penitent soul.”*

Both have validity and both may be correct. However, based the way God handled Israel for thirty-eight years of wandering, I believe The Adam Clark Commentary more correctly defines a *sin unto death*. I base this on two things:

- Strong’s Concordance for this scripture (Strong’s reference 2288) defines this term to mean **to take refuge, a cleft, a riff in the rocks**. The definition seems strange until reviewing the facts of Israel’s refusal to serve God.
- The Webster’s definition of **temporal** – “of or relating to time as opposed to eternity.”

Taken together, they correctly define Israel’s sin and punishment. By their failure to trust and serve God, they truly committed a *sin unto death*. They became useless to God’s needs for a holy, serving people. As such, they received a *temporal* death penalty. God hid them in the cliff of the Rock (Christ) for 38 years so as not to separate them from His grace, love, and mercy. Consequently, I believe a *sin unto death* is **not a physical death but a spiritual death**.

What does to become a castaway tell us about salvation? Israel’s failures provide great examples of how God deals with a redeemed people who refuse to serve Him. This generation of Israel lost all hope. Now, they can never possess their ancestral home nor return to Egypt to their former lives. They became a nation of wanderers with no place to call home.

Nehemiah gives us great insight into how God dealt with this nation of castaways. These were a redeemed people that God loved but could no longer use. However, they were still in grace!

Nehemiah 9:19

Yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go.

Israel was a redeemed people that belonged to God. They had a position in God's eternal family. However, they lost their earthly inheritance of reward and service in Canaan (His Rest). Yet, God still loved and cared for them.

Nehemiah 9:20-21v

²⁰Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst. ²¹Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, so that they lacked nothing; their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.

Acts 13:18 (ASV)

And for about the time of forty years as a nursing-father bare he them in the wilderness.

God continued to care for His disobedient children. He did not abandon them nor forsake them. He hid them in the safety of the cleft of the ROCK. He did not lead them back to Egypt, which would imply lost redemption. He continued to lead a redeemed people with the Holy Spirit. He did not withhold His love nor any essential of life. He merely stopped dealing with this faithless generation. Without faith and trust, *a redeemed person is unqualified for God's service.*

UNDERSTANDING GOD AND HIS REQUIREMENTS

As we look closely at Israel's forty years of failures to please God, we can learn many things about His personality. We can see what pleases and displeases Him. He is like a teacher with a class full of students. First, He teaches at grammar school level, then junior high, and then high school. When a student's education is deemed acceptable, He sends an invitation of acceptance to attend His University. They cannot come to this University unless invited and meet all the entrance criteria. They must have the desire for advanced education that only the Head Master can teach. He is a father figure who wants to gather His students around Him and teach them marvelous skills not available to those unwilling to seek higher education. But, at this university of higher learning, God is the Head Master. The blood of His Son purchased it, and He requires that those redeemed by His Son's blood to seek entrance to this university of higher learning. Failure to seek higher learning can result in provoking the Head Master's wrath. In simple terms, His University is in a spiritual destination called His Rest.

Due to our indoctrinated Christian beliefs, these concepts seem implausible. Maybe it is because we have a false impression of what God will or will not do. We need to keep in mind that God is God; He can do whatever he wants, to whom He wants, when He wants. He requires us to follow His instructions for His service. We want to think of God as pure love. However, He is also a God of wrath.

Romans 9:21

Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

When we see God only as absolute love, this can lead us down a path of delusion. We forget that we can provoke His anger. In dealing with Israel's refusal to enter Canaan, we can see the seriousness God places on bringing His redeemed to a place where they can serve Him. Failure to recognize that God requires faith and obedience from His redeemed can lead to serious consequences. Israel's castaway experience has implied implications for the Church. God's dealing with Israel appears as a warning to us. Paul warned us to look to Israel's wilderness example for understanding. Therefore, we Christians should be alert for new paradigm lessons for the Church.

ENTERING A PARADIGM SHIFT

In illustration 1, God revealed His veiled plan for salvation through three collaborating and parallel journeys. We are nearing the end of the first part that followed Israel's wilderness path by FAITH. Through it, we have witnessed several things that IMPLY flaws and lack of understanding in today's church teachings and doctrines. Many imply that we misunderstand why Christ is disappointed with our form of worship and this church age.

Through Israel's experiences, we can glean several **IMPLIED** paradigms in our beliefs for Christian living and service:

1. God requires the redeemed to enter, through faith and obedience, a place of service to Him that the Apostle Paul identifies as His Rest.
2. God maps out a plan through the Holy Spirit for faith building for the redeemed to build trust and obedience to serve Him.
3. God will ask an enlightened Christian to be obedient and step out in faith to enter His service and abide in Christ (His Rest).
4. For those enlightened who refuse to serve, they can become castaways, unfit for God's service and use.
5. For those denominations who do not believe salvation is eternal, God's dealing with castaways reaffirm that the redeemed are never separated from the love of God.

These paradigm shifts appear alien to our indoctrinated and engrained beliefs. However, if we truly believe that we live in the last Church age of Christ's displeasure, we must open our eyes and minds to see and understand why. We must examine if our existing paradigms are contrary to Christ's requirements for His Church.

PARADIGMS AND TODAY'S CHURCH

Here, the implied wilderness paradigms come into conflict with present church teachings. Services, today, focus on saving souls and preaching sermons for Christian living. These are things needed and required. However, God's dealing with Israel implies that these alone are insufficient and fail to meet the requirements revealed in scripture and His doctrines. Consequently, they foster His displeasure with our form of worship.

Since the Protestant Reformation, the role of the pastor has morphed into the roles of both an evangelist and preacher. In reality, his role as an evangelist is no greater or more than the redeemed members of His church. As born-again believers, it is our duty to win people to Christ and bring them into our church fellowship so the pastor can instruct them how to live and abide in Christ. However, weak (wilderness) Christians have placed these duties back onto the pastor. Today, many pastors assume the role of an evangelist and tailor their sermons to winning souls. The primary misunderstood instruction for a pastor is to lead his redeemed congregation to His Rest and abide in Christ where they can serve God as His empowered earthly ambassadors. Unknowingly, that is what a pastor is trying to accomplish. What is missing is the understanding that entering His Rest is a requirement for God's service. Also missing is the warning of consequences for those who refuse to enter His Rest. Without this understanding, a congregation can languish for years at the same spiritual level. Without this understanding, a church can become weak and complacent, all hallmarks of the Laodicea church age.

What are the lessons, herein, for the church? You can draw your own conclusions. However, if Israel's wilderness journey is truly God's revelation of the doctrines for redemption and Christian

service, His reactions toward Israel alert us that we lack understanding of what He wants and needs from His redeemed.

After faith building in our lives, He asks us to enter a place of service and reward so that we can be the instruments for His works. It is only here, walking in the Spirit and not the flesh, that we can serve Him and earn rewards. It is only here that He can use us. It is a faith walk. Simply put, if we have no faith, He cannot use us. If we will not serve or trust Him, He will turn His attention to someone else who will. This is what He did with Israel. As the Apostle Paul tells us, there is no grace (or rewards) for those who live in sin (no faith).

Romans 6:1-2

¹What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? ²God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

Eternal security is a gift of God. Though unconditionally given, it does not come without expectations. There are both earthly rewards and consequences. God has a destination for all His redeemed so that He can use them in His work. Rewards await those who comply and in faith enter His Rest (our Canaan Experience). Those who refuse can suffer loss (discussed later in the chapter “The Second Adam’s World: The Canaan Experience, His Rest.”)

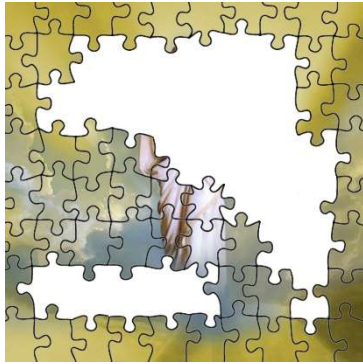
God needs His redeemed to have complete faith and comply with His image. The redeemed must rely on God for every need. It is only by walking by the guidance of the Holy Spirit that God exercises His will on Earth. Those that walk in God’s will and not their own serve God and are His instruments to accomplish heavenly tasks on Earth. God does not force us to trust Him. He simply demonstrates His power in our lives so that we can grow in faith and trust. The Holy Spirit will lead and convict but will not push us over the threshold into His Rest and a place of total reliance in God. That is a personal demonstration of faith. Just as the Holy Spirit led Israel on a faith-building journey to a place of decision, God’s Spirit attempts to lead every new Christian on a parallel journey.

Today, it is easy to rest on our assurance of redemption and never grow in service, faith, and reliance in God. Israel’s experience says we cannot do that. God will not allow His redeemed to sit on their redemption. The redeemed must come to a place of trust and service or face consequences. Doctrinally, we have evolved into the Laodicea church age of Christ’s displeasure. Thus, we must enter a new way in thinking to a new understanding of what God wants and needs from a Christian. We must also understand how He deals with redeemed people who refuse to trust and serve Him.

By now, a picture of the root causes for our Laodicea church age should be starting to emerge. We lead people to the cross for redemption and leave them at the altar without direction or instructions. We do not instruct them that God has prepared a destination of reward and service and provided a road map for them to follow. Even worse, we provide no warnings of consequences for failure to seek and enter His Rest. The result is a church with people who have made the Red Sea crossing to redemption but congregate in mass at the edge of a vast wilderness. With no instructed destination or direction, the wilderness clogs with (wilderness) Christians who walk in the flesh, never experiencing the joy and power God provides through faith. Without direction and a non-nurtured faith, new Christians can wonder if there is more to Christianity than they have seen or experienced. Not ever coming to His Rest and experiencing becoming a “new creature in Christ,” many fall by the wayside and leave the church. Those who remain in a wilderness walk will never grow in faith and come to know the joy of their salvation. Welcome to a biblical insight of God’s displeasure with our Laodicea church age.

LEAVING THE WILDERNESS FLESH WALK

We have come to the end of the forty years of Israel's faith building and judgment for disobedience and unbelief. Poised on the brink of the Jordan River, the Holy Spirit beckons a new generation of Israel to cross in faith. Their test of faith will be every bit as daunting as was their parents. Powerful kingdoms still inhabit the lands; and the fortified city of Jericho stood in their midst. Soon, we will join Israel at the Jordan River and eagerly anticipate meeting Mine Angel that God sent before us.



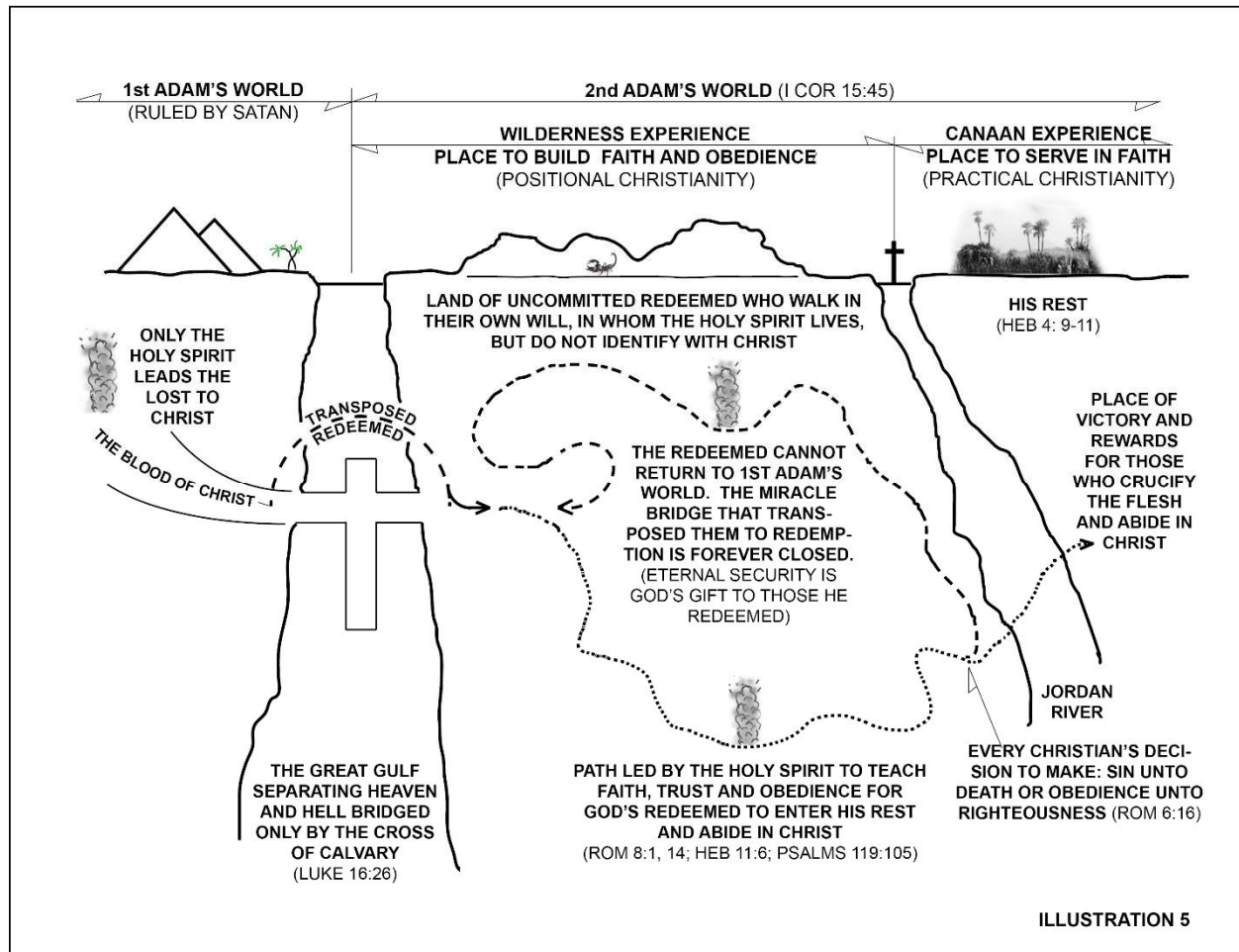
Since starting our journey in Egypt, many new paradigms emerged that should have tested your Bible knowledge and doctrinal beliefs. By this stage of our journey, you are probably either conflicted or enlightened. That is OK and natural. A lifetime of indoctrination is difficult to overcome. I encourage you to continue with us to complete the journey. Israel's upcoming experience in His Rest and parallel journeys through the Tabernacle (the Law) and Christ's ministry will reinforce the paradigms and other revelations presented thus far. New enlightenments also await. Remember, all the pieces of the puzzle must interlock before we can have a complete understanding of the doctrinal picture. We have now added new pieces found in this part of Israel's journey to our puzzle. A more complete picture is starting to emerge.

Our eyes are starting to open to God's message to His Church. We will now resume our journey of discovery to His Rest (Canaan) to see what God has prepared for those who trust and love Him. First, however, we need to pause and reflect on the lessons and paradigms for the Church thus far revealed on our wilderness journey of discovery.

THE CHRISTIAN'S WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things happened unto them for enamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon the end of the ages are come.



The header of Illustration 5 shows Israel's journey divided into two parts: POSITIONAL Christianity (the wilderness experience) and PRACTICAL Christianity (the Canaan experience). Both sides, collectively, cover the scope of Salvation. POSITIONAL Christianity merely means that the redeemed have a permanent POSITION in God's family. Like Israel's experience, God does not ask us to step out on faith until He reveals His ability to supply all our physical and spiritual needs. This place to exercise PRACTICAL faith is analogous to a spiritual destination the Apostle Paul defines as HIS REST.

Here, we can see the wilderness (or learning) experience is the POSITIONAL side of salvation. God automatically transposes the redeemed into a bonded POSITION in His family as the Bride of Christ. We now belong to the master that purchased us and His household.

A newly redeemed person does not know God. However, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, God starts to reveal His nature and power to build faith, trust, and obedience. At this stage of salvation, we are still carnal (living in the flesh). The whole wilderness experience is to transform

us from carnal-to-spiritual Christians. Those that refuse to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit will remain carnal. This is what we saw with Israel. In their wilderness experience, they were a redeemed people still living a worldly life, walking in the FLESH and not the SPIRIT. This is the same with a faithless born-again Christian. A worldly person is one in whom the Holy Spirit lives but does not identify with Christ.

The Red Sea crossing was symbolic of the cross of Calvary. It represented bridging the impassable Great Gulf that separates heaven from hell, traversed only by a miracle of God. It represented a transition from death-unto-life to a POSITION in God's family. Because of that position, we have become joint heirs with Christ and have a promised inheritance. Paul tells us:

Ephesians 1: 10-11

¹⁰That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: ¹¹In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

The earnest deposited on our behalf by the Holy Spirit sealed the promise of an inheritance.

Ephesians 1:13-14

¹³... ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

A believer's Wilderness experience is the same as that of Israel's. It is the period from redemption until the Holy Spirit reveals an undeniable knowledge of God and His purpose for saving us. Just as with Israel, it is through faith and obedience building experiences fostered by following the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

WILDERNESS CHRISTIANS

Recently, I happened upon a blog article titled "Are You in the Wilderness?"¹. It offered a surprisingly collaborating view of a Christian's wilderness experience. The writer's observations closely mirror the views expressed, herein, and other chapters. However, as in today's church, it falters in expounding consequences for failing to leave the wilderness experience.

"Looking back at the Old Testament pictures, Canaan was God's goal for His people. Jerusalem was there, and that is where God's house was to be built. However, God's people had to pass through the wilderness to travel from Egypt to Canaan. They also had to traverse the wilderness to travel from Babylon to Canaan. The wilderness, then, is a divine requirement. But, it is a detour; it is not home. How long you spend there is mostly your decision."

"Let me unravel that a bit. After the children of Israel exited the treasured city of Egypt, they quickly traveled to Mount Horeb. They then wandered in the desert for forty long years. Why? Because of their unbelief (Heb. 3:15-19; 4:1-11). The trip should have only lasted eleven days (Deut. 1:2)."

"The wilderness is temporary, unless you choose to build a home there. God will eventually make a way out of the wilderness. But when that day comes, your faith will be tried. Leaving the wilderness may come at an obscenely high price. It is for this reason that many do not leave it."

"I strongly believe that God's living quarters cannot be built in the wilderness. All that happens in the wilderness is temporary. God's goal is the Land of Promise (I am speaking spiritually). Egypt, Babylon, the Wilderness, and Canaan are all shadows that point to spiritual realities for the Christian."

The article mirrors the views expressed, herein, only using different terminology. However, the meaning is the same. God never intended a Christian to stay in a wilderness experience. It is only a temporary place of faith and obedience training. It is not permissible to stay here and sit on one's salvation. We must continue to grow in Christ and progress to the next level of salvation. We must move past our POSITIONAL side of redemption and enter the Practical side. We must enter our Canaan experience to abide in God's rest for the redeemed in order to serve Him and experience the joys of our salvation. We must cross Jordan into that experience, and it will take both faith and obedience. This is what the article meant when saying, *"Your faith will be tried."* The article also warns that those who refuse to conform and step back can face serious repercussions: *"Leaving the wilderness may come at an obscenely high price."* Yes, those who refuse to exercise faith and obedience face a very uncertain future. The following paragraphs highlight some of the perils and challenges facing a lingering wilderness Christian. However, those who seek to grow in faith and obedience will arrive at an opportunity to abide in Christ and become a faithful servant.

By following the Holy Spirit, one gradually matures in faith and spiritual knowledge; and the Holy Spirit will slowly reveal the direction and destination. This is the essence of a Christian's wilderness experience. By following the guidance of the Holy Spirit, gradually, the fog of indoctrination will start to dissipate. A realization emerges that there is more to church than attending services, going to Sunday school, and singing in the choir. Of these church activities, neither requires obedience or faith. This conviction brings one to the knowledge that there is more to Christianity and serving God. Welcome to the banks of the Jordan River and a beckoning to cross. The Holy Spirit beckons all who arrive here to be obedient, step out in faith, and abide in Christ in His Rest.

Hebrews 4:9

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into His Rest, He also hath ceased from His own works, as God did from his.

Hebrews 4:1

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it

For lack of faith to serve God, Israel refused to cross into His Rest. In doing so, they committed a sin unto death and became wandering castaways. Likewise, a Christian can become a castaway, unqualified for God's service.

PERILS IN THE CHRISTIAN'S WILDERNESS WALK

One of the most difficult implications to understand or accept are the consequences for refusal to serve God. For those redeemed and follow the Holy Spirit's guidance, they will reach a point in their Christian walk where they become reliant on God and enter this spiritual rest without realizing a transformation has occurred. They merely realize that they trust God to supply all their needs. They demonstrate the fruits of the Spirit and have tremendous power through prayer. Their light shines so brightly that they draw others to Christ. Unbeknown to their consciousness, they have spiritually crossed Jordan and now abide in Christ. Others may have an epiphany along their Christian walk as the Holy Spirit directs them to their next level of faith. Regardless of how, those

who seek to grow in faith and knowledge of God will come to a point of decision of whether to serve God or man. Israel faced the same decision. Regardless of whenever that movement occurs in our Christian walk, there are only two ways to go when we come to the knowledge of God's requirement to enter His Rest. Like Israel, we can commit a SIN UNTO DEATH (unusable for God's service) or exercise OBEDIENCE UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS. The apostles Paul and John understood this and gave us solemn warnings. Without following and understanding the wilderness journey, it would be difficult to understand just how profound these scriptures are or what they mean.

Romans 6:16

Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

1 John 5:16

If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

Romans 8:13-14

¹³For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. ¹⁴For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Hebrews 6:26

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.

In other words, if a redeemed person refuses to serve God, He can remove fellowship and that person may never come to know the power and joy reserved for His faithful.

Becoming a castaway is a JUDGMENT EXPERIENCE, cut-off from use by God but not His mercy. Although a castaway, God still loves and cares for His redeemed, protects them and leads them with His Holy Spirit. A castaway is simply cut-off from God's use and bypassed for others willing to serve. A castaway remains a joint heir with Christ and never separated from His love.

Romans 8:13

Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

A GREATER JUDGEMENT

While there is a promise of judgment for refusing to enter His Rest, there is a greater judgement that we should fear for failing to seek God's will. Redemption merely means a secure position in God's family. *Redemption does not impart righteousness!* A redeemed person can still live out of God's will and favor.

Deuteronomy 9:5

Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee,

and that he may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

God's rebuke of this church age implies that many Christians languish with their spiritual lives at or near the same position in faith, knowledge, and service as when redeemed. These are Christians SATISFIED with their standing and seek no further enlightenment. This results in Christians sitting on the edge of Christianity, never experiencing the anticipated "new life in Christ." Those who walk in the wilderness are worldly Christians who walk not after the spirit but the flesh. Consequently, one can continually backslide and embarrass God. This can have serious consequences. The writer of Hebrews gives a warning to wilderness Christians.

Hebrews 10:26

For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,

Hebrews also describes a Christian languishing in the wilderness experience as one who is either unaware of God's purpose for redeeming them or one who simply refuses to seek God's will for their life (sounds like a typical church congregation).

Hebrews 5:12-14

¹²For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. ¹³For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. ¹⁴But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Remember, God loves all His redeemed and wants to lead them with the Holy Spirit. Those who refuse leadership by the Holy Spirit can become castaways and out of communication with God. God will not take away their redemption, but they will earn no rewards and will never know the joys of their salvation in their earthly lives. Peter warns of this type Christian that God cannot use:

1 Peter 4:17-19

¹⁷For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? ¹⁸And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? ¹⁹Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

We should never lose sight of the seriousness of this part of salvation rarely discussed or seemingly understood in today's church. God implores us to enter His Rest as His ambassadors to share the good news of salvation to the world. It is a requirement God has set before Christians. Failure for us to abide in Christ hinders our witness to serve His purposes. Consequently, failure to enter and abide in Christ carries consequences. Moreover, without entering His Rest, the power and joy God gives to those who love and trust Him will never be known or experienced.

Thank God for eternal security. Thankfully if redeemed, we have an eternal position in God's family. If we fail in achieving God's plan for His service, we are STILL IN GRACE! But, if we do not cross, we will never know the peace, joy, and power of our salvation. We will never come to experience the power that God has promised those that have faith and trust in Him.

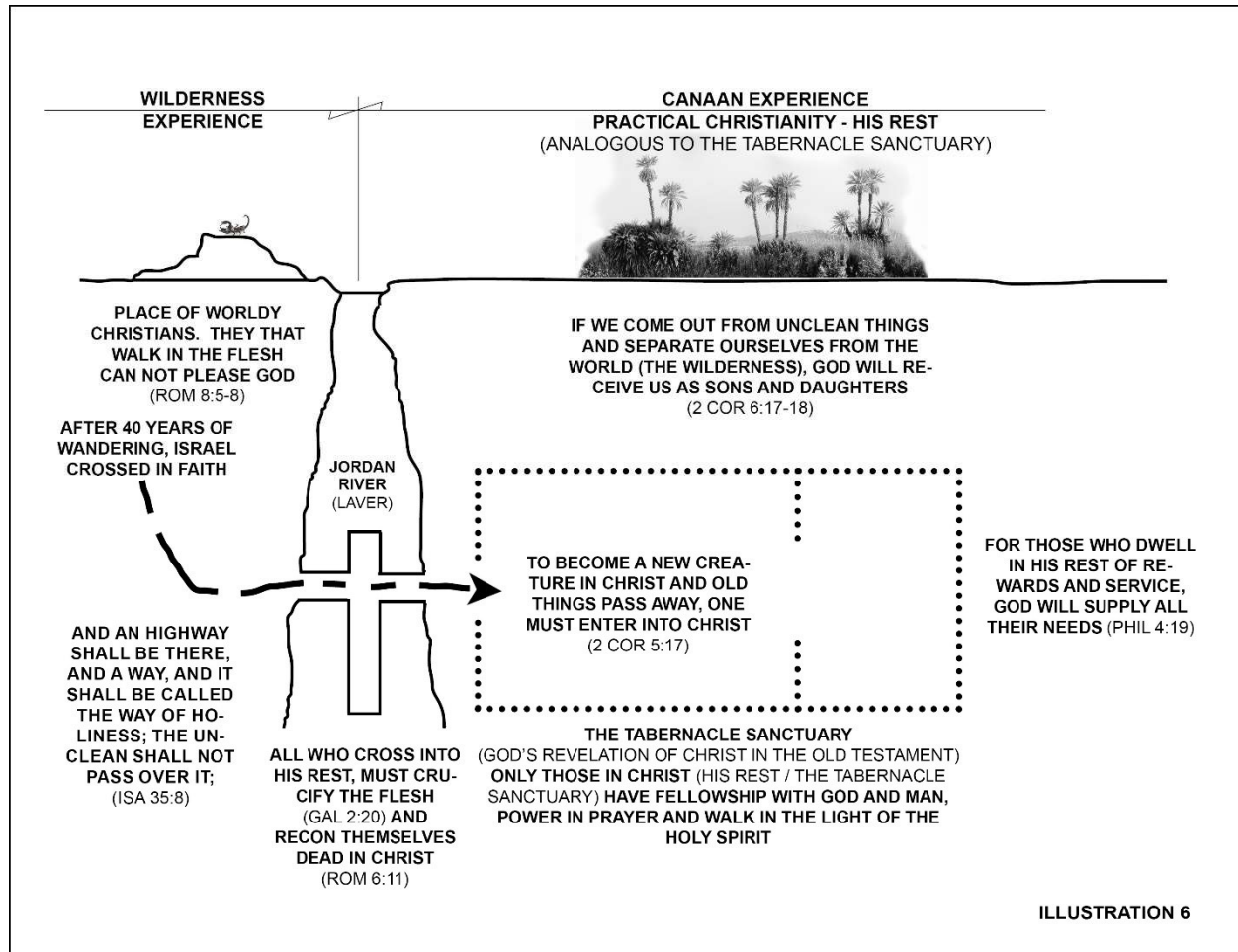
CONTINUING OUR JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY

As Christians, we have followed Israel on a parallel journey through a forbidding wilderness and experienced marvelous revelations for today's church. However, these were just appetizers for the treasures not yet discovered. Many marvelous revelations await on our journey of discovery. With the journey through FAITH to discover and understand God's POSITIONAL side of salvation complete, we now move to an understanding of the PRACTICAL side of salvation by crossing Jordan and entering His Rest.

THE SECOND ADAM'S WORLD: Crossing Jordan

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon the end of the ages are come.



After forty years of wandering, Gods Spirit led Israel's new generation to the banks of the Jordan River and stopped. Before them was a river to cross and powerful kingdoms to conquer. Only an invincible army and the use of deadly force could obtain their promised inheritance. If unsuccessful, Israel faced the potential of annihilation as a nation. They now faced the same decision as their fathers had thirty-eight years earlier. Will you cross in faith and trust God to give you this land as a possession?

God beckons all who arrive at this Jordan crossing in their spiritual journey to cross in faith, not knowing the depth of water or what perils await on the other side. Because it is to be a faith crossing, the Holy Spirit will not go before us. Like Israel, our crossing must be faith based and trust that God will be on the other side to provide all our needs.

2 Corinthians 6:17-18

¹⁷Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, ¹⁸And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

This time, Israel trusted the Lord and stepped out in faith. For all willing to trust the Lord and step out in faith, God has wonderful blessings awaiting them.

Joshua 3:14-17

*¹⁴And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the Ark of the Covenant before the people; ¹⁵And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (**for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,**) ¹⁶That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. ¹⁷And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.*



As soon as Israel exercised faith, God provided another miracle. He stopped the Jordan and Israel crossed on dry ground. Israel stepped into the unknown in faith that God could and would provide a way. This step-in faith was much more daunting than one may grasp. When we see pictures of the Jordan River in modern Israel, it appears as a narrow creek no more than 30 to 50 feet wide. However, when Israel crossed, it was harvest time. During harvest,

the Jordan overflows its banks, expanding up to a mile in width. God stacked every obstacle before Israel for the ultimate test of faith. But Israel exercised faith, and God always rewards the faithful. This modern-day photo shows the Jordan overflowing its banks (courtesy of <http://www.lifeintheholylan.com/>) near the damaged Allenby Bridge that served as an international crossing from Israel-to-Jordan

CROSSING JORDAN



Often overlooked, significant events took place at the Jordan crossing with ramifications for the Church. At the shore of Jordan, the role of leadership for the Holy Spirit was complete. He would not lead Israel's conquest. Also, the Ark of the Covenant, which always led when Israel moved camp, stopped and did not cross before them. The Ark led Israel's procession into the Jordan. Then, unexpectedly, the priests carrying the Ark stopped amid the Jordan and Israel filed pass. This may appear to Israel that God removed His protection and would not go before them into Canaan and secure their claim of the promised inheritance. But God was not going to abandon them, only further test them. Crossing without God's leadership and protection without any knowledge if He would be on the other side must have been very unnerving. If Israel crossed, it was a sure sign to God that they finally trusted Him and were ready for His purpose.

TREASURED PIECES OF THE PUZZLE

Joshua 4:4-9

⁴Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man: ⁵And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of Jordan, and take you up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel: ⁶That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? ⁷Then ye shall answer them, that the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel forever. ⁸And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the LORD spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there. ⁹And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests, which bare the Ark of the Covenant, stood: and they are there unto this day.

We must not overlook the timing of the Jordan crossing, the significance of the Ark stopping amid the Jordan, and the placing of two sets of twelve stones. The biblical implications are profound. They possess several hidden truths to enlighten us. Let us look closely at these events.

The twelve stones placed on the west side of the Jordan were a memorial for future generations of Israelites. They were a visible testament to Israel's faith and God's power to provide. The twelve stones placed amid the Jordan at the feet of the priests were for a future confirmation of

God's plan of redemption. Please proceed slowly and diligently as the explanation can get complicated but very rewarding. Remember, we are still putting pieces of the salvation puzzle together to see the beautiful picture God has left for us to discover.

The Ark of the Covenant represented the Law and legalism. God placing the Ark stationary in the Jordan while Israel filed pass was a message to a future generation when Christ would come. It signaled the future end to legalism and symbolized the promise of a future new covenant, grace. You see, here is the reason God's Spirit would not cross before Israel. It is from this point in the midst of Jordan that Christ would take up the leadership of Israel in their conquest of their inheritance. How do we know this? The Bible tells us. These are some of the richest verses in the Bible because their meaning is so profound.

JOSHUA MEETS MINE ANGEL



Joshua 5:13-15

¹³And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? ¹⁴And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? ¹⁵And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

The Holy Spirit did not lead Israel across Jordan and the Ark of the Covenant would not cross before them. These events are very significant. The Holy Spirit dwelt in the cloud and Moses tells us the Lord God Jehovah resided in the Ark of the Covenant whenever relocated.¹

Numbers 10:35-36

³⁵And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said, Rise up, LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee. ³⁶And when it rested, he said, Return, O LORD, unto the many thousands of Israel.

We saw previously that the Trinity had to be present in the process of redemption. Here we have God as the Holy Spirit, God as Jehovah and now Mine Angel (Ex 32:34), the Lord Jesus, waiting on the other side. Now, we understand why the Holy Spirit and Jehovah did not cross before Israel. The leadership of Israel in the conquest of Canaan would now pass to the Lord Jesus, in type, through Joshua.

God did not tell those compelled to cross in faith that His Son would be awaiting them. They could only find out by stepping out in faith. The reward: The Lord Jesus waiting with His sword

drawn ready to lead all who cross in faith to victory. The Bible confirms this when Jesus starts His earthly ministry.

TREASURES BURIED IN THE JORDAN

The location of the twelve stones amid the Jordan is not without significance. The spot where the priests stood and placed the twelve stones would be the baptismal spot of the Lord Jesus to start His Earthly ministry as High Priest.² The timing of the Jordan crossing confirms this.

Joshua 4:19

And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho.

Joshua 5:10

And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.

Israel crossed the Jordan on April (Nissan) 10. The timing is very significant. They could have crossed any day of the year, but God chose this day. Why? Because, this was the selection day for the Passover lambs. The unblemished lambs signified and typed the Lord Jesus, God's future sacrificial lamb for a future April 14, the Day of Preparation for Passover. To fulfill these types, the twelve stones in the Jordan would mark the place of Jesus' baptism². It is from this spot that He would lead Israel to victory. It is from the very same spot that He would lead us to victory in His earthly ministry as the High Priest of the Tabernacle. How wonderful are the hidden truths of God's word!

A CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP

God had formed a partnership and bond with Moses that led Israel from Egypt to the Jordan River. This partnership brought Israel through the wilderness experience of testing and bonding. Now, the mantle passes to the Lord Jesus and Joshua (Jesus in type) because the Canaan experience represents victory for both Israel and the believer.

This change of leadership provides another one of those "sometimes a story is so familiar that we miss all the blessings that it contains." All that have read the Exodus story know that God did not let Moses enter Canaan because he defied His instruction of how to deliver water to a thirsty Israel in the wilderness. Instead of speaking to the Rock (a type of Christ), as instructed, Moses struck the rock with his staff.

Numbers 27:12-14 (ASV)

¹² *And Jehovah said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mountain of Abarim, and behold the land which I have given unto the children of Israel.* ¹³ *And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be*

gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered; ¹⁴ because ye rebelled against my word in the wilderness of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify me at the waters before their eyes. (These are the waters of Meribah of Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.)

Now, we can see that there was another reason not so obvious. Moses could not have entered Canaan under any circumstance. The leadership mantle passed to the Lord Jesus through Joshua.

As the Lord Jesus took over the leadership of Israel, the manna ceased.

Joshua 5:12

And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna anymore; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

Did this mean that the Lord would no longer see to their needs? Heaven forbid, no. The bounty of the land would be His gift to the people. The manna had to stop because the Lord Jesus now led them, and **HE IS THE BREAD OF LIFE**.

John 6:35

*And Jesus said unto them, **I am the bread of life**: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.*

THE LORD'S ARMY

The Lord (Mine Angel) arrived on the scene with sword drawn to lead Israel to victory. However, the Lord's leadership is not as it seems. The Lord will not lead like the pillar of fire and smoke as in the wilderness. It is time to take possession of the promise. It is time to face powerful kingdoms that will fight for their lands. How can Israel conquer the Promised Land? Only the combined powerful armies of Israel and the Lord can conquer the residing powerful kingdoms. You see, the Lord did not come to lead, per se, but to participate and direct Israel's conquest through faith. The Lord would be the commander of several armies, one being Israel's, in the conquest of Canaan. You might say Joshua commanded one wing of the Lord's Army and reported directly to the Lord Jesus.

Job 25:3

Is there any number of his armies?

In the book of 2 Kings, Elisha provided a witnessed account of the Lord's mighty armies.

2 Kings 6:10-17

¹⁰And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice. ¹¹Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not show me which of us is for the king of Israel? ¹²And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the



prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber. ¹³And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan. ¹⁴Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about. ¹⁵And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto

him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? ¹⁶And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. ¹⁷And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

God rewarded Israel's faith crossing by more than just the Lord's appearance to lead. The Lord brought His invincible heavenly armies to fight beside Israel. The Lord's armies always outnumber the foe. For those who exercise faith and cross Jordan, the Lord offers us the same protection. The Lord's armies will fight for those who cross to withstand the armies of darkness.

GOD'S PROTECTION OF ISRAEL

Joshua 23:3 & 5

³And ye have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for the LORD your God is he that hath fought for you. ⁵And the LORD your God, he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, as the LORD your God hath promised unto you.

What we fail to grasp is the significance of the Lord's promise to fight beside Israel. This is not just a historical event. It is an ongoing commitment. The Book of Joshua tells us that Israel will never face defeat because the Lord's armies fight by their side. That protection remains with Israel to this day.

Joshua 23:9

For the LORD hath driven out from before you great nations and strong: but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day.

We are witnesses to God's ongoing protection of Israel. After God gathered His scattered people from around the world and returned them to the Palestine in 1947, Israel has faced continuous attempts of annihilation. The nations of Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, and Iran have attempted or pledged to destroy Israel. However, God's miracles (armies) provided victories in all their conflicts.

When Israel declared its statehood on May 14, 1948, five mechanized Arab armies invaded. In this **War for Jewish Independence** ³, *"Israel had only 35,000 fighting men, no air force (except for a small training plane out of which the pilot dropped grenades) and only six tanks. The Egyptian army alone had 40,000 soldiers, 135 tanks, heavy guns, and an air force of over 60 planes, including Spitfires and bombers. The Jordanians had the Arab Legion trained by the British and led by 49 British officers. Yet, against all odds, the Jewish fighters won. Many of the pitched battles became epic and smacked of the miraculous."*

Victory in **The Six Days War of 1967** ⁴ was nothing short of God's intervention on Israel's behalf. *"In the spring of 1967, Israel found itself poised for war against four of its Arab neighbors. According to all the military analysts and pundits, it was to be a lopsided match. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) consisted of 275,000 troops, compared to the 456,000 soldiers of the combined Iraqi, Syrian, Jordanian, and Egyptian armies. The united Arab forces also had a decided edge in weaponry and military equipment: They boasted more than double the number of tanks, and close to four times the amount of combat aircraft. However, despite all the prognostications, by the time the war ended, the territory under Israeli control had tripled in size. Jews returned to sites where their ancestors had lived for thousands of years, sites from which waves of terror was against them for so many years. The Jewish nation was miraculously victorious in the face of unbelievable odds."*

Seven years later, Arab nations again attempted to annihilate Israel. In 1973, the **Yom Kippur War** ⁵ began on the holy day of Yom Kippur. The fact that the Arabs chose this day was a miracle. As it was, on Yom Kippur, most of the country was at home fasting or in a synagogue. This was momentous because it was easier to locate the reservists and call them to action.

Just as with all Israel's wars, stories of miracles abound. In this conflict, Jordan chose to opt out of this war. To many, this was a miraculous occurrence. For Israel, the difference between having to fight a war on two fronts instead of three provided a fighting chance.

One heart-warming example of God's hand at work in protecting Israel from her enemies occurred in the battle for the Golan Heights. This event concerned a platoon of Israeli troops. They were in the process of pulling out of a confrontation with the Syrian army while trapped in a minefield.

Knowing it would take a miracle for them to make it out alive, the troops began crawling on their stomachs while using their bayonets to find the mines without detonating them. At some point, one of the soldiers uttered a heartfelt prayer. As the story goes, all of a sudden, a windstorm blew. The soldiers settled down until the storm subsided. When it did, the wind had blown away so much of the dirt that it exposed the mines; and the entire platoon managed to escape, unharmed.

A similar miracle of God's hand at work happened in Israel's on-going war against Hamas,⁶ a Palestinian Sunni-Islamic resistance movement dedicated to the destruction of Israel. While firing missiles into Israel, an incident occurred that convinced both the Palestinians and Israelis that God's hand intervened in protecting Israel. Israel uses a state-of-the art missile defense system called the Iron Dome. This system is so accurate that it rarely misses. In this incident, the Iron Dome failed to intercept two incoming missiles. This left insufficient time to fire more interceptors and Israel braced for the impact. Then, miraculously, a strong east wind (Christ?) blew the missiles off course and into the sea.

While these examples have little to do with Israel's conquest of Canaan, it is important to realize how important Israel is to God's plan for humanity. God promised to protect Israel, and He continues to do so.

Deuteronomy

28:7

The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.

I think it is safe to say that no enemy will ever defeat Israel. God keeps His promises yesterday, today, and forever. Now, let us return to crossing the Jordan River.

I AM CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST

The crossing of the Jordan into His Rest has tremendous relevance to present day teachings. Yet, its importance seems lost to today's church. We know the scriptures but fail to connect the dots. Yet, the Lord Himself, the prophets, and the Apostle Paul give us instructions for entering:

Mark 12:30

And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength:

Only those who love and trust God can enter. Simply put, God's Spirit leads us to a Jordan crossing and compels us to cross in faith. He asks us to put Him first and trust Him to supply all our needs.

Philippians 4:19

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Isaiah tells us those not separated from the world shall not pass over.

Isaiah 35:8

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it;

You see, there are two crosses in every Christian's life. Christ bore a cross for our redemption (Red Sea Crossing), but we must bear a cross for His service (the Jordan crossing). Paul told us this, but apparently, we did not understand what he was saying. Paul told us that we must die to the world to live in faith for Christ (abide in Christ).

In Galatians 2:20, Paul says,

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

In Philippians 3:10, he says,

That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.

In Romans 6:11, he says,

Recon yourself dead in Jesus Christ.

And in Romans 6:6-7, he says,

⁶Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. ⁷For he that is dead (in Christ) is freed from sin.

In Romans 12:1-2, Paul tells us this is our reasonable service.

¹I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. ²And be not conformed to this world (Wilderness Walk) but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Paul tells us that if we have presented our bodies a living sacrifice, we will be a new creation, and our view of the world will be different.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Romans 6:6, 4

⁶ *Knowing this, that the old man is crucified with Him... ⁴...even so we should walk in newness of life.*

With newly redeemed persons, we want to overwhelm them with these verses before they even know God, His character, or requirements for service. What we fail to realize is that these verses are instructions for Christians who have built faith and trust and are seeking God's will in their lives. As a church, we lose sight of whom Paul is addressing in his letters. Paul is simply giving Christians instructions for entering, living, and abiding in Christ (His Rest).

In his letters to the churches, Paul continually tells us what it takes to enter His Rest and the consequences of failure to enter in faith. He also warns of the consequences of entering His Rest and later turning our back on service to God. We will discuss these in the next chapter.

Keep in mind that His Rest has been our destination since leaving Egypt (First Adam's World). All that God showed us in the wilderness walk was to prepare us for this place of victory. It is here that redemption arrives at its PRACTICAL side. We move beyond the security of knowing our redeemed position in God's family to exercising our faith. We crucify the flesh and put on the whole armor of God.

Jesus, Himself, tells of those who fail to enter His Rest in the Parable of the Sower. For the sower who threw his seed by the way side:

Matthew 13:19 (CEV)

The seeds that fell along the road are the people who hear the message about the kingdom, but don't understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches the message from their hearts.

These speak of those who hear the message of redemption through Christ but reject it.

For the sower who threw his seeds onto the rocks:

Matthew 13:20-21(CEV)

²⁰*The seeds that fell on rocky ground are the people who gladly hear the message and accept it right away. ²¹But they don't have deep roots, and they don't last very long.*

These speak of the redeemed who fail to follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit and never develop faith, trust, or obedience. They walk in their own strength and never experience the joy of their salvation.

For the sower who threw his seeds into the thorns:

Matthew 13:22 (CEV)

The seeds that fell among the thorn bushes are also people who hear the message. But they start worrying about the needs of this life and are fooled by the desire to get rich. So the message gets choked out, and they never produce anything.

These speak of Wilderness Christians satisfied with their redeemed position and never grow to any place of service for the Lord (a typical church member?).

Paul tells us about those seeds that fell among the rocky ground and the thorn bushes.

Romans 8:5-8

⁵For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. ⁶For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. ⁷Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. ⁸So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

These speak of Christians aware of God's Rest but choose to remain carnal and not walk by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

For those who threw their seeds on good ground:

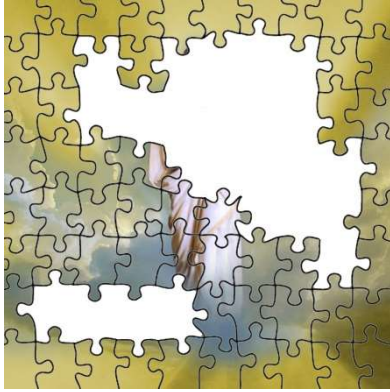
Matthew 13:23 (CEV)

The seeds that fell on good ground are the people who hear and understand the message. They produce as much as a hundred or sixty or thirty times what was planted.

These speak of the redeemed who crucified the flesh and entered His Rest and abide in Christ. God leads all who seek Him to His Rest, a place of service and reward. It is only here that God can use us as His Earthly ambassadors.

You will note that Illustration 6 references and provides an outline of the Tabernacle across the Jordan River into Canaan. Later, when we take our parallel journey through the Law, the importance and association to the Jordan crossing will become clear.

MOVING TO LIFE IN CANAAN



Finally, after forty years, Israel has entered the Promised Land. By crossing in faith, they have found new leadership and a new hope. But they still face many challenges. Christians who have crossed in faith have entered His Rest and met Christ the King. They will never again see Him as just a man. However, like Israel, many challenges await.

Crossing Jordan and meeting the King have added to our picture of salvation. We have learned what it means to crucify the flesh and walk in newness of life. Let us now walk in His Rest to see what God has in store for those who love and trust Him.

THE SECOND ADAM'S WORLD: The Canaan Experience, HIS REST

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things happened unto them for examples, and they are written for our admonition, upon the end of the ages are come.

THREE RESTS FOR GOD'S REDEEMED

God has three rests for His redeemed. The first is eternal salvation, and the third is the reward of heaven. These rests depended upon God's redemptive work through His Son. But the second rest (His Rest) is a place of service, peace, joy, and victory. It is a present possibility and depends upon our faithful labors for the Lord. Since it depends on our faithfulness and obedience to serve God, it CAN BE LOST. Hence the warning:

Hebrews 4:1

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

God leads His redeemed to this place of commitment to His service. Not all possess the faith and trust to enter. However, we can recognize those who enter by the fruit they bear.

Galatians 5:22-24

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ²³Meekness, temperance: against such, there is no law. ²⁴And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh....

We also recognize those who have trusted God by their walk. To make progress in our Christian life, we cannot STAND but must WALK. Our union with Christ assures our standing (POSITION); but our communion (FELLOWSHIP) depends upon our WALK.

Paul tells us in Galatians 5:25-26:

²⁵If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

John tells us in 1 John 1:6-7:

⁶If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: ⁷But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

John also tells us in 1 John 3:14 that if you walk in Christ, you love people.

We know that we have passed from death unto life (crucified the flesh), because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in (sin unto) death.

All who walk in Christ have great faith in God's promises and give God glory for everything in their lives.

BE PREPARED, PERSECUTION LURKS FOR THOSE WHO SERVE THE LORD

There is no persecution in the wilderness walk. When living as a wilderness Christian, Satan can be your best friend. He will accompany you into any bar and help you live any fantasy. But in His Rest, there are spiritual fortified cities and giants to overcome. Rewards come through adversity. Here, warfare is against the powers of darkness. Satan will no longer be your best friend. He will be your worst nightmare and the reason why Paul told us to put on the whole armor of God.

Paul tells Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:12:

Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

And in Ephesians 6:10-18

¹⁰Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. ¹¹Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. ¹³Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; ¹⁵And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. ¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: ¹⁸Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

We should never fear Satan, only be aware of his presence and power. He can only control and influence our lives if we permit him. Those who put on God's armor have an impenetrable hedge of protection. Remember, the Lord's Armies stand by our side to fight the Prince of Darkness.

WHY SUFFER PERSECUTION?

We have learned about the requirements to enter His Rest and abide in Christ. We have learned about the characteristics of people who have trusted God and entered His Rest. We also read Paul's warning of persecution for those who walk in Christ's image. Then, we must ask, what is in it for those who have trusted and seek to serve? Why would we want to live in such a restricted place? These are good questions, and we need good answers to create a desire to enter His Rest and abide in Christ.

I am certainly no expert on living in His Rest and am still learning about God and His requirements for Christian living. But I have learned there are tremendous benefits in serving God and trusting

Him. First, and foremost, is power through prayer. However, as you will see when we take our journey through the LAW, wilderness Christians do not have full access to this divine power.

Proverbs 15:29

The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

It is difficult to explain why those abiding in His Rest have so much power through prayer without first seeing the answer in our journey through the LAW (Tabernacle). So, we will have to wait until we get to that part of our journey to get into the beauty and extent of a Christian's tremendous power through prayer. For the present, the words of Jesus tell us that those who live in His Rest have this power. Many just do not understand how to tap into God's tremendous power source.

Matthew 21:22

And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

We not only have the promise of access to God's power through prayer but a promise of rewards for those who serve God in His Rest. The Bible tells us of crowns earned as rewards for our service to God.

2 Timothy 4:7-8

⁷I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: ⁸Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

James 1:12

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

1 Peter 5:4

And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away

The crowns we earn will determine our status and rewards in heaven. But here is the sobering reality. **Christians in a wilderness walk cannot earn crowns. Only those serving and abiding in Christ can earn these rewards.**

IT IS MORE THAN PRAYER AND CROWNS

Outside our redemption, the power those Christians abiding in His Rest have in prayer is the greatest gift God gives those who serve and trust Him. Once we exercise this power and witness it in our lives, it strengthens faith and our desire to serve in a greater role. Once one learns how to tap into this awesome power, there is no desire to return to a wilderness walk.

Crowns are rewards for faithful service. Miracles we witness through prayer stimulates our faith. The more we know God, the more we want to serve. The crowns are God's way of saying, "thank you for your faithful service." But it is not all about prayer and crowns. There is also the personal relationship with God. Allowing guidance by the Holy Spirit lets us establish a personal relationship. God already knows us personally and awaits a fellowship bond.

Exodus 33:17

And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.

He redeemed us to remove the sin barrier and reestablish a personal fellowship. This is the essence of the plan for salvation. This fellowship can be reestablished only by being "crucified with Christ" and "being dead to sin and raised in newness of life (crossing Jordan)." If we live a holy life, God will be our best friend. He is not just available for our prayers. He is available as a friend to hear any problem or seek advice and direction. So, you see, living in His Rest is the total package but is only available to those who trust and serve Him. It is here that we fully understand Jesus' words as recorded in the Book of John.

In John 15:11, Jesus tells us:

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

ISRAEL'S CANAAN EXPERIENCE

In this chapter, focus has centered on relevance to the Church and not Israel's Canaan Experience. There is a reason. Israel came into their inheritance promised since Abraham. In Canaan, they received their reward. They came as far as they could. They came as far as the Law could take them. On the other hand, we as Christians do not receive our inheritance in His Rest. Where the Law can only take one as far as Canaan, God's grace will lead us to our inheritance in heaven. This is the reason Jesus took over the leadership of Israel across Jordan. It was to lead all who cross to victory. Israel's victory was Canaan. Ours will be heaven as the bride of Christ. However, we need to learn from Israel's mistakes in their Canaan experience so as not to repeat them. Israel gave us a good example of how the Lord interacts in our victories and defeats. When the Lord's armies fought alongside Israel, they were invincible. As long as Israel exercised faith and obedience, the victories were theirs. But when they did not walk in the Lord's ways, they suffered loss.

Joshua 7:1-5

¹But the children of Israel committed a trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel. ²And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Bethaven, on the east side of Bethel, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and

view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai. ³And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labour thither; for they are but few. ⁴So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men: and they fled before the men of Ai. ⁵And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them from before the gate even unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going down: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.

Because of Israel's sin, the Lord withheld His armies; and Israel's army went to Ai alone. Without the Lord's protection, they suffered defeat. We cannot have victory in life in our own strength. Victory comes only from the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Our battles in life, as children of God, are much like Israel's battles. In Canaan, Israel fought physical battles. In His Rest, we fight spiritual battles against the powers of Satan's army. To flourish in His Rest (our Canaan experience), we must follow Paul's instructions and put on the whole armor of God.

ARE MANY CHRISTIANS ABIDING IN GOD'S REST?

Only God can answer this question. We each have our own opinions based on fellow Christians we know and the churches we have attended. However, if we recall the chapter THE PRESENT CHURCH AGE, Christ's own rebuke of this church age answers that question. Many Christians are languishing in their wilderness experience, never realizing the joy of their salvation. Someday (judgement seat of Christ), God will hold pastors, preachers, and Bible teachers of this church age accountable for their failure in guiding Christians to His Rest.

Of all the saints who ever lived, the Apostle Paul is special. He is unique among Christians. You see, he probably had the shortest wilderness experience, per se, of any Christian in history. On the road to Damascus, Jesus immediately transitioned him to not only a position in His family but into His Rest to serve as His ambassador to the gentiles. It is for this reason that we so misunderstand Paul's letters to the churches. Paul's letters are instructions for entering and abiding in Christ, in other words, His Rest, not for those starting a wilderness walk. Unfortunately, we want to apply Paul's scripture instructions to those just redeemed. One of the most misused scriptures is:

1 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Here, Paul is not talking about someone just redeemed but someone who has crucified the flesh and entered His Rest (the Tabernacle Sanctuary: Christ). When we tell this to newly redeemed persons, they could expect lightning bolts of change. When things appear the same as before redemption, some may wonder if they missed something or just not saved. This scripture is contrary to the common beliefs and understanding of today's church, but our Tabernacle journey via

the Law will confirm this fact. Remember, all the pieces of the puzzle must be in place to see the total picture.

The early church stands in contrast to this church age as an example of a church that symbolically abided in His Rest. We can see stark differences between the early Church compared to today. Only through complete faith and trust could they have:

1. Sold all they had and given it to the poor
2. Hidden to worship to avoid persecution
3. Suffered beatings, ridicule, abandonment, and disinheritance by family for identification with Christ
4. Suffered death for their faith (stoning, death in the arena, etc.)

This is not to say the early church was without problems somewhat similar to today. Paul's letters attest to the growing pains of the new churches. However, conversion from life-long idol worship to a living God or conversion from Judaism fostered harsh retributions from family, friends, and the religious community. It took tremendous faith and courage for the early church to identify with Christ. I Wonder how many people would attend church today under the same circumstances? We would probably all agree on the answer. Does today's church prepare Christians for a life of service in His Rest? You can be the judge.

A WARNING TO CHRISTIANS ABIDING IN CHRIST (HIS REST)

The writer of Hebrews gives a stern warning to Christians who have entered His Rest and have returned to a wilderness life or left the church.

Hebrews 6:4-6

⁴For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, ⁵And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, ⁶If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

There are consequences for embarrassing God and tarnishing the sacrifice of His Son. This scripture warns Christians in whom Christ lives but by their immoral lives and witness put Him to an open shame. If our witness provokes mockery of the lost because of immoral lives as professing Christians, we put God to an open shame. If a redeemed person commits this sin, God may not return them to a place of service. Those that step-back on God and ignore His warnings and pleadings do so until at last it brings them to a place where "it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance." And, God can only deal with them at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

As Christians, we must understand that there is *no standing or sitting in Christ*. We cannot sit on our salvation. It is not permissible to be at the same place in our salvation as the day redeemed.

There is only walking and moving forward. If rebellious (refusal to follow the Holy Spirit) or detrimental to God's purposes, He may remove that person to prevent hindering others from seeking salvation. Never forget Israel's "sin unto death" as a warning for all Christians.

Here, it would be easy to say that God would not do things like that. Many would say, "God is love and would never remove a Christian for backsliding or leading an immoral life." Unfortunately, God can mask His wrath in His love. Satan uses this deception to fool a lethargic church. To see how a loving God can exercise anger, look again to the wilderness experience for the example of how God deals with the Spirit led redeemed who turn their backs on Him.

Exodus 32:1 & 7-10

¹And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him. ⁷And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: ⁸They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. ⁹And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: ¹⁰Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them

As previously stated, there is no standing or sitting as a Christian. There is only walking forward, following the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

FINAL THOUGHTS BEFORE MOVING TO OUR NEXT PARALLEL JOURNEY

If you do not remember anything else about His Rest (abiding in Christ), remember this. Our service in His Rest is preparation for the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Romans 14:10

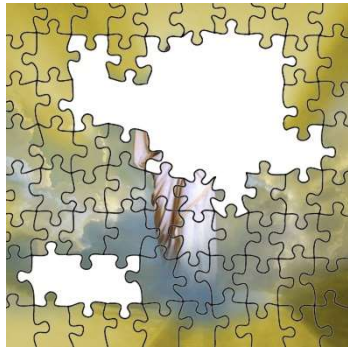
But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:11-15

¹¹For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹²Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; ¹³Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. ¹⁴If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. ¹⁵If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

It is, therefore, paramount that Christians understand the seriousness of God's requirements for His redeemed. Hopefully, those that have participated in this journey of discovery now comprehend that one cannot sit on their salvation and be satisfied. We must continually move forward to our place of service and rewards.

COMPLETING OUR JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY THROUGH FAITH

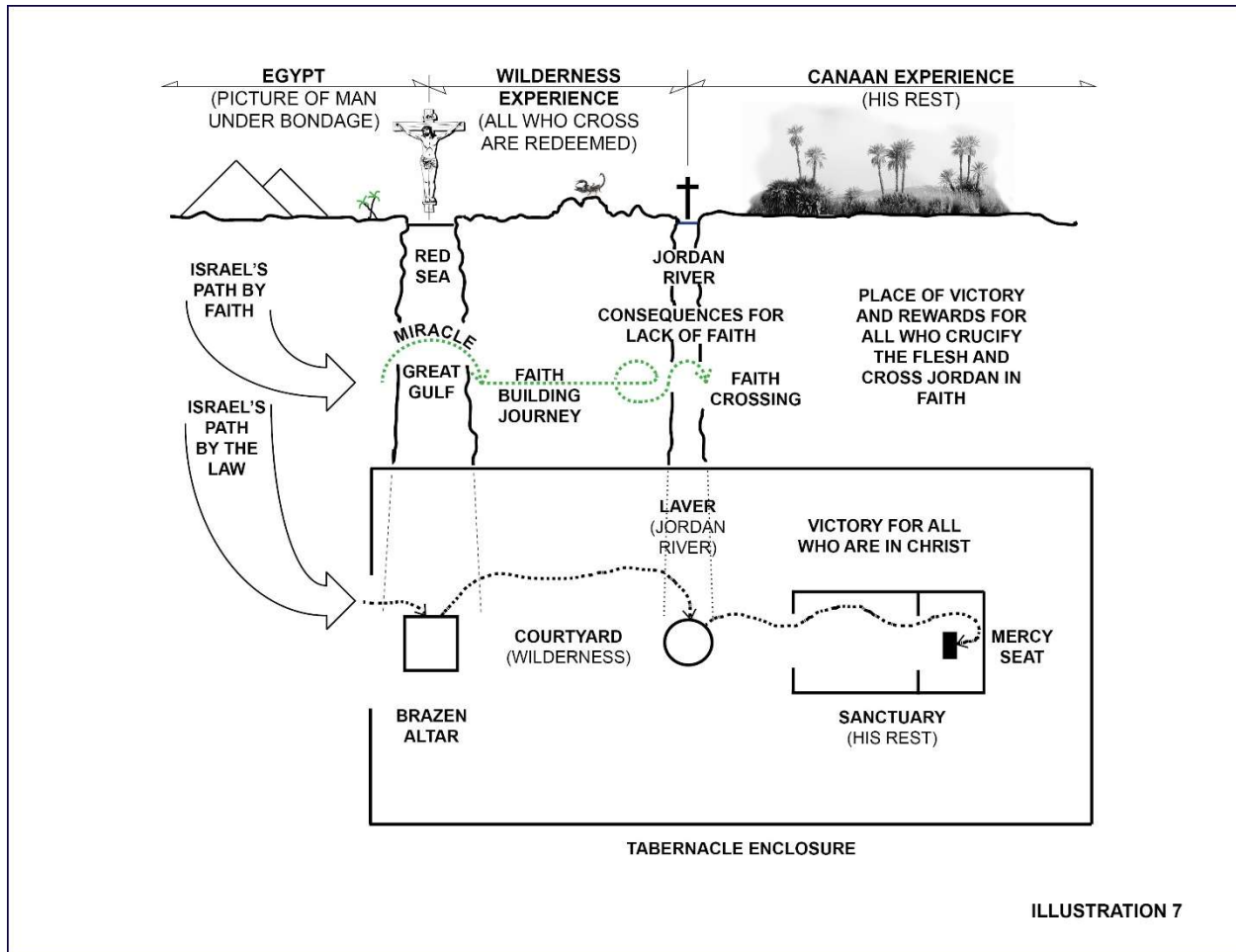


We have now completed our understanding of the revelation of God's plan for redemption and service as revealed through FAITH. Now, it is time for us to move forward to our next parallel journey of discovery. We still must confirm and reinforce what we learned through this FAITH journey. We now will view God's plan of redemption and service as revealed by a parallel journey through the LAW. This will reinforce what we have learned through faith and add eye-opening revelations to an understanding of salvation. We are making progress, but our picture puzzle is still incomplete. Therefore, let us move forward (walking, never standing) to our next journey of discovery. We will now walk through God's house of worship, the Tabernacle, and discover salvation shadowed through the Mosaic LAW.

A PARALLEL EXPERIENCE: The Tabernacle, a Shadow of Salvation through the LAW

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon the end of the ages are come.



We have now received the testimony of the first of three witnesses to our wilderness journey. This witness testified how God revealed the plan for redemption and service through Israel's FAITH building walk and failures. We will now turn to our second witness for testimony on salvation as revealed through a shadow of the Law given to Moses on Mount Sinai. Taken together, Israel's walk-through Faith and the Law complement each other and, together, reveal a more complete understanding of salvation. The testimony of these two witnesses, collectively, provides the basis for understanding the ministry of Jesus and the New Testament. As we will discover through the testimony of the second witness, the rituals of the Law foretell Christ, salvation, and the Church.

The parallel journey by way of the Law played-out in a structure called the Tabernacle. Before we can start our journey through this place of worship, it is first essential to understand the basics of its being, construction, and function. We will not explore all aspects and details of the Tabernacle and its rituals. That would be a whole book study unto itself. We will only examine those things most relative to this manuscript. If you would like a detailed study of the Tabernacle, there are many excellent books available. It is important for every born-again believer to study the Tabernacle. This place of worship is the cornerstone of understanding the ministry of Christ and the New Testament. If you would like to enhance your knowledge of the Tabernacle beyond this abridged disclosure, the one written by Dr. M. R. DeHaan, titled The Tabernacle, is highly recommend. Dr. Dehaan's wonderful work provided inspiration to start the forty-year journey developing this manuscript. Another good reference, although more textbook in presentation, is The Tabernacle: Camping with God by Stephen F. Olford. The Internet also has numerous Tabernacle studies available.

To begin our parallel journey, please refer to Illustration 7. Here, you will see an outline of the Tabernacle superimposed over the wilderness journey. The scale of the Tabernacle is a grossly exaggerated view. This provides a simple way to illustrate how components of the Tabernacle correspond to a place along the wilderness journey. In this part of the manuscript, we will not cover Jesus' journey through the Tabernacle fulfilling the role of High Priest. However, we will touch upon aspects of the construction and rituals that portrays Christ and God's plan of salvation. Additionally, be alert for shadows of doctrines that God laid out for His Church. The next chapter reveals the Church as foreshadowed in the Tabernacle. If you have never studied the Tabernacle, I pray these chapters will inspire you to further your biblical studies. .

A TREASURE FROM THE MOUNT

From our earliest days in Sunday school, most have heard the story of Moses and the Ten Commandments. Can you still visualize Charlton Heston, as Moses, carrying the tablets of the Law from Mount Sinai in the movie, "The Ten Commandments?"

Exodus 24:12

And the Lord said unto Moses, come up to me into the mount and be there, and I will give thee tablets of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written, that thou mayest teach them.

As you may recall from your Sunday school days and the recounting of this story, the next and most important part was probably never part of the narrative.

Exodus 25:1-9

¹ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, ² Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering. ³ And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass, ⁴ And blue, and purple, and

*scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, ⁵And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, ⁶Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense, ⁷Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate. ⁸**And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.** ⁹According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.*

Yes, God gave Moses something significantly more important than the Law on Mount Sinai. God gave Moses instructions for building a sanctuary where He would dwell among His people. This is not to say that the Law is unimportant. Without the Law, as we will see, there would have been no need for the Tabernacle. Since God gave both the Law and the Tabernacle, we have a clue that they are part of the same thing.

Israel built the Tabernacle to the exact specifications given to Moses on Mount Sinai (Exodus chapters 25-30). This is because every aspect of construction and construction materials tells a portion of the plan of salvation and describes some aspect of the character and mission of Christ.

God patterned His earthly dwelling place after a temple that exists in heaven (likely God's dwelling place). The writer of the Book of Hebrews confirms this in describing Jesus as the High Priest of the Tabernacle.

Hebrews 8:1-2

¹Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; ²A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

GOD'S PLAN TO RETURN TO FELLOWSHIP WITH MAN

To understand the LAW, we must first understand its purpose. God is so righteous He cannot be in the presence of sin. This was the reason He broke fellowship with Adam and Eve. Once they sinned, God could no longer be in their presence; and humanity fell under the penalty of death. However, God created man for fellowship and His glory and now that bond was gone. To restore this bond with His creation, God construed a plan to redeem (or purchase back) humanity to a state of grace. However, to make redemption possible, the sin issue required resolution. So, God revealed through Israel how He was going to negate the sin problem.

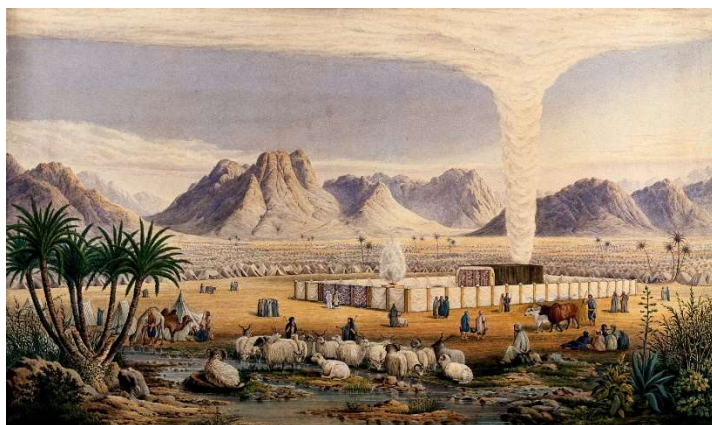
God gave Israel the Law to show the righteousness standards He demanded for anyone to be in His presence, hence, fellowship. Since He planned to dwell among them, they had to be spotless (sinless). To be in the presence of God with sin was a death penalty. These righteous standards manifested themselves in the Ten Commandments.

Exodus 20:1-17

¹And God spake all these words, saying, ²I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. ³Thou shalt have no other gods before me. ⁴Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: ⁵Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; ⁶And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. ⁷Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: ¹⁰But 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, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: ¹¹For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. ¹²Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. ¹³Thou shalt not kill. ¹⁴Thou shalt not commit adultery. ¹⁵Thou shalt not steal. ¹⁶Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. ¹⁷Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

While God set His standards for Israel to be in His presence, He knew it would be impossible for them to meet those standards, the Law. Every time they sinned, when in His presence, they would again be under the death penalty. So, God provided the Tabernacle as a place where Israel could obtain forgiveness for their sins for breaking the Law. To escape the death penalty, an innocent animal had to die as their substitute. As in the first Passover, we see confirmation that the shedding of blood for the forgiveness of sins will be the cornerstone of God's plan of salvation. Therefore, let us begin our journey through the Tabernacle to see how God revealed His plan through the shadow of the Law.

THE TABERNACLE ENCAMPMENT



We will begin this parallel journey by viewing an artist's representation of how the Tabernacle looked when erected in the wilderness and Israel encamped about it. It appears simply as a compound surrounded by a white linen fence with a single curtained entrance. From the outside, only the top of a tent-like structure, the Sanctuary, was visible above the fence. Nothing in the courtyard was visible from the outside. This

place of sacrifice and worship was a portable structure erected wherever Israel camped. The entrance always faced eastward. Using the people and animals as a reference, you can grasp the scale of the compound.

While looking at this picture, one thing catches our immediate attention. A column of smoke hovers above the Sanctuary. Remember, the spirit of God led Israel by a column of smoke by day and a column of fire by night. The Tabernacle was God's earthly dwelling place. When camped, the column of smoke rested above the Sanctuary where God resided. Another important observation is the Tabernacle's position in relation to the tribes of Israel. It is obvious that the Tabernacle was the center of Jewish life as all the tribes encamped about it.

Exodus 40:38

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, throughout all their journeys.

By viewing the Tabernacle from outside the enclosure and at ground level, we can make other interesting observations. From this view, we can only see three things: a white linen fence enclosure, the top of the Sanctuary visible above the fence, and a curtained entrance on the eastern end. However, one cannot see inside to the courtyard or inside the Sanctuary building. One cannot see over the fence, and there is a curtain across the only entrance. It was, therefore, impossible to see inside the Tabernacle from the outside. In simple terms, when viewed from outside, the Tabernacle was a mysterious and unimpressive sight. There was no way to see or comprehend the treasures inside the Sanctuary.

THE COURTYARD ENCLOSURE

Exodus 27:9-15 & 17-19

⁹And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle: for the south side southward there shall be hangings for the court of fine twined linen of an hundred cubits long for one side: ¹⁰And the twenty pillars thereof and their twenty sockets shall be of brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets shall be of silver. ¹¹And likewise for the north side in length there shall be hangings of an hundred cubits long, and his twenty pillars and their twenty sockets of brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets of silver. ¹²And for the breadth of the court on the west side shall be hangings of fifty cubits: their pillars ten, and their sockets ten. ¹³And the breadth of the court on the east side eastward shall be fifty cubits. ¹⁴The hangings of one side of the gate shall be fifteen cubits: their pillars three, and their sockets three. ¹⁵And on the other side shall be hangings fifteen cubits: their pillars three, and their sockets three. ¹⁷All the pillars round about the court shall be filleted with silver; their hooks shall be of silver, and their sockets of brass. ¹⁸The length of the court shall be an hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty everywhere, and the height five cubits of fine twined linen, and their sockets of brass. ¹⁹All the vessels of the tabernacle in all the service thereof, and all the pins thereof, and all the pins of the court, shall be of brass.

The white linen fence that enclosed the Tabernacle courtyard was 7.5 feet tall (2.3 m), 150 feet long (45.7 m) and 75 feet wide (22.9 m). Silver crossbeams attached to sixty wooden fence posts, set in brass sockets as a foundation, supported the linen sheets. The materials of construction are very important. White linen always speaks of God's perfect righteousness (i.e., Revelation 19:8) and brass always speaks of God's judgment against sin (i.e., Numbers 21:4-9).¹ Silver in the Bible always speaks of redemption through the atoning blood of Christ.²

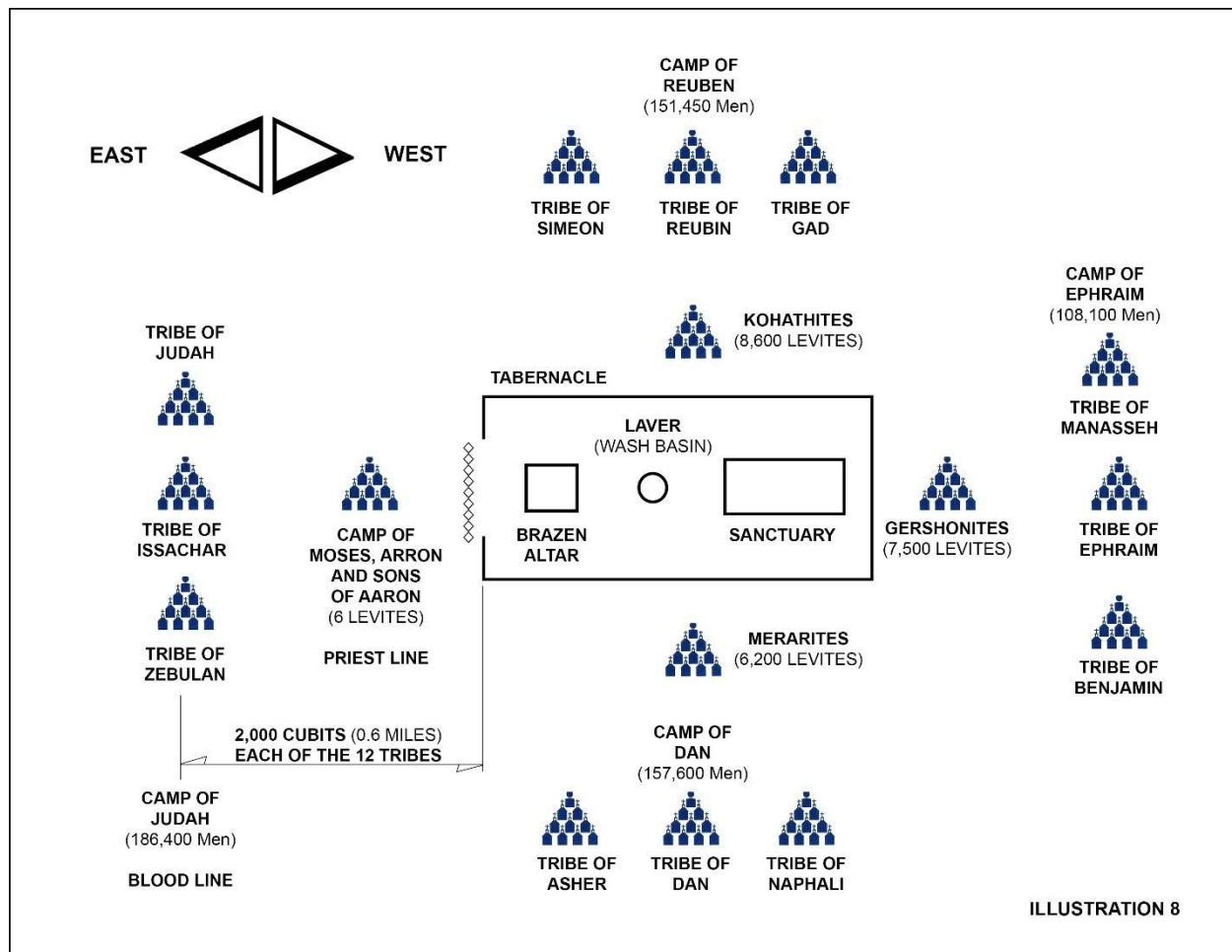
To understand the need for the enclosure fence, we must remember that God dwelt in the Sanctuary, and He cannot be in the presence of sin. Therefore, He surrounded Himself with a veil of righteousness that prevented anyone from outside approaching Him. The fence, therefore, forbids man from approaching God as long as he has sin upon him. To come over, under, or through the fence was instant death.³

Numbers 3:38

*But those that encamp before the tabernacle toward the east, even before the tabernacle of the congregation eastward, shall be Moses, and Aaron and his sons, keeping the charge of the sanctuary for the charge of the children of Israel; and **the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.***

But God wanted fellowship and reconciliation with His creation, so He provided an opening in His veil of righteousness (the linen fence) whereby man could approach Him. It was the eastern facing, curtained gate.

SYMBOLISM OF THE TABERNACLE ENCAMPMENT



Before moving on to the Eastern Gate, we need to pause and discuss symbolisms found in the encampment. Some relate to the Tabernacle enclosure just discussed.

As the center of social and religious activity, the twelve tribes encamped around the Tabernacle in positions designated by God through Moses. Three tribes per side comprised one camp making four camps for the twelve tribes. These camps occupied the outermost positions from the Tabernacle. Moses positioned the camp of Judah on the east side, Ephraim to the west, Reuben to the south, and Dan to the north. The Levites were located nearer to the Tabernacle than the four camps of the twelve tribes.

In Illustration 8, we can see symbolism in the placement of the camps of the tribes and the Levites. Note the position of the twelve tribes in relation to The Tabernacle. Moses placed each camp a minimum of one mile from the Tabernacle.⁴ Placed at this distance, the total encampment would occupy approximately twelve square miles.⁵

This far distance for the camps from the Tabernacle seems strange until we recall the purpose of the white linen fence. It was God's shield to keep sin from coming into His presence. Therefore, He put sinful man behind a buffer zone a safe distance from His Holy residence. Then, God assigned the Levite camp positions between the Tabernacle and the camps of the twelve tribes. The Levites were holy and consecrated by God and selected by Him for the service of the Tabernacle and ministering to the tribes. They camped close to the Tabernacle to perform their holy duties. They consisted of the families of Kohathites, Gershonites, Merarites, and the camps of Moses, Aaron and His four sons. This encirclement of consecrated Levites stood as a band of holiness that served as an additional barrier between God and sin. He also dictated that no one from the camps could approach within 2,000 cubits (0.6 miles or 0.97 km) of the Ark of the Covenant unless coming to worship.⁶ These extreme measures demonstrated that God cannot and will not tolerate or be in the presence of sin. However, God provided an avenue for safe passage through these sin barriers at the Eastern Gate of the Tabernacle: Passage safely through the barrier was permissible only through Christ the King, Christ the High Priest, and the Christ of prophesy.

To understand the eastward facing gate as the only entrance to God's presence, we must understand its purpose and position. Illustration 8 clearly shows the symbolism. Israel always erected the Tabernacle with the gate facing eastward. This was necessary because of prophesy that the Son of Man would appear from of the east.

Ezekiel 43:1-2

¹Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: ²And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.

Matthew 24:27

For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Wherever Israel camped, the camp of Judah positioned their tents outside the Levite priests and in-line with the Eastern Gate. Because the Lord Jesus descended through King David, who in turn descended through the Tribe of Judah, the genealogy dictated Judah's camp position. So, we see that the entrance to the presence of God points to His Son as the only way to enter through His veil of righteousness and into His presence.

Numbers 2:3

On the east side, toward the rising of the sun, those of the standard of the forces with Judah shall camp according to their armies.

John 10:1

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

John 10:9

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

John 14:6

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Scripture verifies the symbolism of Christ descending through the Tribe of Judah. Jacob, the father of the twelve sons who fathered the twelve tribes, prophesied that the senior position in the family would pass to his son, Judah, and Christ would descend through his family.

Genesis 49:10

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

The position of Moses and Aaron's camps, just outside the gate, points to Christ as the only way to enter the Tabernacle. If you recall from an earlier chapter, Moses was a type of Christ, the mediator between man and God. Aaron was the High Priest of the Tabernacle. He foreshadowed Christ as the future High Priest as the only one allowed in the presence of God.

Here would be an opportune time to dispel a common misunderstanding regarding the Levites. Not all Levites were priests, but all priests were Levites. However, God set aside all Levites for service to the Tabernacle. Only Aaron and his four sons made-up the priesthood; and God killed two of those sons for failing to follow instructions in their duties. The remaining Levites (the Kohathites, Gershonites, and Merarites) had various duties assisting the priests but could not handle any sacrificial blood or enter the Sanctuary. The primary duties of the sons of Gershon and Merari were to disassemble, pack and reassemble the Tabernacle when the camp relocated (Numbers 10:17). The sons of Kohath were responsible to pack and carry the holy furniture (Numbers 10:21).

Leviticus 18:5-7

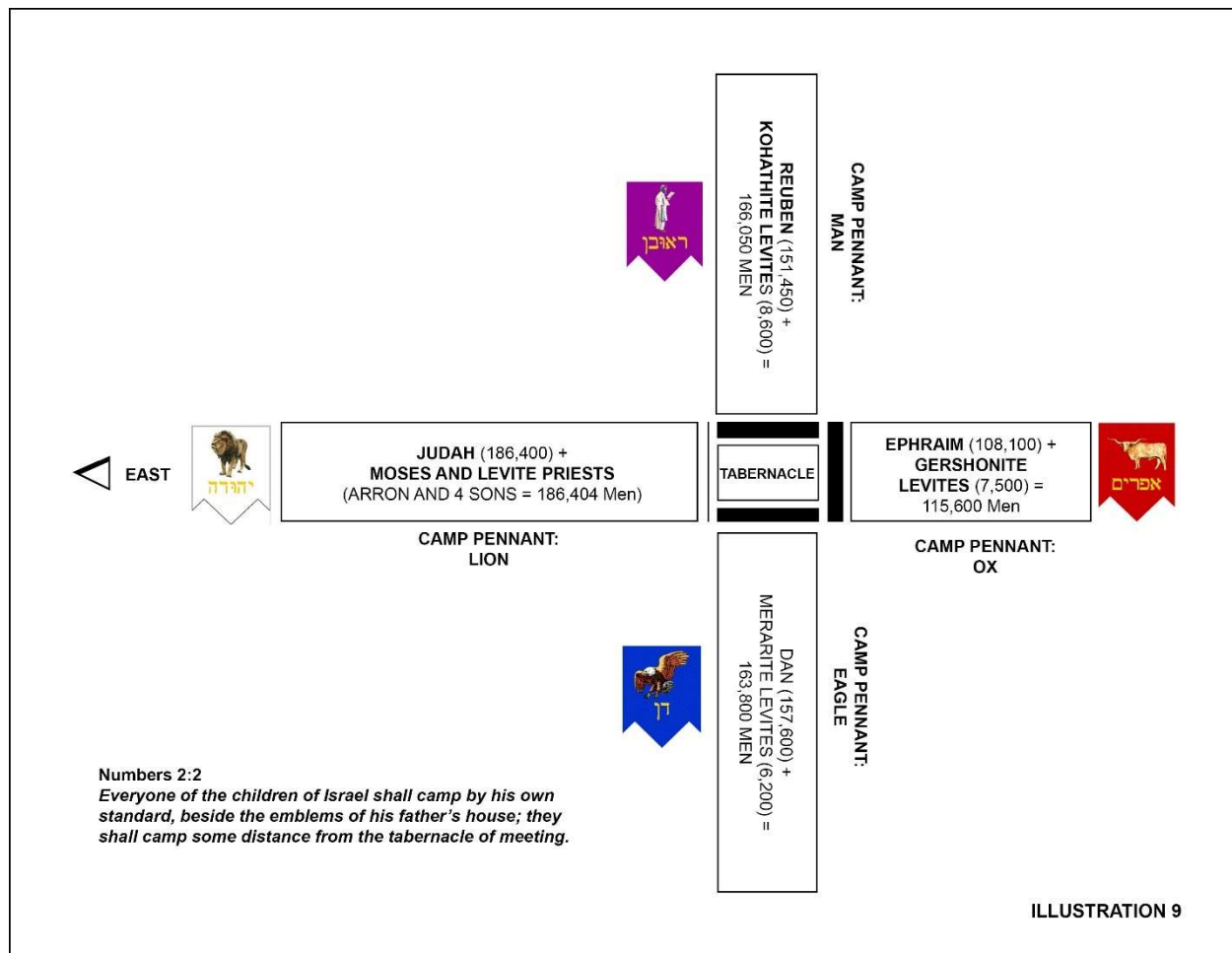
⁵ *You are to be responsible for the care of the sanctuary and the altar, so that my wrath will not fall on the Israelites again.* ⁶ *I myself have selected your fellow Levites from among the Israelites as a gift to you, dedicated to the Lord to do the work at the tent of meeting.* ⁷ ***But only you and your sons may serve as priests in connection with everything at the altar and inside the curtain.*** *I am giving you the service of the priesthood as a gift. Anyone else who comes near the sanctuary is to be put to death.*

VEILED PURPOSE OF THE TABERNACLE CAMP LAYOUT

In Illustration 8, we saw how God arranged the tribes into camps about the Tabernacle. As we saw in earlier chapters, many things in scripture veil hidden meanings that are not obvious to sight or reading comprehension. The Tabernacle encampment is no different. Both the numbers of men in each camp and their identifying pennants (ensigns) dictated the layout.

Numbers 1:1-3

¹ And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of the congregation, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, ² Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, after their families, by the house of their fathers, with the number of their names, every male by their polls; ³ From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel: thou and Aaron shall number them by their armies.



In Illustration 9, we can see why God had Moses number each tribe. The largest camp was Judah. It pointed eastward to fulfill scripture and anchor the veiled message. Then, God placed the positions of the remaining three camps according to their numbers. He placed Ephraim, the smallest camp, opposite the largest camp, westward. He then placed the two camps near equal in numbers north and south. By plotting the camp positions in proportion to their numbers, the Tabernacle camp becomes a picture of the cross of Calvary. This symbolism alerts that the Tabernacle foreshadows redemption through Christ.

Also, note that each camp had a pennant to identify the three tribes it contained. None of the original ensigns survived to this day; however, tradition tells us the colors and the Bible tells the crest of each pennant. The Camp of Judah was a lion, Ephraim an ox (or calf), Dan an eagle, and Reuben a man. The crests each tell a different attribute of Christ as both savior and the Messiah.⁷ Scripture refers to Christ as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. The Lion crest symbolized Christ as King, one of leadership and power.

Jeremiah 23:5

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

The Man crest of the camp of Reuben symbolized Christ as a suffering servant, the human messiah.

Zechariah 3:8

Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH.

The Ox crest of the camp of Ephraim symbolized Christ's strength and determination.

Zechariah 6:12

And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD:

This Eagle crest of the camp of Dan symbolized the execution of judgement.

Jeremiah 33:15

In those days, and at that time, will I cause the BRANCH of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land

In the Book of Revelation, we come across four creatures surrounding God's throne that praise Him continuously. Immediately, their appearance draws our attention. Their faces are the same as the pennants of Israel's encampments (reference Illustration 9). This alerts us that there is a

connection between the throne of God and the Tabernacle, and in particular, their relationship to the encampments.

Revelation 4:6-9

*⁶And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were **four beasts** full of eyes before and behind. ⁷ And the first beast was like a **lion**, and the second beast like a **calf**, and the third beast had a face as a **man**, and the fourth beast was like a flying **eagle**. ⁸ And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. ⁹ And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,*

There are different interpretations of what the four creatures represent. Some believe they represent the doxology of God. Some believe they represent the four gospels. Quoting from the Bible Knowledge Commentary provides some clarity:⁸

“They symbolically represent the attributes of God including His omniscience and omnipresence (indicated by the creatures being full of eyes) with the four animals bringing out other attributes of God: the lion indicating majesty and omnipotence; the ox, typical of faithful labor and patience; man, indicating intelligence; and the eagle, the greatest bird, representing supreme sovereignty. Another possible view is that they represent Christ as revealed in the four Gospels: in Matthew, the lion of the tribe of Judah; in Mark, the ox as the servant of Yahweh; in Luke, the incarnate human Jesus; and in John, the eagle as the divine Son of God. Another alternative is that the four living creatures are angels (cf. Isaiah 6:2-3), who extol the attributes of God.”

From a personal view, whereas the ensigns represented the attributes of Christ, here, the four creatures represent the attributes of God. If you recall from an earlier chapter, we noted that the trinity has to be present in salvation. Here in the Tabernacle, the Trinity was present: the Holy Spirit in the column of smoke above the Holy Place, Jehovah residing in the Most Holy Place and the Tabernacle, itself,

as a representation of Christ. Further observation points to the creatures representing service to God Jehovah. In heaven, they continually surrounded His throne and continually praised Him. Here, they represent the same thing. God’s throne is now in the Tabernacle Sanctuary. So, He surrounded himself with representations of the same instruments of praise symbolized by the camps of Israel who praise Him by honoring His Law through worship.

THE EASTERN GATE

The entry gate was 30 feet (9.1 M) wide. Its construction leaves no doubt that Christ is the only entrance into the courtyard and inside God’s veil or righteousness. Whereas, the white fence spoke of God’s separation and protection from sin, the fabric curtain of the Eastern Gate symbolized Christ as the only way into God’s domain. Constructed of white linen and beautifully woven

with blue, scarlet, and purple thread, it symbolized every aspect of Christ's character. The white linen spoke of Christ's righteousness. The blue threads spoke of Christ's heavenly origin. The scarlet threads spoke of Christ's sacrifice, and the purple threads spoke of Christ's royalty.⁹

Exodus 27:16

For the gate of the court there shall be a screen twenty cubits long, woven of blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen, made by a weaver. It shall have four pillars and four sockets.

THE BRAZEN ALTAR

Any doubts that the eastern gate was the only entry into the presence of God disappears as soon as we enter. Immediately, the sinner faced God's judgment against sin. To come inside God's veil of righteousness required payment of the sin penalty (death). Erected just inside the entrance was an altar where priests sacrificed animals (the sinner's substitute) and offered it to God on the sinner's behalf.



Exodus 27:1-8

¹And thou shalt make an altar of shittim wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad; the altar shall be foursquare: and the height thereof shall be three cubits. ²And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof: his horns shall be of the same: and thou shalt overlay it with brass. ³And thou shalt make his pans to receive his ashes, and his shovels, and his basons, and his fleshhooks, and his firepans: all the vessels thereof thou shalt make of brass. ⁴And thou shalt make for it a grate of network of brass; and upon the net shalt thou make four brasen rings in the

four corners thereof. ⁵And thou shalt put it under the compass of the altar beneath, that the net may be even to the midst of the altar. ⁶And thou shalt make staves for the altar, staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with brass. ⁷And the staves shall be put into the rings, and the staves shall be upon the two sides of the altar, to bear it. ⁸Hollow with boards shalt thou make it: as it was shewed thee in the mount, so shall they make it.

Again, referencing Illustration 7 at the beginning of this chapter, you will note that the Brazen Altar lines-up with the Red Sea crossing. This is because the Brazen Altar had the same meaning as the crossing of the Red Sea: a miracle transition across the impassable Great Gulf between heaven and hell. The crossing was a perfect picture of the cross of Calvary. Here, it is the same. Only the redeemed can come into the presence of God. Only entering through the Eastern Gate and accepting the sacrifice of a substitute granted passage through God's veil of righteousness. Symbolically, all who entered by way of the sacrifice of a substitute at the Brazen Altar received temporary redemption and safe passage inside God's veil of righteousness. To pass the Brazen Altar without sacrificing (the shedding of blood) was instant death.³

Before continuing into the courtyard, let us stop to discuss the fire on the Brazen Altar that consumed the burnt offerings. It is important because of its source and connection to salvation.

Leviticus 9:23-24

²³And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and blessed the people: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people. ²⁴And there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.

Not only did God kindle the fire, He commanded that it was to burn continuously.

Leviticus 6:12-13

¹²And the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it; it shall not be put out: and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order upon it; and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace offerings. ¹³The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out.

In scripture, fire is highly symbolic of God.

Deuteronomy 4:24

For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.

The website gotquestions.org offered good insight to the meaning of the fire on the Brazen Altar.¹⁰ *"This fire represented God's presence. The Shekinah glory was visible in the fire at the altar of burnt offering. This ongoing presence of God reminded the Israelites that salvation is of the Lord. The atonement made at the burnt offering could only be made through Him. The fire on the altar,*

served as a constant reminder of God's power. It was a gift from heaven. No other source of fire was acceptable to God. Fire served as a sign of judgment and refining"

THE COURTYARD

After approaching the Tabernacle through the Eastern Gate and sacrificing a substitute, we stand inside the courtyard. Because the sin penalty was paid at the altar, we can stand inside God's protective veil of righteousness without enforcement of the death penalty. However, once inside, it is important to take stock of the views about us. Let us visualize ourselves standing inside the courtyard and looking around. What can we see? Looking behind (eastward), we see the Brazen Altar that speaks of redemption through the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. Looking to each side (north and south) we can see the white linen fence. This speaks of assurance of redemption as we can stand in the presence of God's righteousness without a death penalty. Looking downward, we see desert sand and dirt, not streets of gold. This is a reminder that after redemption there are additional steps required to see the beauty and glory of our salvation. Looking to the front (westward), we see a large brass washbasin blocking our path to the Sanctuary (Christ). This appears as a warning that there is a condition for us to abide in Christ our redeemer. Beyond, we see a tent-like structure (the Sanctuary) covered with gray animal skins that have no visible beauty. Wow! We stand redeemed in the courtyard and no beauty is visible to us. The view inside looks pretty much like the one from outside. Where is all the beauty and new life I expected to see when redeemed? Ponder this indoctrination altering observation while we continue examining the rest of the Tabernacle.

THE BRASS LAVER

Located between the Brazen Altar and the Sanctuary was a large brass washbasin, the Laver.



Exodus 30:17-21

¹⁷And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, ¹⁸Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. ¹⁹For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: ²⁰When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD: ²¹So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations.

In carrying out their duties, it was necessary for the priests to work at the Brazen Altar to sacrifice the animals and perform duties inside the Sanctuary. However, because they handled blood and

walked on a dirt and sand surface, they were continuously contaminated and unclean. Their duties required them to walk pass the Laver several times per day. However, there was a catch. The Laver was pure brass in construction, and brass in the scriptures always speaks of the judgment of God. Each time the priests walked pass the Laver, it was necessary to stop and wash their hands and feet. Failure to do so brought God's instant judgment. To touch the Brazen Altar or the Sanctuary without washing both hands and feet was instant death.

Exodus 30:20-21

²⁰ *When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD:*

²¹ *So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations.*

Once again, please refer to Illustration 7 at the beginning of this chapter. With the Tabernacle superimposed over the wilderness journey, note that the Laver is in the same position as the Jordan River. This is because they have the same meaning in God's plan of salvation. The Laver is analogous to crossing the Jordan River into Canaan (His Rest). Like crossing Jordan, it is symbolic to crucifying the flesh and putting on the new man in order to serve God and know Him in all His glory. Inside the Sanctuary is the residence of God; and to enter into His presence, the priests had to be clean. Likewise, to enter into God's presence, we must walk after the spirit and not the flesh. In the simplest of terms, the washbasin is a picture of separation (washing off the filth of the world) in order to be in the presence and will of God. It is analogous to the ritual meaning of baptism.

THE SANCTUARY

Just as the Brazen Altar was symbolic of the Red Sea crossing and the Laver the Jordan crossing, the Sanctuary was analogous to Canaan. For the Christian, it is analogous to HIS REST promised to those who crucify the flesh and live by faith in Christ. The key words here are "IN CHRIST." Remember the scripture we covered earlier:

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Crossing Jordan into His Rest and entering the Sanctuary are the same as entering into Christ. Only those that have crucified the flesh can enter and behold the beauty of His majesty and our salvation. We are not "in Christ" at redemption as taught in today's church. We cannot come to be in Christ until we have separated ourselves from the world and entered His Rest (inside the Sanctuary). In order for these conclusions to be true, the Sanctuary must be a perfect representation of the Lord Jesus Christ. We will now enter the Sanctuary, examining the furnishings and interpret their meanings as they relate to the Lord and salvation.

Exodus 26:15-30

¹⁵And thou shalt make boards for the tabernacle of shittim wood standing up. ¹⁶Ten cubits shall be the length of a board, and a cubit and a half shall be the breadth of one board. ¹⁷Two tenons shall there be in one board, set in order one against another: thus shalt thou make for all the boards of the tabernacle. ¹⁸And thou shalt make the boards for the tabernacle, twenty boards on the south side southward. ¹⁹And thou shalt make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards; two sockets under one board for his two tenons, and two sockets under another board for his two tenons. ²⁰And for the second side of the tabernacle on the north side there shall be twenty boards: ²¹And their forty sockets of silver; two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board. ²²And for the sides of the tabernacle westward thou shalt make six boards. ²³And two boards shalt thou make for the corners of the tabernacle in the two sides. ²⁴And they shall be coupled together beneath, and they shall be coupled together above the head of it unto one ring: thus shall it be for them both; they shall be for the two corners. ²⁵And they shall be eight boards, and their sockets of silver, sixteen sockets; two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board. ²⁶And thou shalt make bars of shittim wood; five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle, ²⁷And five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle, for the two sides westward. ²⁸And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end. ²⁹And thou shalt overlay the boards with gold, and make their rings of gold for places for the bars: and thou shalt overlay the bars with gold. ³⁰And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was shewed thee in the mount.

The Sanctuary was a tent-like structure 15 feet (4.6 M) wide by 45 feet (13.7 M) long by 15 feet (4.6 M) high and divided into two separate rooms. The Holy Place was the first room entered from the courtyard. It was 30 feet (9.1 M) long by 15 (4.6 M) feet wide. The room beyond the Holy Place was a room 15 feet (4.6 M) long by 15 feet (4.6 M) wide and called the Most Holy Place, more commonly known as the Holy of Holies. A heavy veil (curtain) separated the two rooms.

THE FOUNDATION OF BLOOD

The materials of construction had profound meaning. The foundation consisted of 100 solid silver blocks, each weighing 100 talents or about 110 pounds each.¹¹ This was the equivalent of 5.5 tons of silver.

Exodus 38:25 & 27

²⁵And the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation was an hundred talents, and thousand seven hundred and threescore and fifteen shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary: ²⁷And of the hundred talents of silver were cast the sockets of the sanctuary, and the sockets of the vail; an hundred sockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a socket.

The priests placed the foundation blocks of silver for the Sanctuary on the wilderness ground in the shape of a 45 x 15 feet (13.7 M x 4.6 M) rectangle. Thus, the Tabernacle foundation's value exceeded those of most modern-day buildings. At early 2018 silver prices, the foundation would be worth approximately \$2,978,000 (2,533,504 Euros).

The meaning of the silver explains the enormous value. Silver in the Bible speaks of the atoning blood of Christ. This foundation is the basis of our standing in Christ, His priceless atoning blood.

We have no doubt that silver always speaks of redemption. In the Book of Exodus, God gave Moses instructions for collecting the silver.¹²

Exodus 30:11-16

*¹¹ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, ¹² When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the LORD, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest them. ¹³ This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel (silver) after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is twenty gerahs:) an half shekel shall be the offering of the LORD. ¹⁴ Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the LORD. ¹⁵ The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they **give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.** ¹⁶ **And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle** of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.*

Later, the Apostle Paul confirms that Christ is the foundation of redemption.

1 Corinthians 3:11

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

THE WALLS

Exodus 26:15-17, 29

¹⁵ And thou shalt make boards for the tabernacle of shittim wood standing up. ¹⁶ Ten cubits shall be the length of a board, and a cubit and a half shall be the breadth of one board. ¹⁷ Two tenons shall there be in one board, set in order one against another: thus shalt thou make for all the boards of the tabernacle. ²⁹ And thou shalt overlay the boards with gold, and make their rings of gold for places for the bars: and thou shalt overlay the bars with gold.

Construction of the walls of Sanctuary was from vertical boards of Shittim (also called Acacia) wood overlaid with pure gold. The covering of pure gold typifies deity in manifestation and speaks of His divine glory. Shittim wood is a desert growth and a fitting symbol of Christ in His humanity

as “a root out of dry ground.” It was an unattractive tree prophesied in Isaiah that prefigured Christ in His humanity.¹³

Isaiah 53:2

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

It points directly to Him of whom the Apostle John wrote.

John 1:14

*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt **(in the tabernacle)**, among us and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Five Shittim wood bars covered with pure gold tied together the upright boards that made up the walls. The bars speak to us of the unifying work of the Holy Spirit which fitly frames the building of God as a holy temple to the Lord.¹⁴ The Apostle Paul confirms this in his letter to the Ephesians.

Ephesians 2:21-22

²¹*In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:* ²²*In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*

THE ROOF PARADOX

Exodus 26:1, 7, 14

¹*Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubims of cunning work shalt thou make them. ⁷And thou shalt make curtains of goats' hair to be a covering upon the tabernacle: eleven curtains shalt thou make. ¹⁴And thou shalt make a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed red, and a covering above of badgers' skins.*

The Sanctuary roof consisted of four layers. The designation of each layer is interesting. The two innermost layers were curtains and the two outermost layers were animal skins. The inner most layer was an embroidered white linen curtain called in scripture “the tabernacle” (Exodus 26:1). Next was a curtain made from goat’s hair, called “the tent” (Exodus 26:7). The next layer, ram’s skins dyed red, covered “the tent” curtain. Over the rams’ skins was the final layer made from waterproof badger (seal) skins. Collectively, these two top layers were “the coverings” (Exodus 26:14). Each layer had a different purpose and spiritual significance.

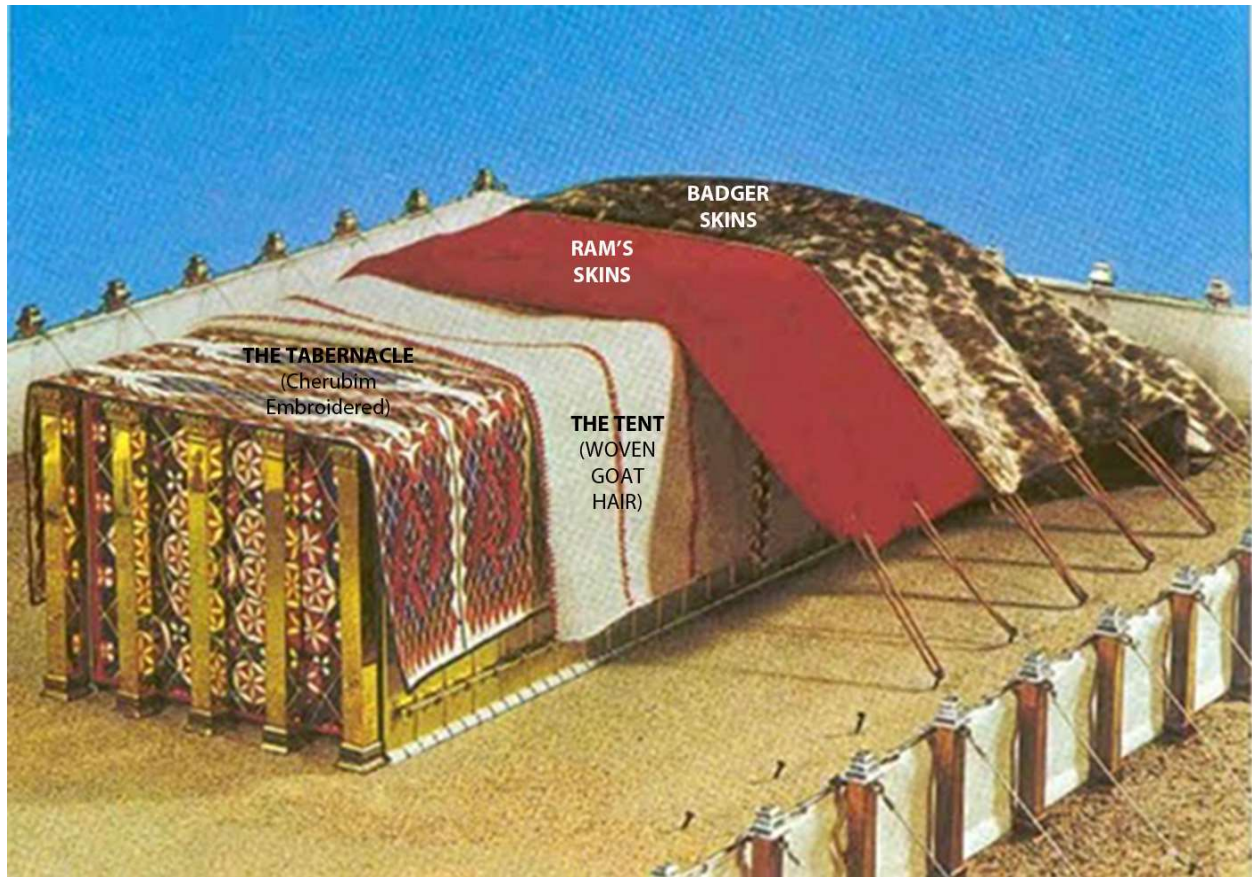
The Tabernacle, constructed in the wilderness, begs the question where Israel could obtain seal-skins and all other construction materials. Scripture tells us they brought all the construction materials for the Tabernacle out of Egypt (Exodus 35:23). Yes, Israel plundered Egypt of its riches when the Exodus began. Seals, plentiful in the Nile River, supplied the leather for their

shoes. So, the Exodus began with a good supply for their journey. For construction of the Tabernacle's outer roof covering, God asked Israel to give up their shoe leather. God rewards those who in faith are obedient to His service.

Deuteronomy 8:4

Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.

THE TABERNACLE (AN INNER) CURTAIN



The “tabernacle” curtain covered the ceiling of the Sanctuary, both the Holy Place and Most Holy Place. The curtain received this name because it covered God’s temporary dwelling place, or in other words, His Tabernacle.

This white linen ceiling curtain, embroidered with blue, purple, and scarlet, not only covered the entire Sanctuary ceiling but also overhung the north, south and west outside walls. It was the only curtain visible from inside the Sanctuary. When entering the Sanctuary, we behold its beauty and marvel at its representation of Christ our redeemer.

THE TENT (AN INNER) CURTAIN

The ceiling layer above the “tabernacle” curtain was the inordinate “tent” curtain. Woven from goat’s hair, it, along with the “tabernacle” curtain, overhung the outside walls of the Sanctuary. To understand the purpose of this curtain, one must understand the sin offering made for the people of Israel on the annual Day of Atonement. Later, we will discuss the sin offering in detail, which will explain the symbolism of this curtain. Abbreviated here, this layer was symbolic of Christ as our sin bearer.

THE OUTER LAYERS

There were two waterproof outer layers to weather protect the two inner curtains and Sanctuary interior. The layer directly above the “tent curtain” was ram skins dyed red. The ram skins spoke of Christ as our substitute sacrificial lamb. The crimson color spoke of the blood shed for the remission of our sins.

The outermost protective layer was badger (seal) skins that made a tough, waterproof covering for the Sanctuary. This gray unattractive outer covering portrays Christ in His humanity. It was the only covering visible from both the courtyard or visible above the fence from the wilderness. Therefore, the Sanctuary covering appeared the same from both inside the Tabernacle courtyard or from outside the enclosure fence. In other words, *an unredeemed person outside the enclosure sees Christ just the same as a redeemed person inside the enclosure, only as a man*. Ponder that thought-provoking statement as we continue.

The plain, unattractive gray leather covering is the worldly view of Christ: merely a man with no recognition of His deity. The prophet Isaiah told us how the world would see Him.

Isaiah 53:2

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

This unattractive view of Christ presents a paradox for current doctrines. Hopefully, the Holy Spirit has already alerted you to something new, unexpected, and not recognized in today’s church. Did you notice that those who enter through God’s veil of righteousness (the Eastern Gate) and sacrifice a substitute at the Brazen Altar (redeemed) still see only the humanity of Christ and not His deity? If we want to see and know Christ in all His resurrected glory, we must continue our walk and enter the Sanctuary (His Rest).

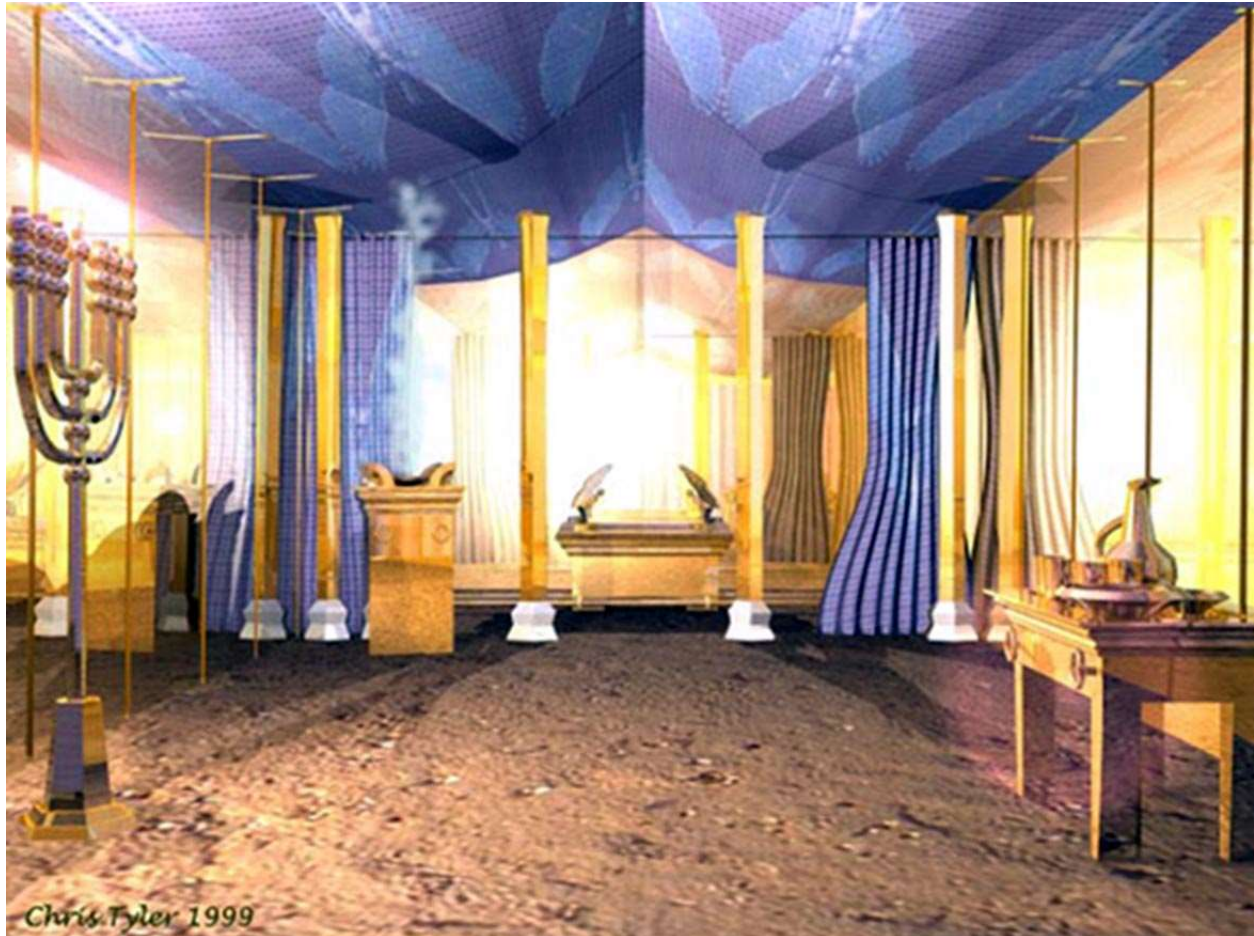
Dr. M. R. DeHann shared a similar view and wrote in his book, The Tabernacle, *“Salvation begins at the cross but it certainly does not end there. The new-born believer is now to go on to the next step, and then the next, and the next, until he attains the final victory, and rests underneath the shekinah glory in the (Tabernacle) Holy of Holies.”* ¹⁵

Therefore, let us leave the courtyard (our wilderness walk), and enter the Sanctuary. Let us behold the beauty before us and marvel at knowing Christ as the son of God and not just as a man. Let us enter the rest that God prepared for those who love and trust Him.

ENTERING THE SANCTUARY

When entering the Sanctuary, we walk into the room called the Holy Place. Immediately, our attention focuses upon a beautiful sight. Nothing on the outside gave any clue to the beauty we would behold. Above, the “tabernacle” ceiling curtain dazzles. It was white linen beautifully embroidered in blue, scarlet, and purple. Also embroidered into the linen were images of cherubim with outstretched wings. It appeared as though they monitored the priests performing their duties. As revealed earlier in the VEILED PURPOSE OF THE TABERNACLE LAYOUT, cherubim in the Bible are the holy guardians and attendants of the throne of God. They are the guardians of His throne and continually praise Him day and night. As the throne of God was temporarily resident in the Sanctuary, the cherubim of the “tabernacle curtain.” in type, performed the same rituals.

The blue embroidery in the linen ceiling speaks of Christ’s heavenly origin. The scarlet speaks of His sacrificial death. Purple speaks of His royal character, and the white background speaks of His sinless, rightness perfection. In other words, this curtain was symbolic of Christ’s resurrection glory. To see Christ as the son of God, we must see Him from within. We must be in Christ to know the beauty of Christ. And, the only way to be in Christ is come by way of His blood.¹⁶ In other words, we must leave the wilderness, cross Jordan (crucify the flesh) and enter into the Sanctuary to be “in Christ” and see Him as the architect of salvation.



As we look around the Holy Place, we observe three pieces of furniture: The Seven Branch Golden Candlestick (left), the Table of Shewbread (right), the Altar of Incense (front of curtains), and curtains (veils) separating another room called the Holy of Holies. Beyond the veils (open for clarity), we can see the Ark of the Covenant with two cherubim resting above the Ark. The veils remained closed every day, except for the Day of Atonement (Yom Kipper) when the High Priest entered to make the annual sin offerings.

THE SEVEN-BRANCH CANDLESTICK

If we look to our left (southward), we see the Seven Branch Candlestick. We will discuss the candlestick first because it is the only light inside the Sanctuary. If the candles go out, there is total darkness; and we can see nothing of Christ. Without the lamp stand, we would not be able to see any furniture and learn anything of their meaning regarding the character of Christ and the plan of salvation.

Exodus 25:31-40

³¹*And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made: his shaft, and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of the same.* ³²*And six branches shall come out of the sides of it; three branches of the candlestick out of the one*

side, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side: ³³Three bowls made like unto almonds, with a knop and a flower in one branch; and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch, with a knop and a flower: so in the six branches that come out of the candlestick. ³⁴And in the candlestick shall be four bowls made like unto almonds, with their knops and their flowers. ³⁵And there shall be a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches that proceed out of the candlestick. ³⁶Their knops and their branches shall be of the same: all it shall be one beaten work of pure gold. ³⁷And thou shalt make the seven lamps thereof: and they shall light the lamps thereof, that they may give light over against it. ³⁸And the tongs thereof, and the snuffdishes thereof, shall be of pure gold. ³⁹Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels. ⁴⁰And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.

There are several meanings to the golden candlestick, but one is paramount to any Christian. Note how God refers to the candlestick as a person in verse 31. The “His” to whom God refers in this scripture is none other than the Lord Jesus.

John 9:5

As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

The Lampstand is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. If we do not walk by the light of the Holy Spirit, we walk in darkness. Oil in the scriptures always represents the Holy Spirit. The lighted lamps speak of the Holy Spirit and Christ as the light of the world. Unless we walk in the light of the Holy Spirit, we cannot walk (enter) into the Sanctuary (His Rest, Canaan). The Lampstand, fed by the oil of the Holy Spirit, speaks of our testimony (let your light shine).

Matthew 5:14-16

¹⁴*Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. ¹⁶Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

The single shaft, to which all the lamps attached, represented Christ as our foundation. The gold construction represented His deity. The buds and flowers represented His resurrection.

TABLE OF SHEWBREAD

If we now turn our attention to the right (north side or opposite the golden lampstand), we see another piece of furniture, the golden Table of Shewbread.

Exodus 25:23-30

²³Thou shalt also make a table of shittim wood: two cubits shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof. ²⁴And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, and make thereto a crown of gold round about. ²⁵And thou shalt make unto it a border of an hand breadth round about, and thou shalt make a golden crown to the border thereof round about. ²⁶And thou shalt make for it four rings of gold, and put the rings in the four corners that are on the four feet thereof. ²⁷Over against the border shall the rings be for places of the staves to bear the table. ²⁸And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold, that the table may be borne with them. ²⁹And thou shalt make the dishes thereof, and spoons thereof, and covers thereof, and bowls thereof, to cover withal: of pure gold shalt thou make them. ³⁰And thou shalt set upon the table shewbread (unleavened bread) before me always.

Made of acacia wood and covered with gold, the table speaks of the two-fold nature of Christ: His deity and humanity. A gold rim encircled its top with gold rings placed at each corner. When carrying the table for travel, priest inserted gold covered Acacia wood staves (or poles) through the corner rings. The table was 3 feet (0.9 M) long, 1.5 feet (0.45 M) wide and 2.3 feet (0.7 M) high. Just as the name implies, it was a table for holding a supply of unleavened bread as food for the priests.

The priests were continually busy in the service of God. As their place of labor was serving the duties of the Tabernacle, a portion of the sacrifices was set aside as food for the priests. Also, every Sabbath, each tribe of Israel brought a fresh loaf of unleavened bread for the table as a Meal Offering to the Lord. Bread that sat on the table symbolized the priests' fellowship with the Lord and each other. It is at this table, always standing in the service of God, they took their meals and fellowshiped with each other.

The table had a continuous supply of wine and twelve loafs of unleavened bread.

Leviticus 24:5-9

⁵And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake. ⁶And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the LORD. ⁷And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto the LORD. ⁸Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. ⁹And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it is most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute.

It is important to note that the priests, although fellowshiping and eating their meals, were always standing. There were no chairs in the Sanctuary. In the Lord's service, they were always prepared and ready to serve. It is also important to note that the priests could only fellowship inside the Holy Place (inside Christ; His Rest). The Law prohibited fellowship or resting in the courtyard

(wilderness). Has the church's indoctrinated view of salvation and service begun to dissipate in your mind?

THE ALTAR OF INCENSE

The third and last piece of furniture in the Holy Place was the Altar of Incense. The priests always placed it on the west side, directly in front of the veil that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies.

Exodus 30:1-6

¹And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it. ²A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits shall be the height thereof: the horns thereof shall be of the same. ³And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. ⁴And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make it; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. ⁵And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. ⁶And thou shalt put it before the vail that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee.

Each side of the square altar measured 1.5 feet (0.45 M) and was 3 feet (0.9 M) high. Made of acacia wood overlaid with pure gold, a horn protruded from each of the four corners.



God commanded the High Priest to place incense on the Altar every morning and evening. These events coincided with the daily Burnt Offerings made in the courtyard; one offered at the third hour (9 AM) and the second at the ninth hour (3 PM).¹⁷ Later, we will see the Lord Jesus as High Priest fulfill the Burnt Offering as He fulfills every jot and tittle of the Law.

Exodus 30:34-38

³⁴And the LORD said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight: ³⁵And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure and

holy: ³⁶And thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy. ³⁷And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD. ³⁸Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people.

The purpose of this altar was to burn a special formulated incense. Priests carried fire from the Brazen Altar in the Courtyard to fuel the Altar of Incense. Offering of strange fire was a death penalty. For offering strange fire on this altar, God killed two of Aaron's four priest sons.

Numbers 3:4

And Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD, when they offered strange fire before the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai, and they had no children: and Eleazar and Ithamar ministered in the priest's office in the sight of Aaron their father.

Like the Brazen Altar, the fire was to burn continually. The fire was holy because it burned the incense that carried intercessory prayers to God. In scripture, incense often equated with intercessory prayer. David offered prayer as incense in the Psalms.

Psalms 141:2

Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

The Apostle John also saw prayers of the saints arriving in heaven in the smoke of the incense.

Revelation 8:4

And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

The incense burned continually throughout the day and night as a pleasing aroma for God. Made of an equal part of four precious spices: stacte, onycha, galbanum and frankincense (Exodus 30:34), God deemed the mixture of spices as holy. Forbidden for use as personal perfume or consumption, violation meant permanent exile from the camp.

Always placed at the veiled entrance to the Holy of Holies, the continuously burning incense symbolized the prayers and intercession of the people going up to God as a sweet fragrance. As the High Priest prayed for the people, the fragrance carried the prayers behind the veil and up to the presence of God who dwelt therein.

Got Answers Ministries provided a good summary of the meaning of the Golden Incense Altar.¹⁸

“The altar of incense can also be seen as a picture of the intercession of Christ. Just as the altar of sacrifice in the courtyard was a type of Christ’s death on our behalf, the altar of incense in the Holy Place was a type of Christ’s mediation on our behalf—Christ’s work on earth and in heaven. The altar of incense was situated before the mercy seat of the Ark—a picture of our advocate’s standing in the presence of the Father (Hebrews 7:25; 9:24). The incense was to be burning continually on the altar of incense, which shows the perpetual nature of Christ’s mediation. Christ’s intercession on our behalf is a sweet-smelling savor to God.”

God wanted His dwelling to be a place where people could approach Him and pray to Him. Simply put, this ritual was a symbol of prayer and intercession. An interesting thing to note is that the priests offered no intercessory prayer for themselves or the people in the Courtyard (wilderness). The priests offered Intercessory prayer only inside the Sanctuary (in Christ, His Rest). Any conclusions regarding these rules and restrictions as affecting church doctrine are difficult to comprehend. However, we will discuss these issues as related to prayer in the next chapter.

THE MOST HOLY PLACE (HOLY OF HOLIES)

Just beyond the Holy Place was the Holy of Holies. A heavy veil separated the two rooms and prevented any view into the room.

Exodus 26:31-33

³¹And thou shalt make a vail of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work: with cherubims shall it be made: ³²And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold, upon the four sockets of silver. ³³And thou shalt hang up the vail under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the vail the ark of the testimony: and the vail shall divide unto you between the holy place.

This was an extremely restricted room; entered only by the High Priest once per year on the Day of Atonement (discussed later). This room was highly restricted because it was God’s temporary, earthly dwelling place. The High Priest could enter only because he was a type of Christ who is the mediator between man and God.

Recall from an earlier discussion, God surrounded the Holy of Holies with three physical levels of protection from sin: the white linen fence, the camps of the consecrated Levites, and a buffer zone between the Levites and the camps of the twelve tribes. However, these three barriers were still insufficient for a holy God. Those who enter the courtyard redeemed, the last physical level of sin protection, are still worldly and do not know Him in His deity. This is the same as in the wilderness journey. Those that crossed the Red Sea redeemed were still worldly and did not know God. The courtyard is completely analogous to the wilderness journey (Red Sea to the Jordan River).

As previously stated, the Sanctuary (Christ) looks the same inside the courtyard as it did from the wilderness. Here in the courtyard, one still views Christ only in His humanity. Jesus paid the sin penalty at the Red Sea crossing (the cross) and the Brazen Altar (the cross), but the people still practiced sin. Therefore, God needed another physical barrier against any remaining form of sin. It is as though God said, "You are now redeemed (accepted) into my family but you must be totally clean before you can enter into my presence." Thus, until permanent resolution of the sin problem, God had Moses make a veil of protection to separate Him from the Holy Place.

By observing the construction of the veil, one can see what this barrier to God symbolizes. The materials of construction point to every aspect of the Lord's character. The artisans fabricated the veil from fine white linen, embroidered with blue, purple, and scarlet. As previously noted, blue signified Christ's heavenly origins; scarlet spoke of His sacrificial death, purple proclaimed His royalty, and white symbolized His sinless righteousness. The veil hung from silver sockets that speak of His atoning blood. We can see from the symbolism that the veil represents Christ as the only way into the presence of God. Cherubim on the ceiling tell everyone that God has set up His throne behind the veil and only Christ can enter into His presence.

Isaiah 37:16

O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth.

We now see why only the High Priest could pass beyond the veil. The High priest was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. The writer of Hebrews tells us that Jesus was the real and true High Priest. He would complete this task by taking a 3.5-year journey through the Tabernacle to complete the work of the High Priest.

Hebrews 8:1-2

¹Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; ²A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

Whereas the High Priest was, Jesus is the only mediator between man and God.

1 Timothy 2:5

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

John 14:6

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

INSIDE THE HOLY OF HOLIES

In this room, there was a single piece of furniture with multiple components. It housed the most holy and revered relic in the history of humanity, the Ark of the Covenant. Above the Ark was the Mercy Seat. Above the Mercy Seat were two cherubim with outstretched wings. Above or between the Cherubim was the presence of God.

The sole purpose of the furniture in this room was for performing blood offerings for the yearly forgiveness of Israel's sins. The High Priest performed this ritual once per year on the annual Day of Atonement. The rituals of this day were merely a shadow of how Christ, the true High Priest, would fulfill these rituals, thus the Law, on a Passover week, about 1650 years¹⁹ into the future.

Inside the Ark of the Covenant were the tablets of Law that Moses brought down from Mount Sinai. The penalty for breaking the Laws was death. However, when God, who dwelt above the cherubim, looked downward and saw the sacrificial blood between Himself and the Law, He vowed not to impose the death penalty. This was just like the Passover in Egypt. God spared those who were behind their doors painted with the blood of the slain lambs as the death angel passed and smote the first born throughout Egypt. This of course pointed to Christ who as the true High Priest would present His own blood on the Mercy Seat in the heavenly Holy of Holies for the forgiveness of sins for all time.

Hebrews 10:1 & 4

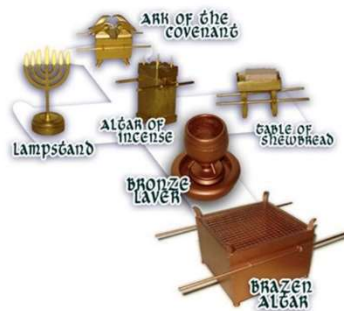
¹For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. ⁴For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Hebrews 9:6-8 & 11-14

⁶Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. ⁷But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: ⁸The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: ¹¹But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; ¹²Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. ¹³For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: ¹⁴How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT (Yom Kipper)

Earlier in the chapter, Illustration 9 showed the “Veiled Purpose of the Tabernacle Camp Layout”. The camps, as positioned about the Tabernacle, graphically illustrated that the total complex foreshadowed redemption via the cross of Calvary. The positions of the Tabernacle furniture foreshadowed both redemption through the cross of Calvary and Christian service. God positioned all the furniture of the Tabernacle to insure their representative purpose.



It is important to note, here, something easily missed. The path to redemption starts at the foot of the cross (the altar), then vertically to the Mercy Seat for the forgiveness of our sins. The other four pieces of furniture represent how a redeemed person must live as a Christian. The Brass Laver represented sanctification, a Christian's separation from the world (crucifixion of the flesh) to serve God. We cannot separate the Golden Lampstand and Table of Shewbread in a Christian's walk in serving God. Only by following the light and direction of the Holy Spirit (Golden Lampstand) can we

have harmonious fellowship with the brethren (at the Table of Shewbread), ever standing to serve in God's will. By following the light of the Holy Spirit and abiding in Christ (the Tabernacle), we have intercessory prayer to the Father via the Altar of Incense.

While the Tabernacle layout illustrated the path for both redemption and service, the Laws given by God to Moses dictated the path required to achieve salvation. Moses gave us the instructions in Leviticus chapter 16 of how to start at the foot of the cross and achieve redemption on the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies. He summarized these in instructions for the annual redemption of Israel's sins via sacrificial offerings and rituals on the annual Day of Atonement.

Leviticus chapter 16 details the events and rituals required for this holiest of Jewish days, Yom Kipper. However, the order and timing of events in Leviticus 16 are difficult to follow. Therefore, a simplified rewrite should aid in uncluttering the events of the day.

The atonement rituals for the Day of Atonement consisted of two primary components: Burnt Offerings and Sin Offerings. Before the rituals could begin, the High Priest selected the animals required for sacrifice. For the sin offerings, He selected a bull for himself and family and two kid goats for the people. For the Burnt Offerings, he selected two one-year-old rams (male lambs), one for himself and family and one for the people.

The Day of Atonement was the busiest and holiest day of the year in the Tabernacle. In addition to the rituals required this special day, the daily business of sacrifices continued. As discussed earlier in the chapter, every day of the year, the priests sacrificed two lambs for a burnt offering (Exodus 29:38-42), one in the morning and one in the evening. This day is no different. The

priests must complete the morning sacrifice before starting the rituals of atonement. While the scriptures do not identify the times of sacrifice, we know from other sources that the times were 9 AM and 3 PM.¹⁷

THE SIN OFFERING

The Sin Offerings were the first ones performed after the daily morning Burnt Offering of a lamb. However, these sacrifices for sin represented Christ as the High Priest making a sin atonement for humanity. Therefore, the High Priest had to change his clothes to special priestly garments in order to stand in the presence of God in the Holy of Holies.

The Sin Offerings were blood offerings and before they could begin, all priests and workers must leave the Tabernacle enclosure. Only the High Priest could perform these rituals. This is because He was a type of Christ carrying His own blood into the heavenly Holy of Holies for the redemption of humanity. Any person touching him would contaminate the sacrifice, requiring reoffering the sacrifice: in type, crucifying Christ twice.

The High Priest slayed the earlier selected bull and collected the blood. He then took the blood into the Holy Place. He took a censor of burning coals from the Altar of Incense and added two handfuls of sweet incense. He then opened the veil and entered the Holy of Holies with the smoking censor and blood. A cloud of sweet incense from the sensor filled the room. God required this so the High Priest would not die. Remember, God was present above the Mercy Seat and no one could look upon Him and live.

Exodus 33:20

And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.



The High Priest, then went behind (west side) the Ark of Covenant, faced eastward and sprinkled the atoning blood on the Mercy Seat seven times. The High Priest sprinkled blood eastward in order to acknowledge prophesy that Christ would appear from the east.

Ezekiel 43:2

*And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the **EAST**: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.*

Matthew 24:27

For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

This completed the blood sacrifice for the High Priest and his family. However, before leaving the Holy of Holies, He must perform an additional blood ritual. He sprinkled blood of the bull seven times on the floor before the Mercy Seat. Completing this, the High Priest left the Sanctuary and went to the courtyard to start the Sin Offering for the people.

This part of the Sin Offering for the people required the two kid goats selected earlier by the High Priest. He drew lots over the goats, one for a sacrifice and the other for a scapegoat. He slayed the one selected for sacrifice and collected the blood. He then repeated the same ritual that he previously performed with the bull's blood. Again, he faced eastward, sprinkled the goat's blood upon the Mercy Seat seven times and upon the floor before the Mercy Seat seven times.

It is easy to see why the High Priest sprinkled the sacrifice's blood upon the Mercy Seat. It is not precisely stated why he sprinkled it on the floor before the Mercy Seat. However, Leviticus 16:16 provides the logical answer. This part of the sacrifices was to cleanse the Tabernacle.

Leviticus 16:16

*And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: **and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.***

The Sin Offering still required two additional components for the blood atonement. The High Priest performed these outside the Sanctuary in the courtyard.

Leviticus 16:18-19

¹⁸ And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about. ¹⁹ And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

The High Priest now took the blood of the bull and goat to the Burnt Altar and sanctified it. Remembering that the Burnt Altar is analogous to the cross of Calvary, it alerts us that this sanctification foretells of a fulfillment of the Law as related to the crucifixion of Jesus.

The High Priest now administered the last component of the Sin Offering. He took the goat upon which the lot fell as the scapegoat and ritually placed the sins of Israel upon its head and sent it into the wilderness where it could never find its way back. This, therefore, explains the symbolism of the goat's hair "tent" curtain and Christ as our sin bearer.

Leviticus 16:20-22

²⁰ And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: ²¹ And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their

transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: ²² And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

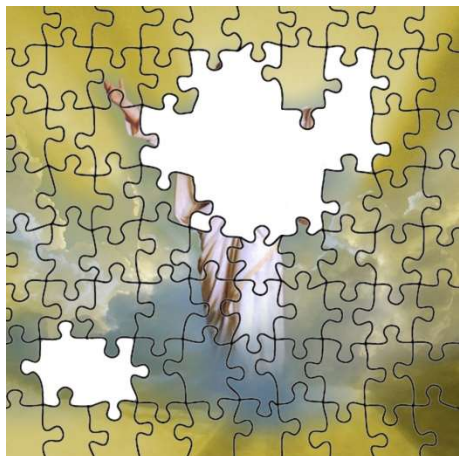
With the completion of the Sin Offering, the High Priest returned to the Sanctuary, took off his priestly garments for the Day of Atonement, washed and put on the clothes for his normal everyday duties. He then returned to the courtyard to perform the Burnt Offerings.

THE BURNT OFFERING

The rituals for the Burnt Offerings differed from the sin offerings. Unlike the Sin Offering, the Burnt Offering did not require the collection of blood. Therefore, the priests could return to the Tabernacle and assist in the Burnt Offerings.

The priests gathered the two rams selected earlier. The High Priest killed the first and placed it on the Burnt Altar as an atonement for him and His family. Then, he repeated the sacrifice for the second ram as an atonement for the people. The priests collected the fat from the earlier bull and goat sin offerings and placed it on the Burnt Altar along with the sacrificed rams. Thus, this final act of the Day of Atonement sacrifices again tells us about the redemptive work of Christ. Both the blood of the sacrifices and the bodies of those sacrificed, burning upon the Burnt Altar at the same time, point to Christ's redemptive work. Whereas His blood must appear on the heavenly Mercy Seat, His body (typed by the lambs) must appear on the Brazen Altar for sacrifice, the cross of Calvary.

COMPLETING AN INCOMPLETE PUZZLE



Everything in the Tabernacle pointed to and represented the Lord Jesus as the architect of salvation. The High Priest was a type of the Lord Jesus who would come and shed His blood for the remission of sins for all time. To complete the plan of salvation, it would be necessary for Jesus to become the High Priest. As High Priest, He would have to fulfill every type in the Tabernacle and the rituals for the remission of sins, both the Burnt and Sin Offerings.

We have now completed our wilderness journey by viewing salvation through both faith and the Law. As the puzzle becomes more complete, we now start to see the blueprint of salvation as God revealed it to Israel. However, it has no meaning unless confirmed. Only Jesus, making a parallel journey through the Tabernacle as the High Priest, can do this. Only then will the picture of salvation be complete. We will now move ahead in our journey to see the marvelous completion to the plan of salvation. Before proceeding on our journey; however, let us stop and

reflect on the many things God has revealed to us. Although the picture of salvation is almost complete, keeping all the pieces together can be a daunting task.

CHURCH DOCTRINES AND THE TABERNACLE

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things happened unto them for examples, and they are written for our admonition, upon the end of the ages are come.

In the Tabernacle part of our wilderness journey, we have only teased how Jesus fulfilled the role of the High Priest. The objective has been to present the Tabernacle as a representation of the Lord Jesus as it relates to the plan of salvation. Now would be an appropriate time to summarize some of the aspects we have discussed and emphasize their impact on our understanding of salvation. What we will see is an exposure of indoctrinated beliefs of Christian understanding. Remember, the journey through the Tabernacle (the Law) tells the same story as the wilderness journey through faith. Each tells a different part of the same story. They complement each other to provide a more complete understanding of salvation (redemption and service). Hopefully, the collaborating evidence in the Tabernacle has dispelled some doubts that you may have had on the wilderness journey. Let us walk again through the Tabernacle to look at some aspects that affect the doctrines of today.

MAKING SENSE OF ALL THIS

When viewed from the outside in the wilderness, all you can see of the Tabernacle is the white linen fence, which speaks of righteousness and the gray badger skin sanctuary roof that speaks of Christ's humanity. When unsaved, this is exactly the way the world views Jesus: merely a righteous man. Nothing from the outside view reveals any aspect of His divinity.

Isaiah 53:2

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

Preaching of the word and the wooing of the Holy Spirit draw those lost to Christ. Those drawn to redemption must approach by the only entrance, the Eastern Gate, which represents Jesus as the only way to salvation. Redemption requires entry into the courtyard and accepting the blood sacrifice of an innocent animal on the Brazen Altar. The Brazen Altar represents the cross of Calvary and the sacrifice is God's Lamb, the Lord Jesus.

By entering the Tabernacle through the Eastern Gate (Jesus) and offering the sacrifice of an innocent substitute (Jesus), we can stand inside the courtyard. This is the first step in God's plan of salvation, redemption! We are now righteous through Christ's blood and can safely stand inside God's veil of righteousness without a death penalty.

Now, a departure from conventional beliefs regarding salvation materializes before our eyes. Once redeemed and standing in the courtyard, we open our eyes to a strange and a "not what we expected sight." What looks so strange? Nothing! Our view of salvation is just the same as

before redemption. There is the joy in knowing of our adoption into God's family and are now joint heirs in Christ. But everything else is puzzling. Where is the new person in Christ we expected to become? Do not dismay. The Tabernacle explains all this. You see, we do not become a new creature in Christ the day redeemed. We would have to be blind not to see the problem. The view inside the courtyard is nearly identical to the view from without the enclosure. From outside, we can only see the white linen enclosure fence and the gray top of the Sanctuary. From the courtyard (redeemed), we still see the same white linen fence we have just entered. It looks the same as from the outside the enclosure. Ahead, we can see the Sanctuary and the Laver. The Sanctuary looks the same inside the courtyard as it did from the outside. All we can see is a gray badger skin covered building. There is no beauty to behold. Our redeemer looks the same after redemption as before redemption. From this vantage point, we can only see Christ's humanity and no hint of divinity. This is a picture of a person just saved: led to the cross but still in the courtyard (wilderness). Although redeemed, where are all the things we expected to see and experience once saved?

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

The answer is we did not understand what Paul was saying. We totally misinterpret and misuse this scripture, thereby, confusing new Christians. When in the courtyard, we are in our wilderness journey traveling to that place God has promised those who will serve Him, His Rest. Just as a redeemed Israel was worldly and walking in the flesh and their own will, so are we after redemption. We do not know anything of the nature of Christ; and He will not reveal Himself to us until we complete the next step in salvation. The other piece of furniture in the courtyard standing before the Sanctuary gives us a clue that there is another step-in salvation. It is the Laver. Its position blocks the entrance to the Sanctuary (Christ). This tells us there is another condition to see and know Christ in His divinity. Just like on the wilderness journey, we must cross Jordan. Here, we must pass the Laver. They mean the same thing.

The Laver is analogous to the Jordan crossing. Both were to sanctify those passing. To pass either, the requirements were the same. The priests had to wash every time they passed it. They could not enter the Sanctuary until they washed (sanctified), which speaks of separation (washing off the filth of the world). The only way to be in Christ (the Sanctuary; His Rest) is separation from the world, *crucifying the flesh*.

We must understand the importance God places on the Laver. To walk past the Laver without washing the hands and feet meant instant death to a priest. This is further confirmation of the requirements to enter the Sanctuary (His Rest). You must be clean! You must cross Jordan. One must crucify the flesh to know your redeemer.

If I was standing before you and teaching this lesson, it would be a good time to ask a question. Since that is not possible, I will ask it for you. If separation from the world is such an important part of salvation and a mandatory requirement for knowing Christ in all His divinity, why did the Apostle Paul not tell us in his letters to the churches? He did! He tells the requirements in almost every letter that he wrote. What were these instructions? Baptism! He had no way of knowing that the church would misunderstand something so simple. You see, the concept is so simple we have turned it into a ritual rather than an instruction. We need to talk about baptism as it relates to our salvation.

Baptism has *nothing to do with redemption* but has a great deal to do with God's plan of salvation. Crossing Jordan, washing at the Laver, and baptism mean the same thing. Crossing Jordan (to His Rest) or entering Christ (the Sanctuary) requires crucifixion of the flesh, dying to the world. This is what baptism symbolizes: sanctification by immersion to wash off the filth of the world and raised to walk in newness of life (by the guidance of the Holy Spirit). Paul confirms this in Romans 6:1-7, where he tell us that baptism is symbolic of death (of the old man) and resurrection of the new man). The problem is that this symbolist ritual does not actually take you across Jordan into His Rest or into the Sanctuary. Baptism merely defines the next step God expects us to take after redemption: separate ourselves from the world and serve Him. This instruction is currently only a ritual in the church, and the seriousness as an instruction becomes lost to the redeemed. If we understand this, then we now know what Paul was saying when he told us of the beauty of serving Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

Galatians' 2:20

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Paul is not referring to Christians just saved. He is describing the life of Christians who have crossed Jordan and entered His Rest (Christ). He is describing Christians that have washed at the Laver and entered the Sanctuary (Christ).

FELLOWSHIP AMONG THE BRETHREN

The Sanctuary's Holy Place exposes another aspect of Christianity lost in indoctrination: the conditions for fellowship among Christians. In this room and only this room were the priests allowed to eat their meals and fellowship with each other. God did not permit fellowship in the courtyard (wilderness). We have fellowship with God and each other only if we abide in Him, only if we are

in the Sanctuary (abiding in Christ), only if we are in His Rest (abiding in Christ). If we are wilderness Christians and walking in the flesh, we have no fellowship with God or each other. Have you not ever wondered why fellow church members get upset at the least little thing, gossip, criticize, back-bite and grumble? It is no mystery. They are wilderness Christians and have no Christian fellowship with God and others because they do not abide in Christ.

The Golden Candlestick in the Holy Place also testifies to the reason wilderness Christians have no fellowship with God and other Christians. They walk in their own spirit and not God's. The light from the Golden Candlestick signifies Christ as the light of the world. It is our guidance to walk in the light of the Holy Spirit. Only by being inside Christ (the Sanctuary, His Rest) can we walk in the light of the Holy Spirit and follow God's bidding. If we do not walk in the light of the Holy Spirit, we have no witness or access to God through prayer.

THE PRAYER PARADOX

Prayer! Every Christian knows what prayer is. It is the cornerstone of faith. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Without prayer, there is no faith. It is a simple concept. Prayer is the communications link between our Christian lives and our heavenly Father. It is so simple that we do not question it, just use it as desired in our Christian walk. But, do we really understand the conditions God places on prayer?

This was by far the most difficult doctrine to address in the manuscript. If speaking on God's behalf, one cannot publish something incorrect or misleading concerning prayer. I have struggled more in understanding acceptable prayer than any other topic, herein. The conclusions reached through scripture and the Tabernacle rituals imply that as a church, we do not fully understand God's requirements concerning prayer.

I am neither Jewish nor an expert in Jewish law and customs. This complicates fully understanding the Tabernacle and the rituals, therein. Most publications concerning the meanings of the structure, furniture, rituals, and types are the interpretations of authors, pastors, Bible teachers, etc., both past and present. In other words, the Bible does not always provide the precise biblical understanding of the rituals. They are mostly interpolations based on logic and scriptural clues. The same is true when discussing a paradox found in the Tabernacle rituals concerning prayer. If we can understand this paradox, it could totally change our understanding of prayer and its acceptable use.

The paradox reveals itself at the Altar of Incense with the High Priest offering prayers for himself and the people. The incense burning on the altar carried the prayers as a sweet savor into the presence of God behind the veil of the Holy of Holies. This was a type of Christ bringing our supplications before God as our intercessor. The paradox emerges when we realize that these prayers to God were only permissible inside the Sanctuary (in Christ). In other words, prayers were only acceptable from those standing (walking) in the light of the Holy Spirit (Golden Lampstand) and those in fellowship with the brethren (Table of Shewbread). Prayers outside the Sanctuary (or in the Courtyard) were not permissible. Thus, the paradox: does God only hear the prayers of those abiding in Christ (His Rest) and not those redeemed and still carnal in a wilderness walk? Understanding this paradox could have tremendous influence on our prayer life.

Every redeemed person understands the concept of prayer. It is a way to bring our supplications before our heavenly father. But, do we really understand prayer? For instance, does God hear everyone's prayers? It would be difficult to find a Christian that did not respond in the affirmative. However, our journey through the Tabernacle implies that church doctrine concerning prayer is incomplete. Moreover, they imply that the prayers God accepts are dependent upon our standing and walk in Christ. Understanding prayer as implied in the Tabernacle is a difficult concept to interpret. I have searched commentaries and books on the Tabernacle and can find no one who has addressed the acceptable prayer paradox. In other words, I can find no publications addressing the prayer paradox as mirrored in the Tabernacle. So, is the interpretation, herein, correct? I can only give you what I believe to be the most logical interpretation. If I have learned anything in writing this manuscript, it is that we understand very little of what the Lord gave us in the scriptures. Many mysteries still allude us.

There were severe penalties placed on the priests for not following God's exact instructions for carrying out their duties. For instance, if a priest did not wash at the Laver before entering the Sanctuary or offering a sacrifice, it was instant death. To put strange fire (that not provided by God) on the Brazen Altar or the Altar of Incense was instant death. Although prayer for self and the people was acceptable only before the Altar of Incense, there was apparently no penalty for prayer offered in the courtyard, just not acceptable. Later, in the Temple in Jerusalem, worshipers (non-priests) in the courtyard would often breakout in prayer when sensing the sweet aroma of the burning incense. Others, not near the Temple, would pray at the time of the morning and evening offerings.

Luke 1:5, 8-10

⁵*There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia, and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.* ⁸*And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,* ⁹*According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.* ¹⁰***And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.***

Therein, we discover a prayer paradox. The Tabernacle plainly instructs, without reservation, that prayers are acceptable only from those who have separated themselves from the world (the flesh) and by faith entered Christ (the Sanctuary, His Rest). This implies that God does not accept prayers from those in the courtyard (or wilderness walk), only those separated from the world and abiding in Christ. However, if we accept this as a strict condition for acceptance of prayer, our spirit tells us something does not equate. Yet, there is partial truth in that statement. We must ask if prayers are acceptable only from those separated to God's service, what prayers are acceptable from those redeemed but not serving God and separated for His service? How does God deal with the prayers of new Christians? Only by understanding this paradox can we understand God's requirements for acceptable prayer.

Hebrews 4:14-16

¹⁴*Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.* ¹⁵*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*

¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

Because of the sacrifice of Christ, our faithful High Priest, we have become priests with access to God's throne room, unencumbered by the rituals of the Law. Matthew Henry, summed it very well.¹

"Christ has redeemed his people from the bondage of sin, guilt, and Satan. He has not only purchased liberty for them, but the highest honour and preferment; he made them kings and priests; kings, to rule over their own spirits, and to overcome the world, and the evil one; and he makes them priests; giving them access to himself, and liberty to offer up spiritual sacrifices."

We can now enter God's holy presence by faith. We now can offer our prayers upon the altar, trusting in Jesus, our eternal and faithful High Priest. Our prayers are acceptable from any place but with restriction (that I have) only found in two scripture passages.

Hebrews 10:19-22

¹⁹ *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,* ²⁰ *By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;* ²¹ *And having an high priest over the house of God;* ²² ***Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.***

James 1:6-7

⁶ *But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.* ⁷ ***For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.***

Yes, here is assurance that we have access to God from any place through Christ our mediator. However, it also implies that sanctification is a requirement to draw near to God. We must wash at the Laver, crucify the flesh, and abide in Christ. James reinforces this when he tells us that we must be a person of great faith, never wavering in our trust and faith in God. So, what does this tell us about the prayer paradox and the power of acceptable prayer?

THE POWER OF ACCEPTABLE PRAYER

As we read the following scriptures, we need to realize that God will give us the desires of our hearts, and that we have tremendous power through prayer. Can we read these passages and dismiss prayers not answered only as "God's will?" God is not a liar. He delivers on what He promises. However, to tap into this energy source, we must ABIDE IN HIM AND LIVE IN HIS WILL, in other words, ENTER AND LIVE IN HIS REST (enter the Tabernacle Sanctuary).

I believe the only prayers not answered here are those God knows will harm us, reflect negatively on Him or His Son or are selfish and without love. Therefore, our prayers are not exempt from God's will. Regardless of our supplications, He will always provide what is best for those who love and serve Him.

We hear that God only hears prayers that glorify Him. I think this is an excuse for a powerless church to explain unanswered prayers. The real key to answered prayer is if OUR LIVES GLORIFY GOD. If our walk glorifies God and we abide in Him and His service, then we have the following promises according to His will:

Matthew 7:7

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

Matthew 21:22

And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

John 15:7

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

John 15:16

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

John 14:13

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

1 John 3:22

And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

If we walk as Christ walked, we hold the key to miracles through prayer. However, this power is not available to those who walk and dwell in the wilderness or the courtyard. Remember, *redemption does not impart righteousness*. To know the power of His resurrection, we must abide within Him. Does this mean that God does not hear prayers from the Courtyard or our wilderness walk? Heaven forbid, no. Due to Christ's redeeming work as our High Priest, we have access to the throne of God 24-7. However, there is a catch: when in the Courtyard and the wilderness, God does not accept all prayers. God is always available to teach faith and obedience and hear prayers of forgiveness in preparation to enter His Rest. This is what He did with Israel in their wilderness experiences. But, as we saw in the above scripture in Hebrews, we must be clean (washed at the Laver, crossed Jordan into His Rest: The Sanctuary) before His promises through prayer are available to the redeemed. The redeemed cannot live an immoral life or a life unpleasing to God. We must live a life of service. Here, the scriptures are very frank regarding prayer.

Proverbs 15:29

The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

Romans 8:5-8

⁵ *For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.* ⁶ *For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and*

peace. ⁷ *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* ⁸ *So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*

A Christian in a wilderness walk is still living in the flesh and not the Spirit. It is a walk to learn faith, trust, and obedience. How does one, then, have access to God through prayer to acquire the faith and knowledge to know and trust God. I believe, Paul gave us the answer.

Romans 8:26-28

²⁶ *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*

²⁷ *And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.* ²⁸ *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

If we want to know the power of His resurrection, we must abide in Christ. If we want to realize the power of prayer that He promises, we must separate ourselves from the world and serve the Master in faith, obedience, and love.

COLLABORATION

After struggling with the interpretation of the acceptable prayer paradox as found in the Tabernacle, I found others who agree with the previous conclusions about the mysterious understanding of acceptable prayer. Watchman Nee, a renowned, published Chinese church leader and Christian teacher (1903-1972), believed that few Christians comprehend the proper use of acceptable prayer to God.²

“Prayer is a mystery; and after we have considered a few questions on the subject, I believe we will appreciate even more the mysterious character that surrounds prayer – for these are questions quite difficult to answer. Yet this observation is not meant to suggest that the mystery of prayer is incomprehensible or that the various problems concerning prayer are inexplicable. It is merely indicative of the fact that few people really know very much about them. In view of this, few are truly able to accomplish much for God in prayer. The power of prayer lies not in how much we pray but in how much our prayers are in accordance with the principle of prayer. Only prayers of this kind are of true value.”

Another Bible scholar, John Piper, wrote excellent collaborating articles on the acceptable prayer issue. I am confident the Holy Spirit led me to his website to confirm the conclusions reached in the Tabernacle study. However, He confirmed the Tabernacle conclusions from a different point of view. They were not from the prospective of revelation in the Tabernacle, rather from a thorough understanding of the scriptures regarding prayer.

John Piper is a teacher and chancellor of Bethlehem College and Seminary and founder of the website desiringGod.org. He published two articles entitled "What Do Answers to Prayer Depend On? Part 1, Obedience" and "What Do Answers to Prayer Depend On? Part 2, God's Will." For those who wish a deeper understanding of acceptable prayer, these articles are available on the internet. Here, I present a few of his comments as related to this study. His articles not only corroborate the conclusions found in the Tabernacle, he offers other thoughts on acceptable prayer, especially as it relates to God's will in prayer. The following quotes are from Part 1 of his presentation.³

*"John 15:7, 'If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will and it shall be done for you.' A child who disregards his father's words (Jesus' words are the Father's words) is not fit to have his requests granted. We would not approve a father's behavior who did everything a rebellious child wished. Not just because the child doesn't deserve it, but because it would be bad for the child and a dishonor to the father's word. It is not a good thing to confirm a child in his waywardness by giving him whatever he asks. **No, if my words abide in you, son, then ask what you will and I'll do it.**"*

"John says in his first letter (3:21–23), Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. And this is his commandment that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another just as he commanded us."

*"If we are unloving, irritable, holding a grudge, impatient, unkind, boastful, jealous, resentful we should not think that God is likely to answer our prayers. His will for us is that we love one another; therefore, **he will be slow to prosper our cause when our attitudes are unloving.**"*

*"James 5:16, Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another that you may be healed. **The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects.**"*

*"We find it taught in the Old and New Testaments that if a child has certain bad attitudes and misbehaves, a good father will not give him everything he asks for.. In order to have our prayers answered, **we must be obedient children.**"*

*"We know that God does not listen to sinners, but **if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him.**"*

*"It seems to me that the application of this teaching is plain: when Jesus commands us to ask and receive, seek and find, knock and have the door opened, he is commanding us not only to pray but also to **live like sons of a merciful father ought to live.** Let the words of God abide in you; cherish no iniquity in your heart; love your fellow believers and do good to all; forsake oppression; confess your sins. **If you walk in the light, as he is in the light, there will be confident communion and great answers to prayer.**"*

“What do answers to prayer depend on? was that they depend on our being obedient children.”

The following quotations are from Part 2 of his presentation.⁴

Mark 11:24-26

²⁴ Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. ²⁵ And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. ²⁶ But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

“Let's start with the words "what soever" in verse 24, "Whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours." It sounds absolute and all-inclusive. But there are three reasons why we should not think Jesus intended to give a blank check to us. The first has to do with the nature of language. The second has to do with the other teachings in the New Testament. The third has to do with the immediate context.”

“The nature of language is such that all words get their meaning from their usage. Therefore, the usual meaning of a word is determined by its usual usage in our culture. And the particular meaning of a word in a particular text is determined by its particular usage by a particular author. I used to illustrate this when I taught at Bethel by coming into class and asking, "Is everybody here?" Then, if someone said, "Yes," I would say something irritating like, "Well, then, where is Jimmy Carter?" And it wouldn't take long to illustrate that the word "everybody" may or not have an absolute, all-inclusive meaning depending on the way it is used in a particular context. That's the way it is with the term "whatever" in Mark 11:24. It may or may not be absolute and all-inclusive. If you were invited out to eat and you sat down at the table and said, "I'll eat whatever you have," no one would offer you a pencil to eat, or a straw basket, or a shoe. They would know that "whatever" meant "whatever you are serving for dinner." So the meaning of "whatever" in Mark 11:24 can't be settled simply looking at the word. We must look at the context to see if Jesus put any limits on it.”

“The reason I even stopped to think about whether "whatever" was all-inclusive is that there are texts elsewhere in Scripture which teach that there are things we won't get, even if we ask for them. I'll mention two such texts. James 4:2, 3 says, "You do not have because you do not ask, you ask and do not receive because you ask wrongly to spend it on your passions." If James is right, then the "whatever" of Mark 11:24 has to be qualified: You won't get whatever you ask for, no matter how much you believe you will, if what you're asking for is simply for your own private satisfaction. Prayers should always be acts of love and so they should always aim not merely at our own satisfaction, but also at the benefit of others. 1 John 5:14 is another text that limits what we can ask for:”

"This is the confidence which we have in him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have obtained the requests made of him."

"This is an especially helpful text because the word "whatever" in verse 15 seems to be used just as absolutely as in Mark 11:24. "If we know he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have obtained our requests." But verse 14 makes it crystal clear that "whatever" in verse 15 means "whatever we ask according to God's will." If this is the case in 1 John 5:15, might it not also be the case with Mark 11:24? Does the immediate context in Mark 11 demand a limitation on the meaning of "whatever" in Mark 11:24, similar to the way 1 John 5:14 limited the meaning of "whatever" in 1 John 5:15?" I think it does. Mark 11:25, the very next verse, says, whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father in heaven may forgive your trespasses."

"This verse demands that the promise of verse 24 be limited. It shows that when Jesus said, "Whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you received it and it will be yours," he did not mean you could pray for vengeance to come on all your enemies. The very next verse says, "When you stand praying, forgive. Therefore, the "whatever" of verse 24 must at least exclude a prayer for vengeance. What this means is that there is no contradiction between Jesus on the one hand and James and John on the other. All agree that God does not promise that absolutely everything we ask for will be given to us if we can just believe that it will."

"Therefore, in answer to our old question, "What do answers to prayer depend on?" I would say, they depend on asking for the right things. 1 John 5:14 is the most explicit text on this matter, "If we ask anything according to his will he hears us." The right things to ask for are things that accord with God's will. When Jesus said, "Whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours," he meant whatever you ask that accords with God's will, believe that you have received it and it will be yours."

A ROLE MODEL FOR ACCEPTABLE PRAYER

Whenever I think of serving God in His Rest, the possibilities available to those who love Him and serve in faith overwhelm me. My inspiration is an uneducated preacher by the name of Smith Wigglesworth who lived from 1859-1947. He was the epitome of absolute faith in God. His life of service demonstrated the potential power God offers those who truly love and serve Him in faith and obedience. His impact still reverberates as a beacon to inspire Christians.

Smith was a great healer. He believed Satan was responsible for all sickness. By attacking Satan in those afflicted, he healed innumerable people. There are several documented accounts of him raising the dead. No less than fifty-nine books are written by or about Smith documenting his miracles and faith.

Smith is the poster child for the kind of power possible through absolute faith and trust in God and His promises. Smith would often say, *"Only believe! Only believe! All things are possible, only believe."*⁵

In an earlier chapter (The Second Adam's World: The Canaan Experience, His Rest), we posed the question, "why suffer persecution to serve God?" I believe Smith provides the best example. It is in God's Rest that we serve and reap the rewards God has reserved for those who love and trust Him. The possibilities in prayer that He provides those who serve Him is immeasurable. Lewis Edward Jones' immortal hymn rightly witnesses to the source of that power: *"there is power, power, wonder-working power in the precious blood of the Lamb."*

MY EXPERIENCE

This manuscript has always had great meaning for me. As a young man, I led a dear cousin to Christ. He accepted Christ because I told him of the joys and rewards of being a Christian. Before long, he began to ask, "why does God not hear my prayers?" Soon afterwards, he began to fall away and return to his former carnal nature.

I could not give him an answer because I had no clue. The only answer we ever get in church is the standard response, "God's will." I did not understand it at time, but my cousin was a typical wilderness Christian, led to Christ and abandoned to find his own way. No one explained that God had a plan for his life, a destination to travel, and a guiding hand to lead him. No one explained the privileges of becoming joint heirs with Christ and the responsibilities that accompanied redemption. No one told him there were penalties for refusing to serve God. No one explained that a redeemed person belonged to God because of the tremendous purchase price, the blood of His only Son. No one explained that because the purchase price was so high, God would not permit a redeemed person's life to dishonor the sacrifice made.

At the age of thirty-nine, I lost the cousin that I loved as a brother. He died a dog's death at the hands of a brother. I believe God removed him as his testimony dishonored His Son. This cousin was a victim and sad picture of today's church. Many pastors and evangelists seek numbers. Favorite conversations center around the number saved and baptized, not what to do with the redeemed. We lead people to the cross and then turn our backs, believing that salvation is complete. We leave the newly redeemed to find their own way without direction. Today's church is a sad reflection on the New Testament Church of the first century. Captives to the order of the service, we have become a twenty-first century version of the Pharisees.

God warned us that a redeemed person cannot dishonor His Son without consequences. Through the prophet Isaiah, He delivered a sobering warning. It is possible to gain redemption yet by immorality lose your life. Isaiah gives a sobering example of countering the typical church belief that "God is all love and would never do that." Isaiah warned the rulers and people of Jerusalem that He was sick of their sacrifices and burning of incense in the Temple because they

were just a ritual to them, and they did not understand their meanings. These people had sacrificed at the Brazen Altar and temporarily redeemed. Yet, they continued to sin and refused to learn about Christ (salvation). This is analogous to a redeemed Christian living an immoral life and refusing to serve God.

Isaiah 1:10-11, 16-20 (TEV)

¹⁰ Jerusalem, your rulers and your people are like those of Sodom and Gomorrah. Listen to what the LORD is saying to you. Pay attention to what our God is teaching you. ¹¹ He says, "Do you think I want all these sacrifices you keep offering to me? I have had more than enough of the sheep you burn as sacrifices and of the fat of your fine animals. ¹⁶ Wash yourselves clean. Stop all this evil that I see you doing. Yes, stop doing evil ¹⁷ and learn to do right. See that justice is done—help those who are oppressed, give orphans their rights, and defend widows." ¹⁸ The LORD says, "Now, let's settle the matter. You are stained red with sin, but I will wash you as clean as snow. Although your stains are deep red, you will be as white as wool. ¹⁹ If you will only obey me, you will eat the good things the land produces. ²⁰ But if you defy me, you are doomed to die. I, the LORD, have spoken."

As we near completion for this segment of our parallel journeys to witness God's salvation; hopefully, you are starting to understand why the church is so weak and displeases God. It is a mere shadow of what God wants and needs. How do we escape from and restructure this religious quagmire? It will take strong pastors, preachers, and teachers who are bold enough to embrace new paradigms for worship and service.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Will we see revival in our lifetimes? If we look at the condition of the church and believe this is the last church age, from a human perception, it seems improbable. We are just too indoctrinated in the "way it is always done." If pastors and teachers stood up, today, and presented salvation as revealed in this manuscript, it is doubtful a congregation could overcome their engrained beliefs and embrace new paradigms in serving God. Commitment to God's service just does not fit into today's social structure.

The continuing decline in church attendance and increase in church closings are warning signs that something is wrong with the church. We are also witness to a world undergoing rapid changes in morality. Every time we read a newspaper or watch the local and world news, we see scripture unfolding before our eyes. The signs for Christ's return are there for an awakening from our slumber.

2 Timothy 3:1-7

¹ This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. ² For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those

that are good, ⁴ Traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; ⁵ Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. ⁶ For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ⁷ Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

The signs of the times that we are witnessing alert us that the return of Christ for His Church is rapidly approaching. Only those redeemed will return with Him. Yet, we now live in a world where Godlessness is rampant. Fewer are seeking a savior and a lethargic and uneducated church is failing in bringing the lost to Christ. Thus, God needs revival in His church to save the lost before it is too late.

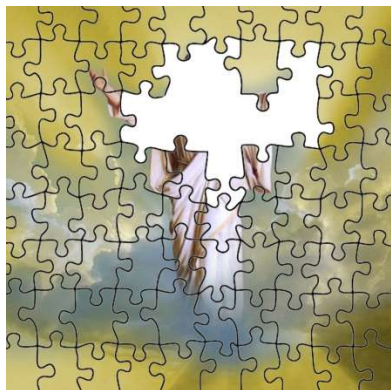
REVIVAL

Earlier, I asked the question if we would have revival in this lifetime. From a human perspective, it seemed improbable. Humans cannot bring revival, only God can. The good news is ***that revival is on its way***. God promised that in the last days before His return, He would pour out the Spirit of Elijah on all men. God will collect His remnant before the terrible day of the Lord when He returns with His bride to wreak vengeance upon His enemies.

Malachi 4:5-6

⁵Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: ⁶And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

CONTINUING OUR JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY



We have now completed the first and second parts of our three parallel journeys through God's plan of salvation. In those two journeys, we presented a bold view of salvation that differs from the traditional understanding and interpretations of today's Protestant churches. This may be hard to accept, but the scriptures presented provide the evidence. Remember, biblical doctrines rarely appear in one place in the scriptures. Scattered throughout the Bible, verses are like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. You cannot see the picture until all the pieces are in place. We have merely taken the pieces explaining salvation and put them together so you can see the picture as God intended it.

It is now time to move on to the third and final part of our parallel journeys through the plan of salvation. God has revealed a picture of salvation, but it is incomplete. Salvation through the Law is only temporary and repeated yearly. To see the picture of what God is trying to show us through grace, we must find the remaining pieces of the puzzle. To discover them, we will have

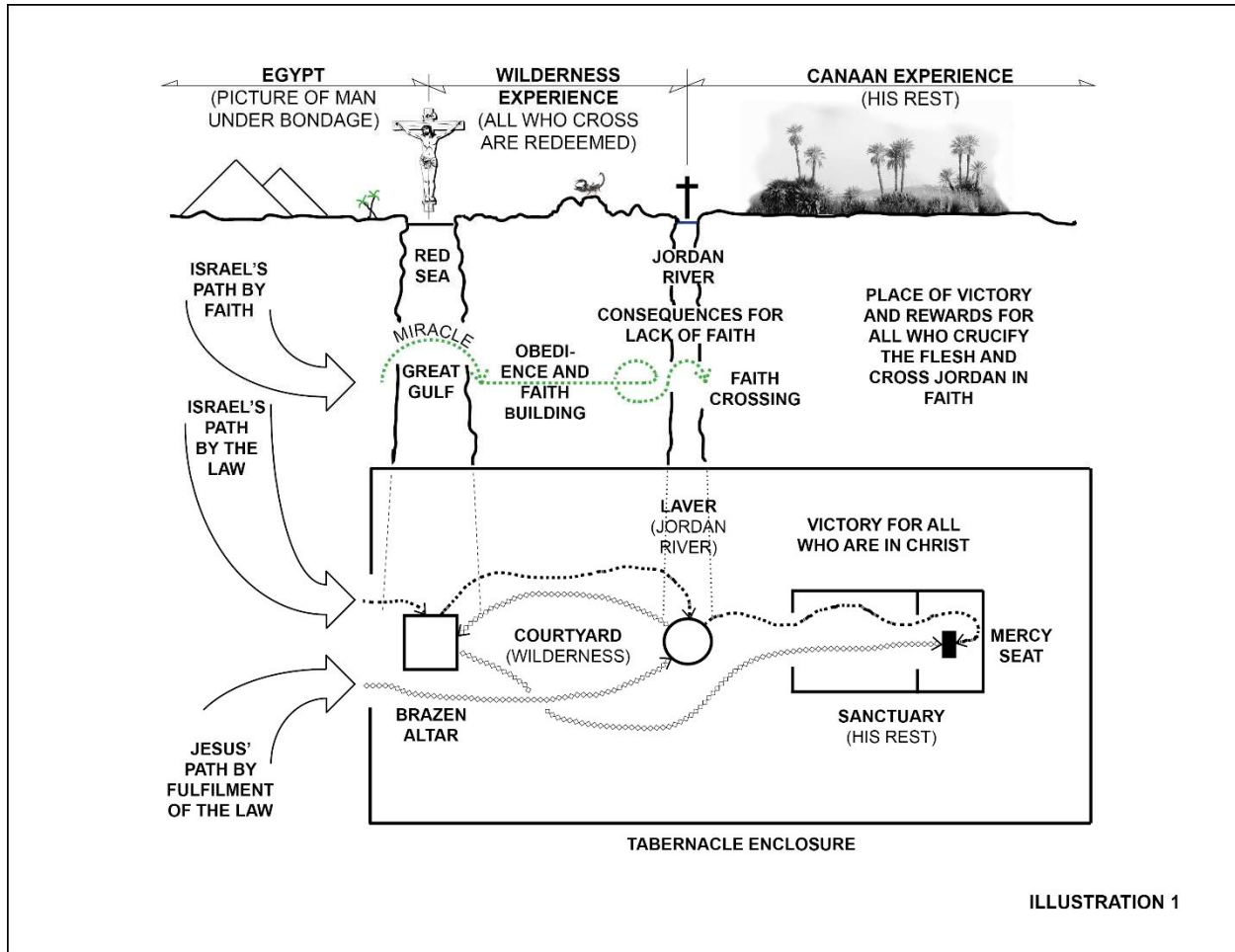
to complete the third part of God's plan of salvation: Jesus' 3.5 years journey through the Tabernacle as the High Priest. When we complete the puzzle, Jesus' ministry, as our High priest, will change perceptions and understanding of the four gospels. It will be as though we read and understood them for the first time.

A PARELLEL EXPERIENCE: Redemption through Christ, the High Priest

1 Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon the end of the ages are come.

As we start the final journey testifying to God's plan of salvation, let us once again refer to Illustration 1.



As previously discussed, God structured the plan of salvation such that three collaborating witnesses could provide testimony to its validity of heavenly origin. The first witness testified that through Israel's wilderness walk of learning faith and obedience, redemption is eternal but comes with expectations and consequences for disobedience. The second witness testified that salvation shadowed through the LAW collaborated the first witness' account of salvation. Both the first and second witnesses testified to a future Church with doctrines for worship and service for the redeemed. The second witness also testified that a third witness would come some future day to verify that all testimony given by the first two witnesses was true.

WHO ARE THE THREE WITNESSES?

Remember from an earlier chapter a statement that God does not waste Bible space on frivolous stories and that all scripture has significant meaning. The three witnesses are no exception. To sentence a person to death, two or three witnesses must testify against the accused.

Deuteronomy 17:6

At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

Recall that the sentence for sin is death. This is the reason we needed a redeemer to save us from the penalty of death. This is an important consideration as it helps reveal the identity of the three witnesses who would testify for the plan of salvation for humanity. The first witness who led the wilderness walk to teach faith and obedience was none other than the Holy Spirit. He led Israel the entire journey as the column of fire and smoke. The second witness was none other than Jehovah God who dwelt in the Tabernacle. Living with Israel, He witnessed them exercising His Laws for the temporary forgiveness of sin. And of course, the third witness was the Lord Jesus who awaited Israel across Jordan to lead their conquest of Canaan. And, as we will see in this chapter, Jesus will complete the Law and every type revealed by the first two witnesses. This is why three witnesses, rather than two, were necessary to rescue humanity from the death penalty. The Father, the Holy Spirit and the Son must all be present in redemption. Therefore, let us follow the third witness on His 3.5-year journey as High Priest to see the testimony that He will give the Father for the eternal redemption of humanity.

PREPARATION FOR THE PRIESTHOOD

When we followed Israel's journey through the Tabernacle, we saw how everything in its structure and furniture pointed to God's Son who was to come and complete all types foretold in the Tabernacle. We will now return to the Tabernacle and this time, walk with Jesus through the Eastern Gate, and follow Him into the Holy of Holies. He will make the journey as the High Priest of the Tabernacle. As the mediator between God and man, only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies and make intercession for the sins of the people. The writer of Hebrews confirms beyond any doubt that Jesus was the High Priest and the only one qualified to make this journey.

Hebrews 2:17

Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

Hebrews 9:11

But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

Before we start the journey of Jesus as the High Priest, it is very important to understand something about Jesus' ministry as the High Priest. If I asked each of you why Jesus came to us, I would expect several answers relating to the establishment of the Church. While these are popular views, they are all incorrect. *The gospels have no relevance to the Church.* They are evidence of the completion of the Old Testament. The gospel preached here is the offer of the long anticipated Millennial Kingdom reign of Christ, not the gospel of Grace. At the time of Jesus, the Church was still a mystery. Had Israel accepted Jesus as the Messiah, God would have established the Millennial Kingdom and established Jesus as king upon the throne of David. Jesus confirmed this when He defined the purpose of His ministry. Quite simply, He came to fulfill all things written in the Law of Moses, types, prophesy, and the Psalms.

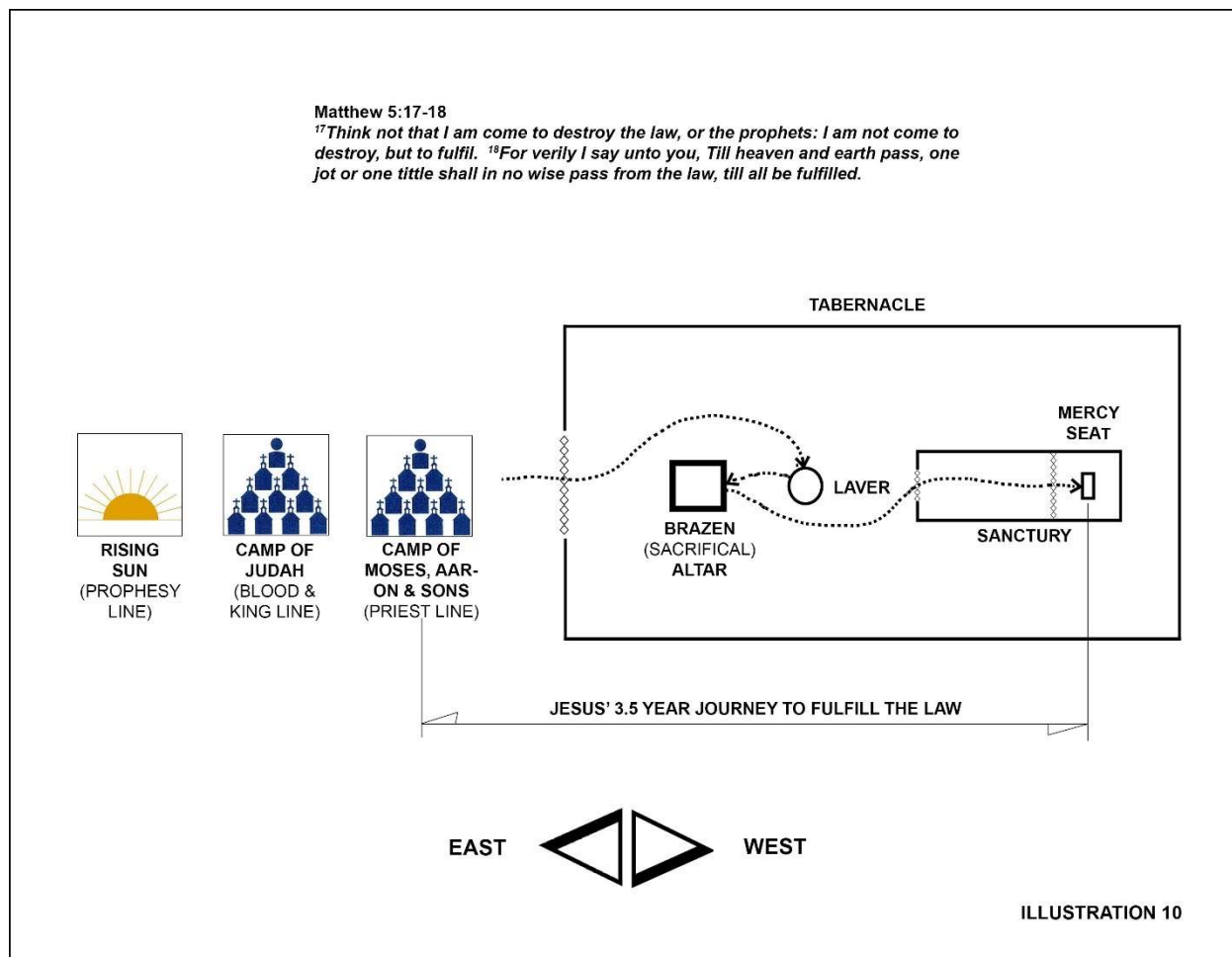
Matthew 5:17-18

¹⁷Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. ¹⁸For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Luke 24:44

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

Only the High Priest could complete the Law for the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, only God's son, who the old priest foreshadowed, was qualified to fill this role. The Law, once fulfilled by Jesus, would complete God's Plan of Salvation. Therefore, we must understand that Jesus devoted His entire ministry to fulfillment of the Law. As Hebrews tells us, He can do this only as the High Priest. Therefore, to start this ministry, He must become the High Priest as foreshadowed in the Tabernacle.



THE PRIEST KING

Earlier in the chapter on the Tabernacle, we discussed the positions and importance of the camps of Judah, the priests, and Moses as located outside and in-line with the Eastern Gate. The Tabernacle's Eastern Gate always faced eastward because of prophecy that the Son of Man would appear from the east.

The camp positions of the priests and Judah are extremely important for another reason not discussed, previously. They not only represent Christ's bloodline from King David and confirmation of His priesthood, they present a paradox not readily apparent. To be king, He must be in the lineage of King David, from the Tribe of Judah. To be a priest, He must be a descendant of the tribe of Levi. All priests of the Tabernacle are Levites. This is a mystery that, thankfully, the Book of Hebrews clarifies.

Hebrews 5:1-10

¹For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: ²Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and

on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. ³And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. ⁴And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. ⁵So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. ⁶As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. ⁷Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; ⁸Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; ⁹And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; ¹⁰Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Melchisedec was both Priest and King in the time of Abraham. The Bible tells us that Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec. Hebrews also infers that Melchisedec had no known beginning or end. Hebrews explains this to let us know that Melchisedec was a type of Christ, who would one day be both High Priest and King. He would become king through the lineage of King David of the tribe of Judah and High priest by proxy through the priest lineage of Levi. Some teach He was a Levite by proxy via His adoptive father, Joseph. However, Joseph was also of the lineage of David. Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, was a Levite. However, which of Elizabeth's parents linked to which of Mary's parents is not known. Therefore, scripture cannot substantiate an indirect Levi lineage for either of Mary's parents. This explains why God gave us the explanation in chapter 5 of the Book Hebrews.

A DIFFERENT PATH

If you reference Illustration 1 at the beginning of this chapter, you will note something strange. The path through the Tabernacle for Jesus is different from that of Israel. There is a reason. Before Israel could come into the presence of God, the sin problem needed resolution. Therefore, entrance into the Tabernacle was only by stopping at the Brazen Altar and offering a substitute for their sins. Jesus did not have to make a sacrifice for sin because He was sinless. Therefore, He could enter through God's veil of righteousness without stopping at the Brazen Altar. To start His ministry as High Priest, it was first necessary to go to the Laver to wash in accordance with the Law for priesthood (in type the Jordan River). It was here that His ministry as High Priest would begin. He would later have to return to the Brazen Altar to sacrifice Himself, not for His sins but the sins of the world.

ORDINATION TO A PRIESTLY OFFICE

To be High Priest, God must select the candidate; and the chosen candidate must receive ordination into this holy office. God selected Aaron to be the first High Priest of the Tabernacle, and He gave Moses detailed instructions for the ritual.

Leviticus 8:6, 10, 12

⁶And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water. ¹⁰And Moses took the anointing oil (a type of Holy Spirit), and anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein, and sanctified them. ¹²And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him to sanctify him.

An additional requirement for the priesthood was age. Ordination to this holy office required the candidate to be at least thirty years of age.

Numbers 4:1-3

¹And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, ²Take the sum of the sons of Kohath from among the sons of Levi, after their families, by the house of their fathers, ³From thirty years old and upward even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.

Thus, God set in the Law the selection process for the ordination and age requirements of the High Priest. To be High Priest, Jesus had to meet all these requirements.

Before proceeding with Jesus' ordination as High Priest, I would like to address a question often discussed. Why do the scriptures say so little about Jesus' early life? I think the answer resides in His mission to fulfill the Law as High Priest. Since a man could not enter the priesthood until the age of thirty, the first thirty years of Jesus' life would have been a time of preparation and instruction by God for the role He was to fulfill. Consequently, these early years would have had been irrelevant to God's plan of salvation.

When Jesus reached eligible age for priesthood, He journeyed to the Jordan River for baptism by John the Baptist. He came to John for the ordination ceremony of the High priest.

Matthew 3:1-3

¹In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, ²And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. ³For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Luke 3:21-23

²¹Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, ²²And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. ²³And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age.

Matthew 3:16-17

¹⁶And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: ¹⁷And lo a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Jesus' baptism by John in the Jordan was the washing part of the ordination. Immersion in the Jordan completed the "washing" requirement of the Law. This cleansing ritual completed *sanctification*. The anointing oil applied by God's Spirit descending from heaven completed the *anointing* ritual. God called from heaven to confirm that this was His Son, thus confirming His *selection* of the High Priest. As Jesus stepped out of the Jordan, He began His ministry as the ordained High Priest. He was now qualified to enter the Tabernacle and begin His priestly duties of redemption.

WHY JOHN THE BAPTIST?

I have never heard the question asked, but why would Jesus come to John for His ordination to become the High Priest? What were John's qualifications to perform the holiest ordination in human history? If you recall from earlier discussions, there were only three ways to become the High Priest. First, appointment by God, He selected Aaron as the High Priest of the Tabernacle. The eldest son of the High Priest, by progression, became the next High Priest after his father's death. If the eldest son died before his father, the priesthood passed to the next oldest son, etc. If none of the sons were 30 years or older; or if the High Priest had no heir, the king appointed the High Priest. This was the line of progression during the Maccabean period of Jewish history. The order of selection varied throughout Jewish ages. In the time of the prophet Eli, King Solomon deposed a High Priest and replaced him (1 Kings 2:35). After the Exile, the line of succession returned to father-to-son. But later, civil authorities took upon themselves the right of appointment.¹ In the time of King Herod, he replaced high priests with outsiders from Babylonia and Alexandria, in an effort to gain support from the Jewish Diaspora.² Understanding the authority of selection helps us appreciate John's unique authority for the baptism of Jesus as the High Priest.

Comprehension begins with recognizing John as a type of Moses. Like Moses, John was a Levite but not a priest. Like Moses, John had no authority, through the Law, to perform the ordination of a High Priest. Therefore, we must search the scriptures (for the puzzle pieces) to understand this mystery of how John qualified, apart from the Law.

The answer begins with Moses. God protected and preserved Moses as a baby. Under the sentence of death by Pharaoh, God hid him in an ark (basket) floated in the bull reeds of the Nile River. Made waterproof with pitch and slime, the ark protected Moses for God's future purpose. It was here that God (water) sanctified him for His service. For one to be sanctified, he must be morally pure, set apart, and devoted to God. This is exactly what his parents, Jochabed and Amran, did. They trusted God to deliver their son and set him apart for God's will.

Hebrews 11:23 (NIV)

*By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no **ordinary child** (Strong's Greek 791), and they were not afraid of the king's edict.*

By looking at the Greek translation, we can see that Moses was set apart for God's special service: "Moses' parents saw him as a normal child, yet one who if dedicated to God by them would fulfill God's particular calling for him;" and "Moses' mother, Jochabed, much like Mary, the mother of Jesus, pondered **God's consecration of her son** and released his care unto Him."

Now, we can understand why Moses, a type of Christ but not a High Priest or king, could ritually anoint Aaron as High Priest. God selected Aaron as High Priest of the Tabernacle, not Moses. A sanctified Moses merely followed God's instructions in the Law for the ordination ritual. So, how does John fit into this picture? Where Aaron, as High Priest, foreshadowed **a future High Priest, only God could select the true High Priest that Aaron typed, Jesus**. Therefore, God would select only two High Priests outside the progression of the selection of the High Priests: the one that foreshadowed salvation in the Law and the true High Priest that would fulfill the Law. To do this, He must first sanctify and consecrate a person outside the priesthood and kingship, like Moses, for the ordination of the true High Priest, Jesus.

It is not a coincidence that John and Jesus were near the same age and related. It is important to recognize the family connection between John and Jesus. Elisabeth, John's mother, and Mary, Jesus' mother, were cousins. When conceived by the Holy Spirit, Mary visited Elizabeth who was, at the time, six months pregnant with John.

Luke 1:39-42

³⁹ *And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda;* ⁴⁰ *And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.* ⁴¹ ***And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:*** ⁴² *And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.*

It was here, at this time in his mother's womb, that *John received the Holy Spirit from an unborn Jesus still in His mother's womb*. By this family visit, God consecrated John for His special service to ordain His Son as foretold by the Angel in the Gospel of Luke.

Luke 1:15

For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

The scriptures heralded another very important aspect of John. Like Jesus, he was a *Nazarite*. Raised under the strict Nazarite code (Numbers 6:1-21), John was holy unto the Lord. As such,

he was as near a sinless man as humanly possible. Thus, God prepared, from birth, a holy man, consecrated wholly to His service, for the baptismal ordination of His Son.

The scriptures prophesied in several places that John would come to prepare the way of the Lord, However, while somewhat beyond the scope of this manuscript, I would like to mention another aspect of John rarely discussed. We think of these prophesies merely as announcing John as the forerunner to Jesus. But the prophesies are much more profound than they appear.

Isaiah 40:3

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Malachi 3:1

Behold, I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord, who ye seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, whom ye desire, behold, he comes, saith Jehovah.

Mark 1:1-3

¹The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ²As it is written, behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. ³Thee voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Luke 1:17

*And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias (**Elijah**), to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.*

Whereas God consecrated Moses as a new born, He consecrated John in his mother's womb. This seems strange. Why not consecrate both in their mother's womb or both as a new born? This was not a coincidence. John was a type of Moses qualified to ordain the High Priest. However, the time in their lives (one born and one yet unborn) when God consecrated them is significant. It foretells that John would come *later*, again, as a type of Moses.

As a type of Christ, Moses led Israel on an EXODUS to their inheritance promised since Abraham, Canaan. However, God did not permit Moses to cross the Jordan River. Yes, Moses could not cross because He disobeyed God by striking the Rock. However, there was a less subtle reason because of a future event to take place in the Jordan. John the Baptist would one-day stand amid of the Jordan as in type, Moses. John would herald God's next national promise to Israel, the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Let us not forget, John was the last prophet of the Mosaic Law that promised the Kingdom reign of Christ. John's message in the Jordan was repent because the Kingdom of God was at hand. And it was. As Jesus stepped out of the Jordan at completion of ordination, His ministry to complete the Law began. This would herald a NEW

EXODUS for Israel as prophesied in Isaiah chapters 40-55. As with the first EXODUS, here it means the same, “to lead out of the wilderness.” Of course, it will be Jesus who will lead this NEW EXODUS of deliverance with the Spirit of Elijah changing hearts to God before the Lord’s return.

The prophesy of the Spirit of Elijah is more profound than one can imagine. But here is not the place to discuss the significance and impact of this prophesy. In the ending EPILOGUE chapter of this manuscript, this prophesy will become clarified as it tells what will happens in the end days before Christ’s return.

Realizing John’s consecrated holy life and the role he played as the last prophet of the Mosaic Law, we can understand Jesus’ high esteem of John.

Matthew 11:11

Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

JESUS’ BAPTISM AND THE CHURCH

Over the years, we have listened to many sermons and Bible lessons expounding the reasons for Jesus’ baptism. Usually, they focus on lessons or examples for the church. This is an unfortunate misinterpretation of scripture and a sad testimony on biblical illiteracy infusing the pulpit and classrooms. Tying Jesus’ baptism to the church rejects Old Testament Law and the Book of Hebrews. John baptized Jesus for one reason and one reason only: to fulfill God’s Law of ordination to become the High Priest. Only as High Priest could He complete the Plan of Salvation. We must not lose sight that Jesus’ ministry was to Israel, not the church.

THE RITUALS OF REDEMPTION

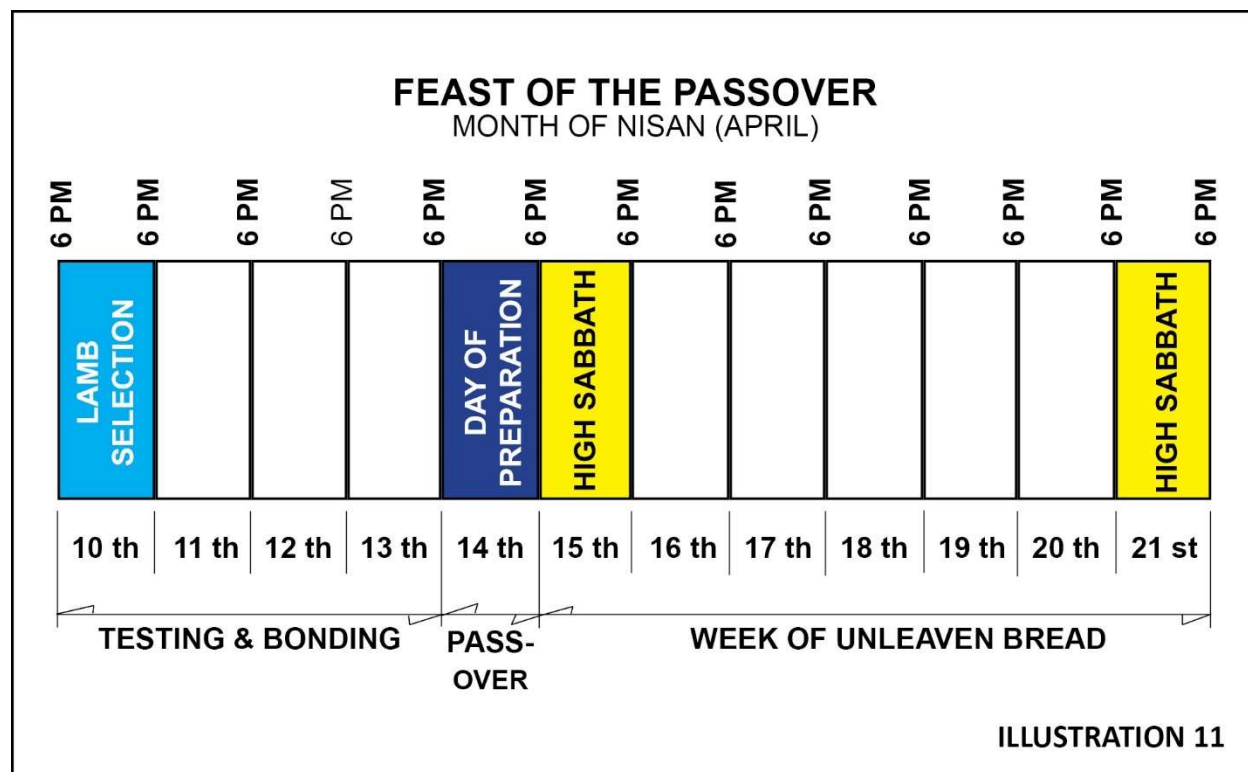
Before we can understand Jesus’ actions as High priest, we must understand the rituals He must fulfill. The priests who served the Tabernacle performed the everyday sacrifices for individual transgressions of the Law. The High Priest had a different role. His duty was to perform the rituals for forgiveness of Israel’s sins on the annual Day of Atonement and minister to the Altar of Incense. In the chapter “A Parallel Experience: A Shadow of Redemption through the Law, the Tabernacle,” we disclosed these rituals performed to fulfill the Law. Chapter 16 in the Book of Leviticus detailed every ritual requirement of the High Priest. This chapter omits such details and only addresses relevance to Jesus’ role in fulfillment of the rituals of redemption.

You may already be questioning yourself, “How would we know how Jesus fulfilled the Law when there is no explanation in the gospels?” Good question! Only parts of the answers are in the gospels. Old Testament Law, types, prophesy, and Jewish customs provide the components of understanding. And like mentioned before, we must gather all the puzzle’s pieces before we can

see the complete picture. Rest assured that once we connect all the pieces, scriptural myopia will fade.

THE PASSOVER

The key to understanding Jesus' journey through the Tabernacle as High Priest is to understand His role in the events of the Passover. This may sound strange as the Day of Atonement occurs six months after the Passover. However, God had to use the Passover to satisfy the Passover statutes and simultaneously fulfill the Law of Moses and prophesy. Recalling the first Passover in Egypt, God issued a statute for Israel to celebrate the Passover as a feast each year. It was at this first Passover that God showed that a lamb must die in our place and the blood placed between Him and the death penalty for sin. Therefore, to reconcile humanity to a state of grace, God's Lamb had to die during the Passover and His blood placed between God's presence and the death angel (the Law). Therefore, let us start our journey through the Feast of the Passover by first identifying the days that encompass the days of celebration.



Exodus 12:3-5

³Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: ⁴And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count

for the lamb. ⁵Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats:

Leviticus 23:5-8

⁵In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S Passover. ⁶And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. ⁷In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. ⁸But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

While all the days of celebration are meaningful, only a few are instrumental in Jesus fulfilling the Law and securing redemption for humanity. The 10th, 14th and 17th are the most important days while the 14th has the most dramatic day of events.

TIMING IS CRITICAL TO UNDERSTANDING THE EVENTS OF PASSOVER

Israel celebrated the Feast of the Passover each year April 14-21. The 15th and 21st were holy holidays called High Sabbaths. These Sabbaths are not to be confused with the weekly Sabbath. The two High Sabbaths occurred only once per year at Passover. The 14th was the Day of Preparation. It is this day that the priests slaughtered the lambs for the Passover meal. Israel ate their lamb meal in the early hours of first High Sabbath, the 15th.

On the 10th, each family selected a Paschal Lamb for the Passover meal. The lamb had to be a male of the first year and without spot or blemish. Once selected, the family took their lamb to their home. This was not without design. This was to be a four-day period of testing and bonding with the family. God wanted each family and lamb to bond and become personally attached. In this manner, the lamb would not be just a lamb, but their lamb. This would deeply impress the costly nature of the sacrifice. Keep in mind that this lamb represented God's Lamb for sacrifice at Passover. It was the responsibility of the man of the home to examine, continuously, the lamb for perfection. Call to remembrance the words from the Book of John:

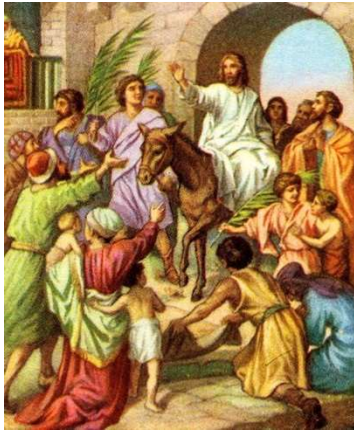
John 1:29

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Every family took their Paschal Lamb to their respective homes on April 10th. As God's Lamb traveled to the home of His family, He was now, in type, moving from the Laver toward the Brazen Altar as the High Priest. The Paschal Lamb was a type of Jesus, God's Lamb. Therefore, to fulfill the Law and type, Jesus had to parallel and experience every action of the Paschal Lambs.

John 12:12-13

¹²On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.



As families gathered their Paschal Lambs to their homes, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, April 10th, and on to the Temple to offer Himself as King of Israel. Not by coincidence, this year, Palm Sunday happened to fall on the 10th, the same day as lamb selection. Therefore, it was necessary for Jesus to go to the Temple for both His offering to be King and report to the home of the family that selected Him as their Paschal Lamb. Yes, the Temple was the residence of His family as God resided in the Holy of Holies. It was here that Jesus began His days of testing in parallel to other Paschal Lambs scattered with families throughout Jerusalem and neighboring communities.

Arriving at the Temple on Palm Sunday and the day of lamb selection was not a coincidence. Both events represented Jesus' two possible endings to His ministry: acceptance as Israel's king or God's lamb sacrificed for the redemption of humanity. On this day, God required Israel's decision. Thankfully, Israel refused their rightful king, thereby, permitting Jesus to graft the gentiles into His family.

FOUR DAYS OF TESTING FOR THE LAMBS

When studying the examination period of the lambs, exercise care. Some references note testing of the lambs lasted 5 days. Some count the Day of Preparation, April 14, as the fifth day of testing. However, the lambs only spent four days with the families that selected them, April 10-13.

When the Paschal Lambs began their days of examination, to mimic the Law, Jesus also began His examination. As the man of each household was responsible to examine their lamb, God was responsible to examine His Paschal Lamb for perfection. He did this by letting the Temple priests test Jesus on the scriptures. The scriptures only record four trap questions asked by the priests.³

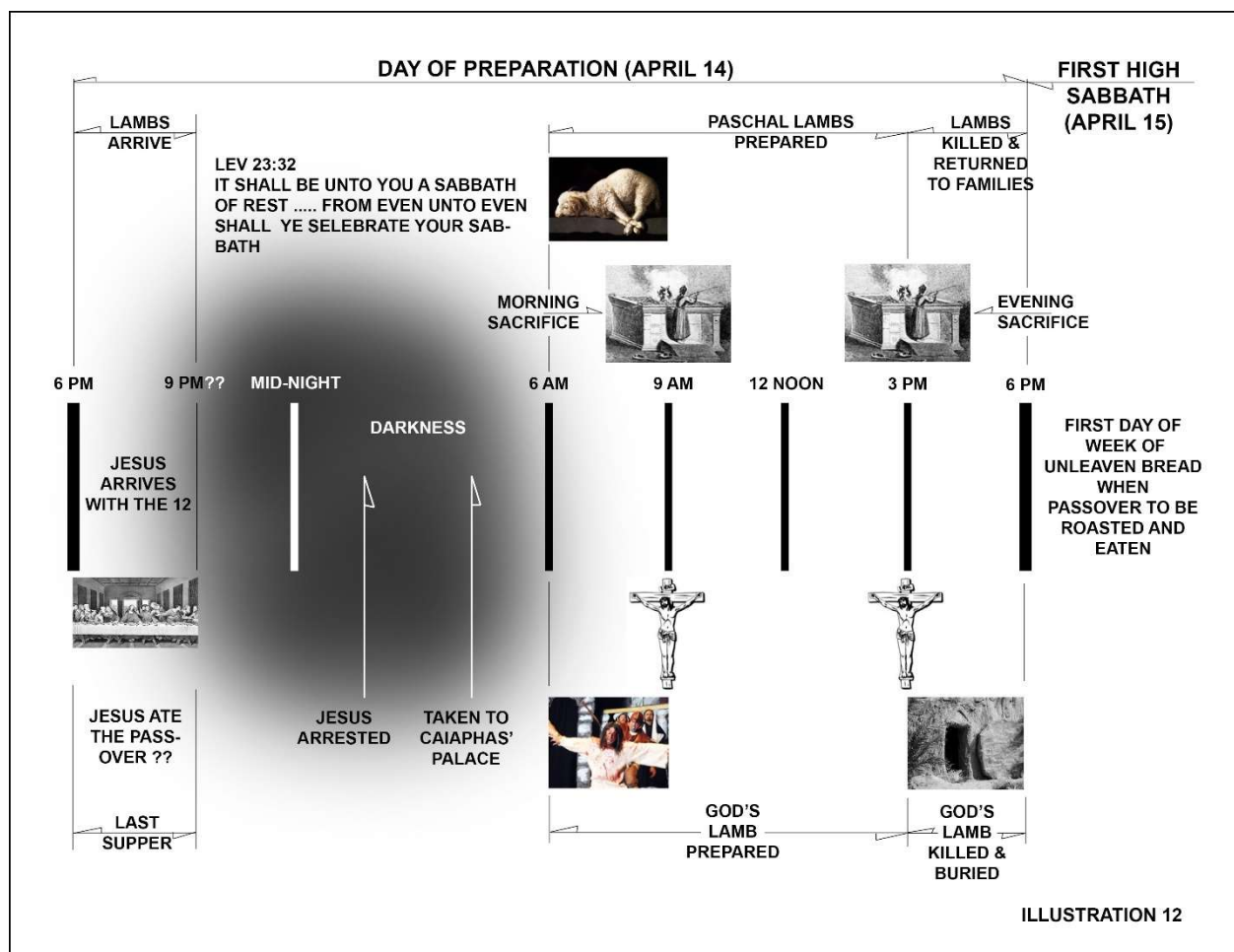
1. The Pharisees, Sadducees, Torah-teachers, and Herodians asked Jesus: "By what authority are you doing these things?" (Matthew 21:23-48, 22:1-14; Mark 11:27-12:12; Luke 20:1-19)
2. The Pharisees and the Herodians asked Jesus: "Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" (Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26)
3. The Sadducees asked Jesus: "Whose wife will she be at the resurrection?" (Matthew 22:23-33; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-40)
4. The Torah-teachers asked Jesus: "Which is the greatest commandment in the Torah?" (Matthew 22:34-40, Mark 12:28-34)

Jesus ended His testing by the priests by asking the one question that they could never answer: "Whose Son is the Messiah?"

Having triumphed over all the tricks and entrapments of the priests, Jesus concluded His period of testing as God's Paschal Lamb. He proclaimed His authority by warning the people not to follow the teachings of the Scribes and Pharisees and proclaimed eight woes against their hypocrisy. The Paschal Lamb proved spotless and without blemish and was thus qualified for sacrifice.

TIME TO MOVE THE LAMBS

The timing of the events of Passover is critical in decoding Jesus' fulfillment of the Law. Let us begin by illustrating the timing of events on the Day of Preparation.



It is now April 14, the Day of Preparation, and the time of testing and bonding with their families has ended. It is time to take the Paschal Lambs to the Temple for slaughter. Before we enter Jerusalem, however, we must understand the Jewish calendar and the timing of the events about to unfold. We must tread slowly because much is about to happen in a very short period of time.

Illustration 12 breaks down the timing of the Day of Preparation. It will serve as our guide through the events transpiring this day.

The first thing we must understand is the Jewish day. Our calendar day in the Gentile world is twenty-four hours, 12 AM to 12 AM. In the Jewish world, the day is also twenty-four hours, 6 PM to 6 PM. This sounds simple but can cause much confusion in following the events of this day. This simple fact has especially caused chaos in scripture translation regarding the resurrection events (which we will discuss later).

Leviticus 23:32

It shall be unto you a Sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath.

At present day, the Jewish people still observe their day from 6 PM to 6 PM. We will immediately see the importance of understanding the Jewish day as the Paschal Lambs and God's Lamb arrive on The Day of Preparation.

THE TITULUS



Before the Paschal Lambs arrive, we need to introduce something that is easy to miss when following the lambs. It is the titulus and is simply a Latin word used by the Romans to signify a sign. The titulus had profound meaning in understanding this day. Israelites used the titulus to identify their Paschal Lambs.

Each lamb had a titulus hanging from its neck. This was the method of identifying the owner of the lamb. Their titulus was the only way of insuring that each family received back “their lamb.”

The Paschal Lambs arrived in Jerusalem with great fanfare, coming from miles around. Josephus, the Jewish historian, recorded that the priests and their helpers would slaughter as many as 256,500 lambs in the Temple courtyard on the Day of Preparation.⁴ You can imagine the spectacle of this event. Josephus also recorded that the population would swell to as many as 2,700,200 to 3,000,000 for the Passover.

GOD'S LAMB ARRIVES

The lambs arrived at the start of the Day of Preparation. They are corralled near the Temple complex after 6 PM or the start of the 14th. As the lambs arrived, Jesus had to arrive in Jerusalem at the same time to mirror the Paschal Lambs that type Him.

Mark 14:12-18

¹²And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the Passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the Passover? ¹³And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. ¹⁴And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest chamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples? ¹⁵And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us. ¹⁶And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the Passover. ¹⁷And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. ¹⁸And as they sat and did eat....

As the lambs arrived in Jerusalem, Jesus arrived in Jerusalem with His disciples. Like the lambs, He arrived after 6 PM, the start of April 14, the Day of Preparation. Illustration12 maps out the events that will unfold on this day. It will be our reference to witness the Law fulfilled.

THE LAST SUPPER PARADOX

The first event of significance that unfolds on this day is The Last Supper. We know Jesus and His disciples ate the Passover meal at the start of the 14th or shortly after 6 PM. Here we must pause and reflect on a paradox with this event. The timing and meal appear to conflict with the Law of the Feast of the Passover. Since every jot and tittle of the Law needed fulfillment, we must resolve this paradox for Jesus to continue His journey as the High Priest.

If you are a studious person of the Bible, you may have previously discovered this paradox regarding Jesus and His disciples keeping the Passover. In fact, it is so confusing and contradictory that scholars have stopped referring to Jesus' last meal as "keeping the Passover." The new description has morphed into "The Last Supper." What is the confusion? Jesus is God's Paschal Lamb. As such, He must die when the Paschal Lambs die at the Temple during the afternoon of the Day of Preparation (the 14th). Therefore, He could not eat the Passover meal in the early hours of the 15th, the High Sabbath. Jesus ate the Passover in the first hours of the Day of Preparation, approximately eighteen-to-twenty hours before the slaughter of the lambs. The Bible even confirms that Jesus ate the Passover before the Feast of the Passover took place.

John 13:1

Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

So, what is the answer to this perplexing mystery? It is only recently that God provided the simple answer for this manuscript. In researching the subject, I uncovered several arguments but none came close to the truth. Sometimes an answer is too simple, and we search for something more complicated. It is like the analogy of "not being able to see the forest for the trees."

The answer is in the scriptures, and Jesus gave the undeniable explanation. To keep the Law, Jesus and the disciples had to keep the Passover and sacrifice their Paschal Lamb for their Passover meal. However, they made no provision to procure a Paschal Lamb, keep it for four days of testing and sacrifice it for their Passover meal. So, how did they keep the Law?

Matthew 26:26-28

²⁶And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. ²⁷And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; ²⁸For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Keeping the Passover required four **basic** elements: testing a Paschal Lamb for four days for perfection, killing and presenting the lamb's blood as a sacrifice, cleansing the house of Levin, and eating the lamb for the Passover meal.

- The disciples were with Jesus for the four days of His Paschal testing to witness His perfection. He was their Paschal Lamb.
- The disciples prepared the place to keep the Passover. This would include cleansing the place of leaven which was a statute of the Law (Exodus 12:19-20). Matthew tells us in chapter 26:17-19, *¹⁷Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the Passover? ¹⁸And he said, go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, the Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at thy house with my disciples. ¹⁹And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and **they made ready the Passover.***
- Jesus was the Paschal Lamb slain for the sins of the world. Hence, Jesus gave them bread and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." Jesus symbolically said, "I am the Paschal Lamb; when you eat this bread that represents my body, you have eaten the Paschal Lamb for your Passover meal."
- He then gave them wine to drink and said, "drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the New Testament." He gave them "my blood" which was the blood of the true Paschal Lamb later presented on the Burnt Altar of the cross.

The Paschal Lamb eaten with the Lamb's blood applied completed the essential elements of the Law. With this mystery clarified, let us continue our journey through the Tabernacle and Passover.

LAMBS PREPARED FOR SLAUGHTER

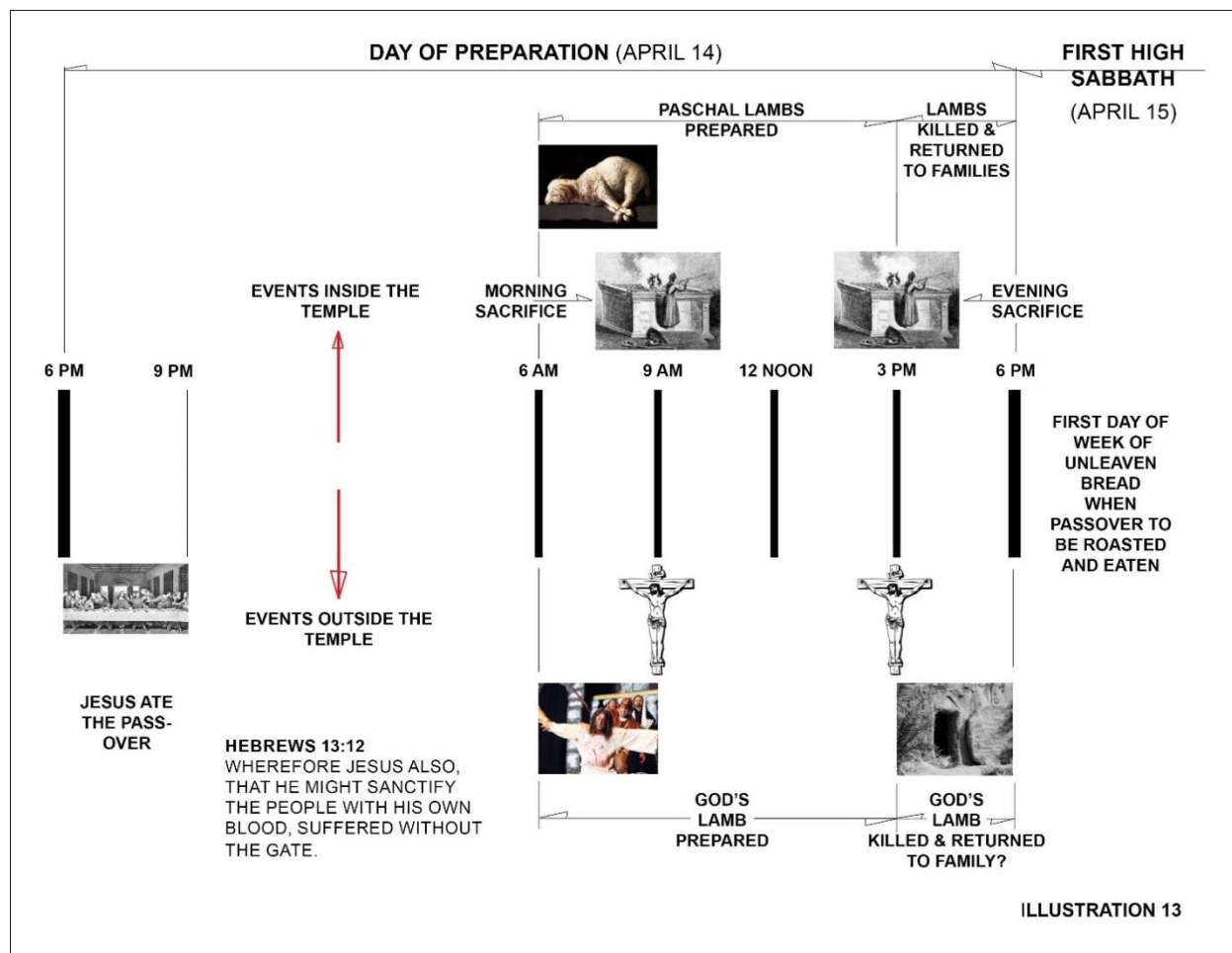


(Model of the Temple in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus.)

We are now a few hours into the Day of Preparation. Sometime before midnight, priests corralled the Paschal Lambs, awaiting preparation for slaughter. Therefore, to keep the Law and fulfill the type, the priests must corral God's Paschal Lamb and prepare Him for slaughter.

Matthew 26:57

And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.



Here, we must note something important. Unlike the Paschal Lambs, the guards took Jesus to the palace of the High Priest, Caiaphas, not the Temple. This was necessary to fulfill scripture.

On the Day of Preparation, Jesus had to mimic everything that happened to the Paschal Lambs. As the events of this day unfolded in the Temple, Jesus had to fulfill every action of the Paschal Lambs from outside the Temple. While the High Priest carried out the ritual requirements of the Law in the Temple, outside the Temple Jesus, as the true High Priest, had to fulfill (mimic) what the Law represented.

Hebrews 13:12

Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

“Outside the Gate” in this passage of scripture is somewhat ambiguous. Since the Romans crucified outside the city on Golgotha, most take this scripture to reference the crucifixion outside the city gates. This may not be correct. All sacrificial Laws followed this day occurred inside the Temple. To mimic the lamb’s fate in the Temple complex, Jesus must suffer the same fate outside the Temple. Here, the scripture probably means outside the gates of the Temple. The fact that He suffered the scourging inside the city substantiates this reasoning.

The scriptures do not provide specific timing of the events for the first twelve hours of the Day of Preparation. We know that Jesus and His disciples went to the Garden of Gethsemane after their Passover meal, and Jesus prayed for strength for His upcoming ordained sacrifice.

Matthew 26:36-46

³⁶Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. ³⁷And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. ³⁸ Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. ³⁹And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. ⁴⁰And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? ⁴¹Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. ⁴²He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. ⁴³And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. ⁴⁵Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

Apparently, they were here for some time as Jesus mentioned in verse 40 that He prayed for an hour, and He prayed three separate times. This would indicate that the Jews arrested Jesus and took Him to Caiaphas’ Palace in the early morning hours. We know from scripture that the priests beat Him; and after daylight, took Him to Pontius Pilot, the governor. Since the preparation for



the slaughter of the lambs began at 6 AM, we can assume Jesus was also bound about 6 AM in preparation for His coming ordeal. Matthew 26 describes His preparation that began about daylight.

Matthew 26:65-68

⁶⁵Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. ⁶⁶What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. ⁶⁷Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, ⁶⁸Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?



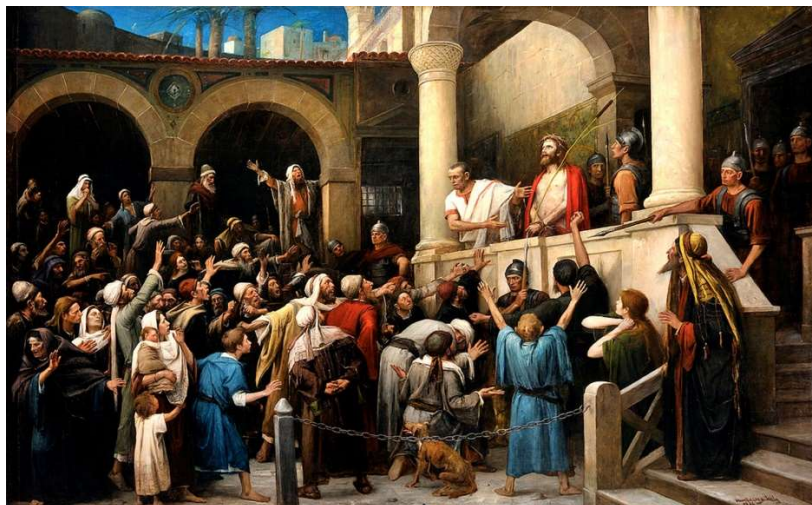
Matthew 27:1-2

¹When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: ²And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

It is now approximately between 7-8 AM. Inside the Temple courtyard, preparation for the slaughter of the Paschal Lambs was in progress. As preparations for slaughter of the lambs began, preparation for the slaughter of God's Lamb began outside the Temple gates. At the court of Pontius Pilate's palace, Pilate proclaimed a death sentence for God's Paschal Lamb. To fulfil the Law and type, as the Paschal Lambs die, so must God's Lamb. But first, the Romans performed a cruel preparation of the Lamb to hasten a death by crucifixion.

Matthew 27:22-30

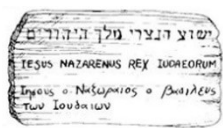
²²Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. ²³And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. ²⁴When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. ²⁵Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children. ²⁶Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. ²⁷Then the soldiers of the governor took



Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. ²⁸And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. ²⁹And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! ³⁰And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.

Matthew 27:31 & 37

³¹And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. ³⁷And set up over his head his accusation written, **THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**



For crucifixions, it was a Roman custom to prepare a **titulus** to proclaim the crimes of the condemned. Since Pilot could find no fault with Jesus, he mocked the Jews by proclaiming Jesus' crime as being "the King of the Jews."

THE ROAD TO GOLGOTHA

Escorted by Roman guards responsible for Jesus until His death, the procession walked toward Golgotha for the crucifixion. Thus, a tortuous agonizing walk began. The estimated distance to Golgotha was 650 yards (594 M), the equivalent to over six American NFL football fields. The procession proceeded on a stone road now known as the Via Dolorosa or "the way of suffering."⁵

We know from scripture that Jesus could not make this tortuous walk due to His weakened condition from the Roman flogging (scourging), a vicious beating to weaken the victim to near death. An Internet blog, Answering Bible Questions, offered the following take on Jesus' condition and His inability to carry His cross.⁶



"The centurion, anxious to get on with the crucifixion, selects a stalwart North African onlooker, Simon of Cyrene, to carry the cross beam. Jesus follows, still bleeding and sweating the cold, clammy sweat of shock, until the 650 yards journey from the fortress Antonia to Golgotha is finally completed."

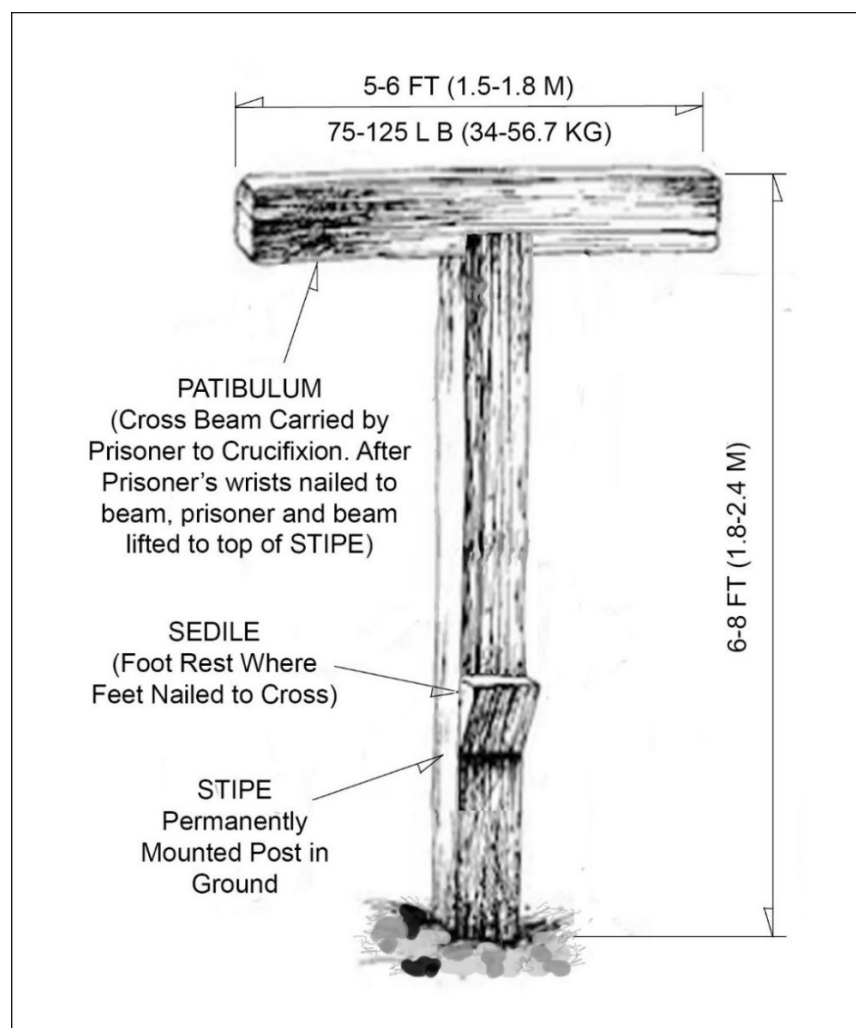
Another article provided a more vivid picture of the brutality of the flogging that Jesus received. It leaves no doubt of why Jesus was unable to carry His cross. The article, titled "What Was

Flogging”, is found on the website Catholic Education Resource Center. It provided a sobering reality check on the beating Jesus received from the Romans.⁷

“Flogging, or scourging, was done before every crucifixion. The scourging was intended to bring a victim to a state just short of death. Also, it hurt. A lot. The whip had iron balls tied a few inches from the end of each leather thong on the whip. Sometimes, sharp sheep bones would be tied near the ends. The iron balls would cause deep bruising, while the leather thongs would cut into the skin. The sheep bones would hasten the process of cutting into the skin. After a few lashes, the skin would be cut through, and the muscles would begin to be cut. Blood loss was considerable, and the pain would probably have put the victim in a state of shock.”

A ROMAN CRUCIFIXION

As the procession toward Golgotha continued, let us pause in our journey to talk about the Roman crucifixion awaiting Jesus. This is necessary to understand what Jesus endured for us as the



Paschal Lamb and dispel common beliefs about His crucifixion. It is far more brutal than we could imagine. It is not possible for us to phantom what Jesus endured to pay the price for our redemption. Before covering how He fulfilled the Law for our redemption, it is important to understand the price He paid. Here is a sketch of a typical Roman crucifixion cross of Jesus' day. And before you say it, you are correct: it looks nothing like the cross we see in all the depictions of Jesus on the cross or the one carried to Golgotha. The Romans were expert in the art of crucifixion, and this is their design perfected for maximum suffering. An article on the Catholic Education Resource Center website provided an excellent

description of the design and its method of inflicting an excruciating death.⁸ This modified picture reveals the notched method of attaching the patibulum to the stipe.

“After the flogging, the victim would carry his own crossbar (called a patibulum) from the flogging area inside the city to the crucifixion area outside of the city walls. The crucifixion area was always outside the city, because the process was horrible and disturbing to citizens.”

“The upright part of the cross (called the stipe) was permanently mounted in the crucifixion area. The part that the victim carried was only the patibulum.” (not a full cross as depicted in paintings of Jesus’ crucifixion)



“The crossbar would be balanced on the victim’s shoulders, and their arms would be tied to the crossbar. In this position, if the victim tripped or fell, they could not use their arms to break their fall, and they would likely fall face first into the ground.” Notice that the crossbar is notched to fit atop the stipe.

“The victim was escorted by a Roman guard (probably a centurion and several soldiers), who were responsible for guarding the victim until his death. One of the soldiers would display a sign (a titulus) with the crime written on it.”

“Once the crucifixion area was reached, the victim would be offered a drink of wine mixed with myrrh to act as a mild pain killer. The drink was a charitable service performed by an association of women in Jerusalem. Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. - The victim would then be nailed to the cross bar (Mark 15:23).”



Here, we have an apparent deviation from the scriptural account. The Romans crucified by nailing the victim to the cross beam through the wrists. This was for maximum pain. They did not nail through the palms, as these would not support the body weight. (NOTE: This statement conflicts with scripture and is clarified later in this chapter).

The stipe was rather short and usually no more than 6 FT (1.8 M) high. This short height was to help facilitate hoisting and placing the patibulum (crossbar) onto the vertical stipe (post) with the victim attached. The stipe only had to be tall enough to prevent the victim’s feet from reaching the ground. This was accomplished by nailing the victim’s heels to the post (sedile).

Continuing the narrative: *“Once crucified, a victim would live for a period ranging from a few hours to a few days. How long he lived depended mostly on how severe the scourging was. If no claimed the body, it would be left on the cross to be eaten by predatory animals. The family could, however, claim the body for burial. In this case, a Roman soldier would pierce the chest with a sword or spear to make sure the victim was dead.”*

“What actually kills the victim? The initial scourging would weaken the victim, cause massive blood loss, and probably induce shock. By the time the victim had carried the cross bar to the crucifixion area, he would be exhausted.”

“Once on the cross, the victim would have his body weight suspended by their arms. In this position, it is difficult to completely exhale. The victim could take shallow breaths for a while, but eventually would be forced to push himself up to take a full breath. At this point three things happen:

- *The victim's weight is now fully supported by his feet. The nails through the feet would be likely to hit two major nerves running through the area. The result would be excruciating pain in the legs.*
- *The nails in the wrists would be likely to pierce the main nerve running through the arm. As the victim pushed up to breathe, the wrists would rotate against the nail, irritating the nerves and causing intense pain in the arms. Some authorities also believe that the crucifixion position would dislocate the shoulder or elbow. Any movement would aggravate the pain from these injuries.*
- *The wounds on the victims back from the scourging would push up against the rough part of the stipe. This would tend to re-open the wounds, leading to more pain and blood loss.*



“This combination of pain would quickly force the victim to lower himself back down. Eventually, the victim would no longer be able to raise himself up and would suffocate. The shock from blood loss due to the scourging would hasten this process.”

“In some cases, the victim’s legs were broken to finish him off. This would prevent the victim from being able to raise himself up and he would suffocate in a matter of minutes.”

This article provided vivid testimony to the brutality of the Romans and their ingenuity for inflicting maximum pain. The Romans performing the crucifixion of Jesus, however, were the worst of the

worst. The Christian Blog website explained that the soldiers who crucified Jesus were not typical Roman soldiers.⁹

“The Romans who carried out the crucifixion of Jesus were members of the 10th Legion, mercenaries known for their brutality. This was routine duty for the executioners. To them, Jesus was just one more criminal to be killed with maximum pain, an example to others who defied Roman power. Just another day’s gruesome work. So, at every step the Romans were in control of a highly organized, very efficient process. They were the pros!”

Hopefully, everyone now has a better understanding of the horrors that Jesus endured for us. With a new vision of reality, we will continue our journey through the Tabernacle and Passover to experience the rapidly moving events for the redemption of humanity.

As we leave the sobering, disheartening explanation of Jesus’ scourging and crucifixion, we leave several paradoxes challenging our indoctrinated beliefs regarding these events. We never comprehended the Roman cross and method of crucifixion it inflicted. We never fully comprehended the brutality of the scourging inflicted. We never fully comprehended the type of cross that Jesus carried to Golgotha. We never fully comprehended how the Romans nailed Him to the cross. Such is the power of false indoctrination and misinformation that permeates today’s church. Answers follow in this chapter. But now, it is time to follow Jesus in fulfilling the Law to secure redemption for humanity.

FULFILLING THE LAW AS THE HIGH PRIEST

Matthew 5:18

for verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

The Day of Atonement rituals for the yearly forgiveness of Israel’s sins required two types of sacrifices: Burnt Offerings and Sin Offerings. As the true High Priest, Jesus must mimic in type these same rituals to fulfill the Law.

THE BURNT OFFERINGS

Let us now step backwards in time to the start of the Day of Preparation, the 14th. The previous accounts of Jesus’ suffering hopefully prepared you for the events to unfold on this day. Today in the Temple, two sacrificial events, required by the Law, would occur that will affect Jesus in fulfilling the role of the High Priest. Just as in the Tabernacle, the Law dictated two male lambs for sacrifice in the Temple for the daily Burnt Offerings. The priests meticulously performed the sacrifices in accordance with the instructions of the Tamid.¹⁰ As related to the Day of Atonement and daily sacrifices, the lamb offered in the morning was for the High Priest and his family. The lamb offered in the evening was for the people.

Recalling from our journey through the Tabernacle Sanctuary, the High Priest had to burn incense on the Altar of Incense every morning and every evening. The ritual had to coincide with the daily Burnt Offerings on the Brazen Altar.

A BURNT OFFERING FOR THE HIGH PRIEST AND HIS FAMILY

Things will now happen in rapid succession. It would be beneficial go back a few pages and reacquaint yourself with Illustration 13. Note the sacrifices going on inside the temple and the parallel events happening outside the Temple.

Jesus, as the true High Priest, had to fulfill the meaning of the Burnt Offering rituals conducted by the High Priest in the Temple. The time for the first Burnt Offering was rapidly approaching and two events were about to clash that would start the fulfillment to the plan of salvation.

At first light (1st hour, 6 AM), preparation for the first daily sacrifice began. The priests cleaned the altar then moved the first sacrificial lamb for the offering to the Burnt Altar. The priests then secured the lamb to the altar to await the morning sacrifice at 9 AM. Simultaneously, outside the Temple, Roman guards moved God's Lamb to His altar of sacrifice and secured Him. They nailed Him to His crossbar (patibulum) to (unknowingly) await the 9 AM morning sacrifice in the Temple.

Isaiah 53:4-8

⁴Surely he hath borne our griefs , and carried our sorrows : yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God , and afflicted. ⁵But he was wounded for our transgressions , he was bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed . ⁶All we like sheep have gone astray ; we have turned every one to his own way ; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. ⁷He was oppressed, and he was afflicted , yet he opened not his mouth : he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter , and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb , so he openeth not his mouth. ⁸He was taken from prison and from judgment : and who shall declare his generation ? for he was cut off out of the land of the living : for the transgression of my people was he stricken .



At 9 AM in the Temple, the priests sacrificed the first lamb and placed it upon the Burnt Altar. Simultaneously, the soldiers hoisted Jesus, nailed to the crossbar (patibulum), upon the post (stipe), The soldiers then nailed His feet to the sedile. Unknowingly, the soldiers placed Jesus upon God's Burnt Altar, the cross of Calvary.

Mark 15:25

And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

The morning sacrifice heralded the start of the religious day for the people of Jerusalem. Nine AM was the time of the first hour of prayer. It was also the time for opening the Temple gates for the people.

The morning Burnt Offering was the first part in God's preparation to redeem humanity as foreshadowed by the High Priest's rituals on the annual Day of Atonement. Jesus' crucifixion on the cross (Burnt Altar) fulfilled and completed this part for redemption as foreshadowed in the Law.

As Jesus suffered on a cruel cross, an oblivious people carried on their daily routine in the Temple. At noon, the 6th hour, the priests moved the second sacrificial lamb and secured it to the Burnt Altar. This heralded the second hour of prayer in the Temple.

BACK TO THE DAY OF PREPARATION

Inside the Temple, as the morning Burn Offering concluded, preparations for the slaughter of the Paschal Lambs continued at fever pitch. Numerous priests, Passover helpers and Paschal Lambs in the Temple complex made a crowded, chaotic environment. Preparation of the lambs required completion by 3 PM and all slaughtered by 6 PM, before the start of the High Sabbath when the Passover meal was to be prepared. Every aspect of the Law for the redemption of sins, with one exception, would find fulfillment this day before 6 PM. The one remaining unfilled part of the Law would find fulfillment three days later. We will now continue following Jesus, the High Priest, as He continues His journey through the Tabernacle fulfilling the Law.

A BURNT OFFERING FOR THE PEOPLE

Whereas the morning offering was for the High Priest and his family, the afternoon offering was for the people. Although the Temple complex was in chaos with the preparation of the Paschal Lambs, preparations continued for the afternoon Burnt Offering of the sacrificial lamb for the people. Outside the Temple on Calvary, God's Paschal Lamb was in preparation for the same upcoming event.

The Roman soldiers crucified Jesus at 9 AM, initiating a long agonizing period of suffering. It would have been easy to shorten His time of suffering; but to fulfill the statutes of the Burn Offerings, it was necessary for Him to endure until the afternoon sacrifice in the Temple. Why did He have to wait and suffer? *He was the evening lamb for the Burnt Offering.* To fulfill the Law, Jesus had to die "on His Burnt Altar" at the same time as the evening sacrificial lamb in the Temple. The priests slaughtered and placed the evening sacrificial lamb on the Burnt Altar at 3 PM. Outside the city on the cross of Calvary, also at 3 PM, God's Lamb gave up the ghost and died, thus completing the Burn Offering sacrifice for the people.

Mark 15:34-30

³⁴And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? ³⁷And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

John 19:28-30

²⁸After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. ²⁹Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. ³⁰When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

Completion of the second Burnt Offering in the Temple mimicked the first part in of the rituals of the Law on the Day of Atonement to forgive Israel's sins for one year. Jesus' death as the sacrificial lamb on God's Burnt Altar fulfilled and completed this part for redemption as foreshadowed in the Law

Be very careful, here, not to let indoctrination cloud your view of what just happened. Many times, I have heard pastors say that when Jesus said, "it is finished," the plan of salvation was complete. Thankfully, that is not the case. If so, we would have no redemption, today. When Jesus said, "it is finished," He verified completion of the Law of the Burnt Offerings and this part of His redemptive work as the High Priest. His redemptive work was far from complete at the cross. He had not completed the work of the High Priest. Until He placed His redeeming blood on the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies in heaven's Temple, redemption of humanity was not complete.

A SIN OFFERING FOR THE HIGH PRIEST AND HIS FAMILY

We are now ready to proceed with the Lamb's redemptive work by mimicking the Law exercised in the Temple (Tabernacle) but from outside the Temple gates.

After completion of the Burnt Offerings, the next duty of the High Priest was to make a Sin Offering for the yearly remission of Israel's sins. Like the Burnt Offering, the Sin Offering had two components: a sacrifice for the High priest and his family and a sacrifice for the people. The Sin Offering differed from the Burnt Offering. In this offering, the High Priest only saved the blood of the sacrifice. He burned the fat of the sacrifice on the altar and burned the carcass outside the camp.

We covered the Sin Offering rituals in detail when discussing the Tabernacle. Nevertheless, for clarity purposes, it is necessary to revisit and enhance some parts. On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest made two sacrifices for himself and his family, a bull for a Sin Offering and lamb for a Burnt Offering. Then, he made two sacrifices for the people: a goat for a Sin Offering and a lamb for a Burnt Offering. We have already seen how Christ fulfilled the Burnt Offering of the lambs at His crucifixion. We will now discuss the role of the High Priest in the forgiveness of sins.

After sacrificing the bull, the High Priest carried the blood behind the veil that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. This room was so restricted, that any breach of protocol resulted in death. The High Priest entered the equivalent of the throne room of God. He could enter only because he was a type of Christ, the mediator between God and man. Only the High Priest could present the blood sacrifice on the mercy seat for the redemption of sins.

Before we enter the Holy of Holies with the High Priest, let us call into remembrance what is in the room. Centered in the room was the Ark of the Covenant. Above the Ark was the Mercy Seat. On both ends of the Mercy Seat were Cherubim with outstretched wings. God's presence was above the Cherubim where He could look down upon the Law, which demanded the death of the transgressor.

Once the High Priest sprinkled the blood on the Mercy Seat, God would look down to the tables of the Law below the Mercy Seat. If the blood of an innocent substitute was between Himself and the Law that demanded death, God would forgive the people's sins and the death penalty not imposed. After completion for the atonement of sins for the High Priest and his family, he repeated the ritual for the people. However, for the people's atonement, he used a different animal, a goat.

The High Priest selected two goats for the atonement rituals. Drawing lots determined the role each would play. The one on which the lot fell became the sacrifice for the Sin Offering. The other goat became the final act of the atonement ritual, the scapegoat. The High Priest ritualistically placed all the sins the Lord had forgiven onto the scapegoat. Then, the priests led it off into the remote wilderness where it could never return.

Leviticus 16:20-22

²⁰And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: ²¹And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: ²²And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

A part of the Sin Offering often overlooked is what I consider to be one of the most important.

Leviticus 16:18-22

¹⁸And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about. ¹⁹And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel. ²⁰And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: ²¹And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their

sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: ²²And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

The High Priest not only sprinkled blood on the Mercy Seat but also the horns of the Altar. The scriptures, here, do not refer to the Altar of Incense in the Holy Place. In keeping with fulfillment of the plan of salvation, the reference is to the Brazen Altar in the courtyard. We will return to the crucifixion to see the importance of cleansing the Brazen Altar of sin. To fulfill the Law as High Priest and reconcile man to God, it would be necessary for Jesus to present his blood at both the Brazen Altar and Mercy Seat.

A SIN OFFERING FOR THE PEOPLE

Only part of the sin offering for the people occurred during the crucifixion. The final part of the sin offering occurred after Jesus' resurrection, three days later. On the cross, we will see partial fulfillment through the cleansing of the Altar to remove sin and the transfer of the world's sins to a scapegoat.

CLEANSING OF THE ALTAR

It is understandable why the High Priest had to make a Sin Offering for both himself and his family. Although he was a type of Christ, he was still a sinful man that needed forgiveness of sins. Why, then, would Jesus, a sinless man, need to fulfill this ritual? The sprinkling of the blood on the horns of the Burnt Altar to cleanse it provided the answer.

Matthew 27:45-46

⁴⁵Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. ⁴⁶And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani, that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Why did God turn his back on his Son? Because, it was during this time that Jesus bore the sins of the world; and God cannot be in the presence of sin. In keeping with the ritual of cleansing the Burnt Altar of sin as part of the Sin Offering, it was necessary to purge the sins of the world from upon the Lord on God's Burnt Altar.

John 19:33-37

³³But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs: ³⁴But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. ³⁵And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. ³⁶For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. ³⁷And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

Hebrews 10:4

For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Now, we see why the Roman soldier had to pierce the side of Jesus. It was necessary to remove the sins of the world that He bore for humanity; and without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins. Only Christ's blood could remove the sins of the world. His shed blood cleansed the altar of sin. Three days later, it would cleanse the sins of humanity.

Hebrews 9:22

And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

CHRIST OUR SCAPEGOAT

We can now understand why there had to be a scapegoat in the ritual for the forgiveness of sin. The blood from Christ's side was necessary for another reason. He had to fulfill the ritual of the scapegoat. The sins of the world needed carried into the wilderness never to appear again. Remember, darkness covered the land from the sixth hour until the ninth. The scriptures do not provide details about the storm wrought upon this occasion, only that darkness covered the land. To complete the Law of the scapegoat in type, we know it was frightening and a great storm of displeasure with darkness and rain.

The blood that flowed from Christ's side carried the sins of the world. As Christ's blood trickled down the cross onto the ground, the rivets of rain washed the sin bearing blood down the slopes and into the wilderness never to return. Thus, Jesus fulfilled the role of the scapegoat in the Sin Offering. Even if it did not rain during these three hours of darkness, the first rain afterwards would have washed Jesus' sin-bearing blood into the wilderness, thus fulfilling the ritual of the scapegoat.

CHAOS

At completion of the afternoon Burnt Offering at 3 PM, the 3rd hour of prayer began in the Temple. It heralded the start of the slaughter of the Paschal Lambs. There were only three hours remaining in the day to complete the task. At 6 PM, the High Sabbath began. The Law prohibited any work on a holy day. Therefore, to complete such a monumental task, the priests employed helpers to slaughter the lambs. However, only the priests could touch the blood.

The following article provides an excellent explanation of the procedures for slaughtering the Paschal Lambs in the Temple courtyard.¹¹

“The paschal lambs were slaughtered in three groups... when the first group entered and the Temple court was filled, the gates of the Temple were closed. A tekiah, teruah, and again a tekiah were then blown on the shofar. The priests stood in rows, and in their hands were basins of silver and basins of gold. ... An Israelite slaughtered his offering and the priests caught the blood. The priest passed the basin to his fellow priest, and he to his fellow, each receiving a full basin and giving back an empty one. The priest nearest to the altar tossed the blood against the base of the altar. While this ritual was performed, the Levites sang the Hallel.” ¹²

Another article on the Jewishencyclopedia.com website provided additional insight on the slaughter of the Paschal Lambs. ¹³

*“The animal was slain on the eve of the Passover, on the afternoon of the 14th of Nisan, after the Tamid sacrifice had been killed, i.e., at three o’clock, or, in case the eve of the Passover fell on Friday, at two. The killing took place in the court of the Temple, and might be performed by a layman, although the blood had to be caught by a priest, and rows of priests with gold or silver cups in their hands stood in line from the Temple court to the altar, where the blood was sprinkled. These cups were rounded on the bottom, so that they could not be set down; for in that case the blood might coagulate. The priest who caught the blood as it dropped from the victim then handed the cup to the priest next to him, receiving from him an empty one, and the full cup was passed along the line until it reached the last priest, who sprinkled its contents on the altar. The lamb was then hung upon special hooks or sticks (**a shadow of the cross**) and skinned; but if the eve of the Passover fell on a Sabbath, the skin was removed down to the breast only. The abdomen was then cut open (**a shadow of the spear in Jesus’ side**) and the fatty portions intended for the altar were taken out, placed in a vessel, salted, and offered by the priest on the altar, while the remaining entrails likewise were taken out and cleansed.”*

By the time of Jesus, Jewish families no longer placed the lamb’s blood on the doorposts of their homes. The priests took the blood of the Paschal Lamb straight to the altar and sprinkled it for the family. After completion of the ritual, the helpers returned the lambs, as identified by their titulus, to their families for their Passover meal. We must now consider God’s Lamb. Slain like the other Paschal Lambs, how can the priests identify and returned Him to His heavenly family in accordance with the Law?

THE PLACEMENT OF THE TITULUS

Until now, the titulus proclaiming Jesus’ crimes has received little attention. We know that Pontus Pilot wrote on it that Jesus was King of the Jews. We also know that a Roman soldier carried it on a standard during the procession to Golgotha. However, we failed to see the importance of the location of the titulus at the crucifixion or the titulus’ message. We have three accounts from scripture addressing the placement of the titulus on the cross.

Matthew 27:37

*And set up **over his head** his accusation written, **THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.***

Luke 23:38

*And a superscription also was **written over him** in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, **THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.***

John 19:19

*And Pilate wrote a title, and **put it on the cross.** And the writing was, **JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.***

All present-day paintings of Christ's crucifixion place the titulus above His head on an extended vertical post above the crossbar. This position comes primarily from Matthew's account of the crucifixion. Luke and John's accounts are ambiguous and Mark does not mention a position. From the previous sketch of a Roman cross, hopefully you noted that there was no extended post above the crossbar. However, as shown in the preceding picture of Jesus on the cross, there was room to nail a titulus to the crossbar, slightly above His head. Regardless, I believe Mathew's account of the titulus' position is incorrect, and this is important. Matthew's account does not comply with Jewish tradition for the Paschal Lambs or the biblical type it represented.

If we encounter an apparent discrepancy in scripture, we must look elsewhere to unravel the answer (fit all the puzzle pieces). Therefore, we must look for another answer and that answer may not be pleasing to traditional Christians. Maybe, just maybe, Matthew (or some unknown author) was wrong. Remember, the author wrote the Book of Matthew over fifty years after the crucifixion. An article on the Internet site Answers.com addresses the "where and when" the author (or authors) wrote Matthew and provides new insights to help unravel this discrepancy.¹⁴

*"Matthew was written in Greek Koine, the lingua franca of the ancient Near East. Although Matthew's two main sources, Mark's Gospel and 'Q', were both written in Greek Koine, we could nevertheless assume that the use of Greek Koine tells us that the Gospel was written somewhere in the Near East. Had it been written in, for example, Greece, we could expect that it might have been written in classic Greek. Various possibilities have been put forward to suggest where in the Near East the Gospel of Matthew was written, but these are speculative and usually based on assumptions that the actual author was the apostle Matthew or that it was written for Jewish converts. In fact, **the New Testament gospels were all anonymous and only attributed to the apostles they now bear, later in the second century.** Modern scholars say none of the gospels could have been written by an eyewitness to the events portrayed, thus the apostle Matthew was not the author of this Gospel."*

"Scholars have demonstrated, by parallel readings in the original Greek language that Matthew was largely based on Mark's Gospel, containing some 600 of the 666 verses of Mark. Mark's Gospel was written approximately 70 CE, and scholars say that Matthew can be dated to the 80s

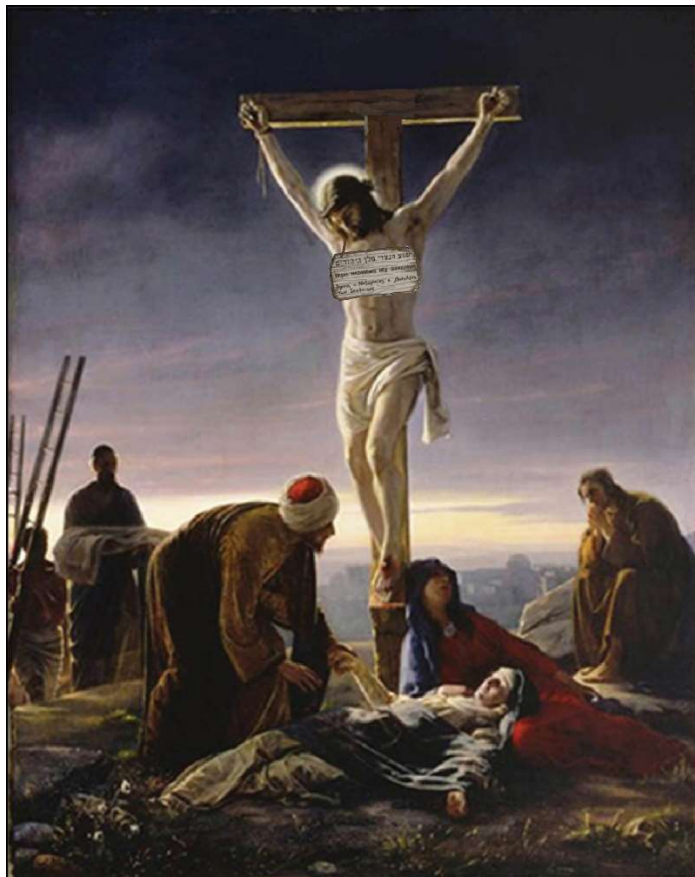
of the first century, although Raymond E. Brown (An Introduction to the New Testament) says that several years should be allowed either side of that decade. Matthew's Gospel was written somewhere in the Near East in the eighties of the first century, but we cannot reliably give a more precise location."

Other sources agree with this assessment of the gospel authors. Written so many years after the event with no eyewitness accounts, descriptions and remembrances vary. We can easily equate this to our own event experiences from several years earlier in our lives.

It is easy to see why Timothy gave us a warning regarding scriptural accuracy affecting interpretation. The problem is not with God's word. The problem is with men working with the scriptures. Man has an innate talent for corrupting anything he touches. The Bible is no exception. However, the Bible is the infallible word of God. It is up to Christians to sort out the truth so we can understand what God is trying to tell us. God rewards Bible study with deep, rewarding scriptural treasures.

2 Timothy 3:16

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:



If true that the writer was not Matthew and there were no written firsthand accounts of the crucifixion, we can see a different view of the crucifixion that fits Roman historical records, Jewish Law, and rituals of the Passover. This picture, I believe, would be a more accurate representation of the crucifixion of Jesus and placement of His titulus.

Remember, to fulfill the Jewish rituals of Passover, the priests identified all Paschal Lambs by the titulus hanging from their necks. God's Paschal Lamb is no different. To mirror the movements of the Paschal Lambs outside the gate, He should have the titulus hanging from His neck. This is important to mirror the movements of the lambs.

As gentiles, we could have never anticipated the importance of the titulus and its

relationship to the plan of salvation. To complete the Law, every slaughtered Paschal Lamb required return to its family for the Passover. However, God's Paschal Lamb was still on the cross. Instead of His family's name to identify Him, His titulus was a mockery of the Jews. Without some way to identify His family and return Him for the Passover, He could not be the Passover Lamb and complete the Law. His sacrifice would be of no avail. This means the titulus is far more important than we could possibly imagine. Therefore, it behooves us to examine Jesus' titulus for any clues to this mystery. Close examination reveals God's invisible handiwork in salvation.

John 19: 19-20

¹⁹And Pilate wrote a TITLE (titulus), and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. ²⁰This TITLE then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

John tells us that Pilate wrote the titulus inscriptions and had it placed on the cross of Jesus. The inscription translated into most of the English Bibles as "Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews." Written in three languages, the Romans could read it in their native tongue of Latin, the Jews could read it in Hebrew, and anyone else could read it in the common language of that day, Greek.

The translated verses in Matthew, Luke and John come directly from the original Greek manuscripts. No hidden meanings have surfaced to provide identifying insight in Jesus' titulus. Apparently, the inscription means exactly what it says, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. However, when examining the Latin and Hebrew versions, amazing, hidden wonders appear.

The TRUTH STANDS FOREVER website offers wonderful interpretations of the inscriptions on Jesus' titulus (article on the inscriptions on the titulus used with permission of the authors).¹⁵

"There was a literary custom of the of the scribes of those days, and it was to take the first letters of the words in a phrase and put them together to see if there would be a hidden meaning from the arrangement of the letters. This custom dates back at least to the time of the Babylonian captivity of the Jewish nation. Today this is commonly called acrostics. The Old Testament scriptures have many such acrostics and they were accustomed to it."

"The Roman Catholic Church used this ancient custom by placing four letters on their crucifixes which are "INRI." These are the first letters of the four words of the inscription on the cross as they appeared in Latin."

In Latin: INRI, from the 1st letter of each word.

Latin

IESVS **N**AZARENVS **R**EX IVD**I**DAEORVM

"IESVS NAZARENVS REX IUDAEORVM" = INRI

*"The name 'Jesus' in Latin is **not** spelled with a 'J.' It is spelled with an 'I.' So, the first letter 'I' represents the name of Jesus. The second letter 'N' is the first letter for the word 'Nazareth' in Latin. Then, 'R' for Rex, is the first letter for 'King,' and finally 'I' would be for the 'J' in the word 'Jews.' Those are the first four letters of the four words in the Latin 'INRI.' And since the Roman Catholic religion uses Latin in their services, it only stands to reason that on their crucifix they would use these four Latin words."*

I = Jesus (Iesvs)

N = Nazareth

R = Rex (King)

I = Jews

"They had the right idea according to Jewish religious customs, but in using the Latin language, it does not reveal the bigger picture or make Jesus more real to the Jews as the Passover Lamb. However, when shown in Hebrew, as we will see shortly, it is an incredible testimony to all the Jews then and even still unto this day."

"When considering the inscription in Hebrew, we can see what so deeply offended the chief priests and scribes. When the chief priests and scribes saw the inscription on the cross in Hebrew, they naturally looked at the first letters to find if there were any hidden meaning in their language. And when they did, their blood pressure surely rose as they were appalled at the sight of what they read."

"And not only did they see it, but many did. John recorded, 'then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city' John 19:20."

"Let us see, just what the Jews saw when looking at it."

In Hebrew: YHVH, from the 1st letter of each word

Hebrew

ישוע הנצרי מלך היהודים

"In Hebrew, the words as from above (which read from right to left) are:"

Yehoshua (Jesus)

Hanatzri (of Nazareth)

Vemelech (the King)

Hayhoodem (of the Jews)

"The first four letters of the words in Hebrew are:"

Y H V H

Y - YOD

H - HE

V - VAV

H - HE

"YHVH, the name of God in Hebrew, is called a tetragrammaton (through the word "tetragrammaton" is a Greek word meaning "4 letter word")."

"The tetragrammaton is the four-letter name of God, "YHVH" in the English rendering. The older form "JHVH" is where we get the name of the Lord JEHOVAH. This name is usually translated in English as "the Lord."

"All this goes back to the Jewish practice of never pronouncing the name as it is but as Adonai, "the Lord." To the Jew, it was the unspeakable, holy name of God!"

"In printed texts, the vowels of the word are placed under the letters of the tetragrammaton. The original pronunciation of the tetragrammaton has been lost, because of the strong Jewish disapproval of pronouncing the name. The pronunciation Jehovah, Yahweh or Yahweh are used by many but there is no certainty of the correct pronunciation according to the Jews in this matter. Some biblical scholars prefer to render it simply as YHWH or JHVH without the vowels. This name occurs over 6,800 times in the present text of the Hebrew Bible."

"The offense to the Jewish leaders was just too much."

*“When Pontius Pilate had the inscription put there, He unknowingly and wonderfully had it put on that titulus, **“the acrostic”** for **“God”** – **JHVH** or **YHWH** – for all the Jews to see.”*

The inscription on the titulus of Christ was a divine work of God. Only He could have cloaked the message in such a faith-inspiring manner. God used a defiant pagan, Pontius Pilate, as a pawn to do His will. How ironic that God allowed a mockery of His Son to be a blessing for the ages.

Jesus' titulus identified His family. He belonged to the family of God. Therefore, He could return to His family for the Passover in accordance with the Law.

CHRIST OUR HIGH PRIEST COMPLETES THE LAW

By the identification of Jesus' family, the next and last step in fulfilling the Law began. As the High Priest, He must return to His heavenly home and visit the Temple which patterned the construction of the Tabernacle in the wilderness. The Book of Hebrews informs us that the construction mirrored a Temple that exists in heaven. Some believe this to be God's residence.

Hebrews 8:1-2

¹ Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; ² A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

Let us now continue our manuscript at the cross and follow God's High Priest back on His journey to the Holy of Holies in heaven's Temple to offer His blood sacrifice. It is now past 3 PM on the Day of Preparation. By the identification of their titulus, the Paschal Lambs have returned to their families. By the identification of Jesus' titulus, God's Lamb began the journey to His heavenly family. An honorable man claimed Jesus' body and placed Him in the man's own tomb sometime after 3 PM and before 6 PM. It was mandatory for completion of the burial before 6 PM, the start of the High Sabbath, a holy holiday.

Mark 15:42-46

⁴²And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the (High) Sabbath, ⁴³Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. ⁴⁴And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. ⁴⁵And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. ⁴⁶And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and WRAPPED HIM IN THE LINEN, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

Unbeknown to Joseph, God used him to prepare His Son to enter the Holy of Holies as the High Priest. Recalling from the sin sacrifices on the Day of Atonement, the High Priest had to change into a pure white linen robe before presenting the blood sin sacrifice in the Holy of Holies.

Leviticus 16:3-4

³Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: ...⁴He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle,

Before Jesus could enter the Holy of Holies, He had to have the white linen garment of the High priest.

Three days, exactly seventy-two hours after placed in the tomb, God resurrected His Son. We know this from the Book of Matthew.

Matthew 12:40

For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

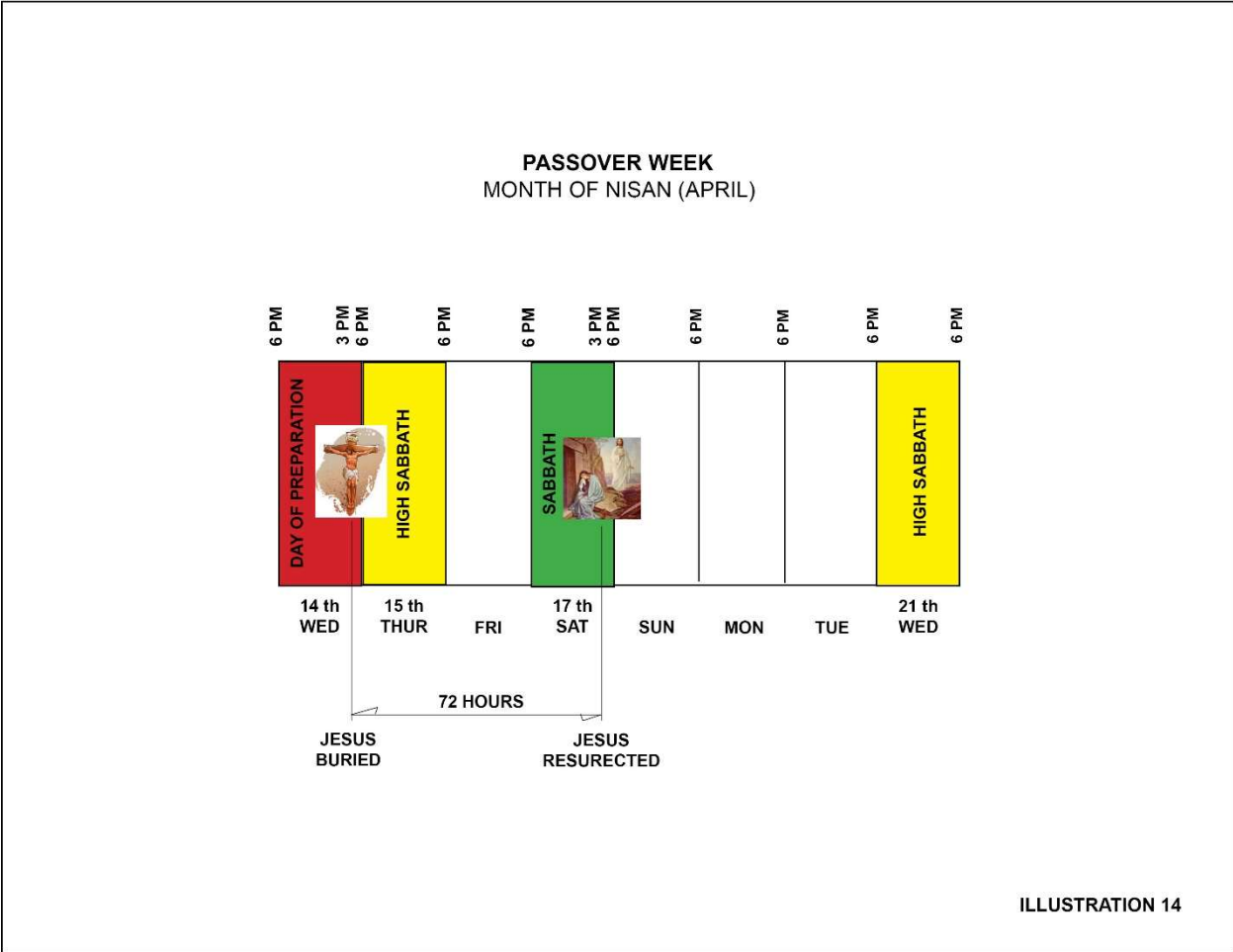
This tells us Jesus came out of the tomb sometime after 3 PM and before 6 PM on the 17th. We also know from scripture that the 17th was the weekly Sabbath.

Matthew 28:1

In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.

A PAUSE FOR CLARIFICATION (WHAT DAY WAS JESUS CRUCIFIED?)

Somewhat relevant to this study, we would like to clarify indoctrination and general misunderstanding about the resurrection. We celebrate Jesus' crucifixion on Good Friday and His resurrection on Sunday morning. Neither is correct. If either was true, the Law would be incomplete, and Jesus' sacrifice would have been for naught. If you recall from earlier, we emphasized the importance of understanding the Jewish day, 6 pm to 6 pm. An improper translation of scripture causes a great deal of the problem: *"as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulcher."* Understanding this is not a problem for a Jew, but apparently was confusing for gentile translators. Here, the scripture is merely saying the Sabbath is ending (6 PM) and the new day is (dawning) beginning (after 6 pm). If you will reference the Illustration 14, the timing of the crucifixion and resurrection become clear.



Scripture has shown that Jesus came out of the tomb on the Sabbath as it was dawning toward (6 PM) the first day of the week (Sunday). Since they placed Him in the tomb after 3 PM and before 6 PM on the 14th, His resurrection occurred exactly seventy-two hours later. This means He came out of the tomb after 3 PM and before 6 PM on the Sabbath. We know the Jewish Sabbath is on Saturday. Therefore, backtracking seventy-two hours or three days from Saturday, we see that the Romans crucified Jesus on Wednesday. We celebrate Easter on Sunday and the crucifixion on Friday. Neither have any relevance to the sacrifice that our Lord made.

RETURNING TO THE SIN OFFERING

To fulfill the Sin Offering and complete the Plan of Salvation, Jesus had to sprinkle His blood on the Mercy Seat in the Temple in Heaven. Only when God saw His Son’s blood on the Mercy Seat would He never see the Law below it again. Christ’s blood blots out all traces of the Law and the sin it guarded against. Whereas the atonement for the forgiveness of sins in the Tabernacle and earthly Temple was only good for one year, atonement by the blood of Christ would be forever. Only the High Priest could offer this atonement. After His resurrection, Jesus prepared to enter the heavenly Holy of Holies. He subtly announced this when Mary came to the tomb to anoint His body.

John 20:11-17

¹¹But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, ¹²And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. ¹³And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. ¹⁴And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. ¹⁶Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. ¹⁷Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

Keep in mind that Mary is talking to Jesus Saturday evening at the end of the Sabbath (before 6 PM), not at first light on Sunday morning. This is important. Let us recall scripture about the Day of Atonement.

Leviticus 16:17

And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.

When the High Priest made the Sin Offering on the Day of Atonement, all other priests had to leave the Tabernacle (Temple). Only the High Priest could be within the enclosure of the Tabernacle courtyard. The reason for this was to prevent anyone from touching the High Priest while carrying the blood sacrifice. Anyone touching him would defile the blood and require repeating the sacrifice. When Mary approached Jesus at the tomb, Jesus forbade her to touch Him. As the High Priest, He had not yet taken His blood and presented it on the Mercy Seat in the heavenly Holy of Holies. If Mary had touched God's High Priest, it would have corrupted Jesus' atoning blood and require a repeat of the crucifixion. If anyone still wants to believe that Mary addressed Jesus in the first light of Sunday, apply reason. Would Jesus have waited through the whole night and risked contamination by an animate object that would have ruined His sacrifice? Logic (and Jewish customs and Law) says no.

By the next day, something miraculous had happened. On the next afternoon, Jesus appeared and spoke with His disciples. This time, he invited the disciples to touch Him.

Luke 24:39

Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

John 20:25, 27

²⁵ *The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. ²⁷ Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold **my hands**; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.*

THE NAIL SCARED HANDS

Before leaving the Roman crucifixion of Jesus, there is one other point to address to reconcile scripture with historical fact: the nail scared hands of Jesus. The Roman crucifixion methods either tied the victim's arms to the crossbar or nailed the arms to the crossbar through the wrists, not the hands. Nailing the wrists was to maximum the victim's pain. Based on what we learned about the origin of the Gospels, John's account may be inaccurate or mistranslated from the Greek. The Wikipedia website posted an article on crucifixion nail placement that the "hands" of John 20:25, 27 implies a possibly mistranslation.¹⁶

"In popular depictions of the crucifixion of Jesus (possibly because in translations of (27 the wounds are described as being "in his hands"), Jesus is shown with nails in his hands. But in Greek the word "χείρ", usually translated as "hand", could refer to the entire portion of the arm below the elbow, and to denote the hand as distinct from the arm some other word could be added, as "ἄκρην οὐτάσσε χεῖρα" (he wounded the end of the χείρ, i.e., "he wounded her in the hand"

It makes little difference whether it was Jesus' hands or His wrists, He suffered a horrible death for our redemption.

FROM TALKING WITH MARY TO VISITING THE DISCIPLES



By the actions of Jesus and confirmation in the Book of Hebrews, we know what happened in this interim of time. Between the time Jesus spoke with Mary and appearing to His disciples, He ascended into Heaven. He entered the heavenly Temple with His blood and entered the Holy of Holies. There, He sprinkled His redeeming blood on the Mercy Seat. The writer of Hebrews confirms this as God patterned the earthly Tabernacle after a Temple that exists in Heaven, and it was here that Jesus presented His blood.

Hebrews 9:23-26

²³It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. ²⁴For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: ²⁵Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; ²⁶For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

When Jesus presented his blood in the heavenly Holy of Holies, it completed the Law, thus completion of the plan of salvation. Now, we can truly say, “*it is finished.*”

Hebrews 10:12

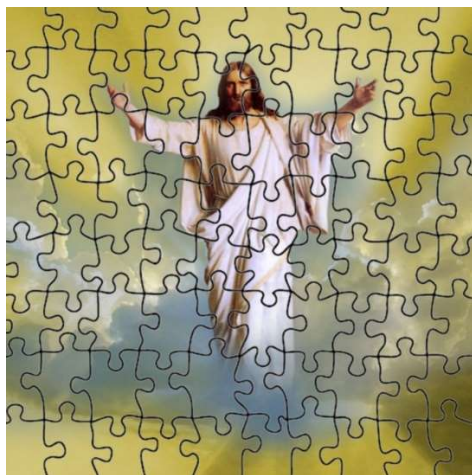
But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God;

OUR JOURNEY IS FINISHED AND THE PUZZLE COMPLETED

When Jesus finished His priestly journey through the Tabernacle (via the Passover), it confirmed His testimony to God’s plan of salvation as revealed through Israel’s wilderness journey. Jesus’ finished work as the High Priest reconciled humanity to God. By fulfilling the Law, Jesus completed His Earthly mission that He revealed to us in the Book of Matthew.

Matthew 5:17-18

¹⁷Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. ¹⁸For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.



Thus, our manuscript ends. There is nothing more that we can add to Jesus’ redemptive work nor God’s veiled plan for redemption and service. We started with the quest to understand the reasons for a weak, displeasing church age. Like the Israelites in their wilderness journey, we let the Holy Spirit guide us. We did not move to the right or to the left following false doctrines. We sought the truth and understanding and God delivered. It was true, salvation was a doctrine not defined in one place. Like the pieces of an intricate puzzle, God placed them throughout the scriptures. Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, He led to us to each piece of the puzzle and showed us its proper location to reveal a complete picture of salvation. Why would we be surprised at what the completed picture puzzle would look like? **JESUS IS THE PLAN OF SALVATION.**

EPILOGUE TO AN AMAZING JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY

Along the pathway of the many years God has patiently waited for me to complete this work, miraculous things have happened to bolster my faith to keep this manuscript alive. However, it seems many times that the more hidden truths the Holy Spirit revealed, the further I drifted. I know that sounds strange; but if you are a Bible teacher, you probably understand. It is amazing the power Satan has to hinder those serving God's ministry. The nearer you are to discovering and sharing new biblical revelations, the more intense the attacks become. But, it is not only Satan that attacks us, God's Word can confront us. When the Lord reveals hidden revelations and some cloaked in His Word from antiquity, the impact can change doctrines and Christian beliefs. I can testify that some things the Holy Spirit revealed about the Lord's expectations of me, as a Christian, so scared me that I hid from Him. Some things shown me were things I did not want to know. They placed too heavy a burden, realizing that they conflicted with my views, our church doctrines, and forms of worship.

Early in this manuscript, I gave my testimony for how God called me to His ministry as a teacher. It was and still is a very powerful testimony. It had to be in order for one to see God's hand in this manuscript. Yet as powerful as my testimony is, it pales in comparison to what God gave me in these last days to show the manuscript's true purpose and importance. In the previous chapter, I stated that I would reveal the meaning of the Spirit of Elijah as it relates to today's church. Understanding is extremely important in comprehending the state of the church and where we are in the days before Christ's return. However, in order to see where I and this manuscript stand in the Spirit of Elijah, I must first reveal some personal stories that have tremendous impact on me and the validity of this manuscript in God's plans for the Church prior to His return.

OBSTICLES, OBSTICLES

Satan fought me relentlessly as I labored with this manuscript. Almost all possible obstacles crossed my path to hinder completion. Sometimes, little but aggravating things would occur. The computer would fail, the Internet go down, the printer failed to work, etc. House, yard, family, and church responsibilities required precious time I needed for writing, research, and study. Sometimes I needed breaks (days, weeks) to unclutter my mind. Any breaks of consequence required hours to reacquaint myself to what had been previously written. Sometimes the obstacles to delay were serious.

A few years ago as I was rewriting and editing text, the Holy Spirit was showing me powerful things. Then, a strange thing happened. I drifted away from God and His manuscript. The more powerful the manuscript became, the more Satan interfered and attacked. I went into a spiritual death spiral. My health deteriorated. I quit reading and studying the Bible. I lost all desire to go to church. I got lost in the world. I had no desire to work on the manuscript as I knew the Holy Spirit could not work through me in my present state. But, I decided to try anyway in my own spirit. I worked on a chapter and saved the file. The next day, I went back to continue work on the file, and it was gone. It had disappeared. I knew then that God would only approve of work completed through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. If my life did not change, the manuscript would never be finished. Then, God intervened to show the manuscript's importance and give me a faith that few on Earth have witnessed.

THE MAKING OF MIRACLES

God was not through with me because the task He assigned me was not finished. Twice, I got very sick; and I witnessed the power of prayer by my church family and Christian friends. It seemed Satan would pull out any stop to hinder me in God's work.

The first attack came seven years ago during Christmas week. Heart pain sent me to the hospital where they discovered blockages of 90 and 95 percent. They scheduled me for by-pass surgery the first week of 2012. Determined to spare me that ordeal, my very spiritual daughter immediately searched for alternatives. She discovered a new robotic heart surgery performed at Emory University Hospital in Atlanta. We sent a copy of my heart catheterization, overnight, to Emory to see if I was a candidate for this new surgery. I was deemed an ideal candidate and surgery was scheduled for the first week of the new year. Little did I know the miracles God would provide to keep me focused on His manuscript.

On our initial meeting, my surgeon told me that I would have to stay about 7-10 days after surgery. I went in for surgery on a Wednesday morning. And then, unexplained things started to happen. Before surgery, I was told that I would stay in the Intensive Care Unit for 2 or 3 days. However, to the head nurse's dismay, I came straight from the recovery room to my hospital room. On Friday I told the surgeon that I was ready to go home as I felt great. To my amazement, he released me. The head nurse protested as I was not following protocol. There was a schedule for walks and exercises over the next few days that I had to perform. She refused to release me. The doctor had to intervene to get me released. So, after three days, I was released. That night, I went to dinner in Atlanta with my family and went to Walmart to get prescriptions filled; and the next day, I went shopping. To my neighbors' amazement on Monday, I did yard work. I had no recovery period. I was a walking miracle of God.

The second attack came five years ago. I got very sick. My kidneys failed, and I was taken to the emergency room and admitted to the hospital for treatment. A female staff doctor said the creatinine level (poison in my blood) was 16.8 (0-3 is normal). In her twenty years as a doctor, she had only witnessed two others with waste levels that high and both were now on dialysis. She also indicated to me and my family that dialysis was not an option for me. She implied that I would not recover.

A team of specialists directed my treatment. By the afternoon of the first day, my creatinine level began to slightly decline. Each day, thereafter, it continued to decline. However, the doctors discouraged me and warned that the creatinine level would drop to a certain level and stop. Then, they would perform a biopsy on my kidneys to determine the cause of failure. But the power of prayer in the church prevailed. To the doctors' amazement, the creatinine level continued to drop near a safe level. After a week, they concluded that I would recover and released me.

Before I left the hospital, I asked the staff doctor what were the odds that I would recover. Without hesitation, she said 1000:1. She also said that my case was so unique, that if I had gone to a teaching hospital, I would have been the subject of a case study. Such is the power of prayer and God's intervention to refocus me to His assigned task. Again, I was a walking miracle.

GOD SENDS HOLY MESSENGERS

On my birthday in 2017, another miraculous event occurred. On that day, I did not sleep in my bed but in a reclining chair in my bedroom. From my chair, I could see down the hallway into the master bath. The door to the master bath was left open so light coming from the back yard into

the bathroom window could dimly illuminate the bedroom. On this night, I did not sleep well and was awake at 4 AM in the morning, praying for daylight. Then, looking toward the bathroom, I saw a woman standing in the bathroom doorway. I assumed my wife had gone to the bathroom and was returning to bed. But, the woman in the doorway did not move. I became alert as something was not right. So, I called out to my wife and asked if she was out of bed. Sleepedly, she answered that she was in the bed. I knew, then, that something supernatural was happening. As I continued to stare at the woman, a man came from within the bathroom and stood beside her in the doorway. I do not know how to express what was going through my mind. I knew a supernatural event was happening and did not know how to react. Then to my horror, the man started walking toward me, and my right knee started shaking. The man walked up and stood about four feet in front and to the right of where I was sitting. He just stood there and said nothing. There was not enough light to see his face, but I could make out his clothing. He wore ancient clothing like a robe which was white and His tunic was a shade of crimson. I sat there mulling what to do. In retrospect, I wish I had asked why He had come to visit and did he have a message for me. Instead, with a strength I did not know I possessed, I stood, faced him, and put my right hand on his chest. Immediately, He and the woman disappeared. Later that day, I called my pastor to tell him of the night's events seeking some sort of insight of what had happened. But, I knew whatever the message was, it was only for me and would only be revealed by God. The big question to me was why of all days did the visit occur on my birthday?

The visit of the two angelic beings consumed my mind for the next several weeks. No one could help me understand. But one thing I was certain, it had to be tied to my birthday. I tried to rationalize the visit and even considered if my deceased parents came to visit their son on his birthday. I prayed for resolution but none came. Three months passed before God gave me the answer. Visiting Colorado, I had gone to dinner with my wife, daughter, and son-in-law. As I sat in the back seat of our auto while returning from dinner, I was recalling the ghostly events on my birthday when God gave me the answer. "Man is granted a limited number of birthdays, and you have not completed the task that I gave you." Talk about a wakeup call! God said you must finish your assignment because you are nearing the end of your life (i.e. He may have implied His return). Then, the realization hit me that God sent two angels to deliver a message specifically for me. What an honor, yet sobering experience. Not only did God deem it important enough to send angels to hurry me to finish His manuscript, He gave me a glimpse of the reality of the spiritual world. I will never doubt again. I have seen angels! Praise God for showing me how important I was to Him and His manuscript.

As I write about this event, two years have passed and based on new things the Lord has shown me, I now believe that the male visitor dressed in white and crimson was the Lord Jesus. I base this upon three things. The archangel Gabriel, God's primary messenger, always delivered God's messages verbally, either in person or in a dream (Daniel 9:21-27). Here, the male messenger did not speak; therefore, I believe he was not the angel Gabriel.

Another reason I believe my angelic visitor was not Gabriel was his raiment. Each of the seven major archangels are associated with a color. Gabriel's is white. So is the Lord's. Moreover, my angelic visitor appeared to me not only in a white gown but also with a crimson tunic, symbolic of the blood of Christ.

Other compelling evidence that the male visitor was the Lord was the fact that He would not let me look upon His face. If this was truly the Lord, this is twice He has visited me: once in a dream when He called me into His ministry and this time when He revealed the importance of finishing His manuscript. In both appearances, He would not let me look upon His face.

THE FEMALE ANGELIC VISITOR

A great mystery of the angelic visitation on my birthday was the female angel. Who was she, why did she accompany the Lord, and what part did she portray in the message? The answer to this mystery has alluded me and the Lord has not revealed the mystery. Only in one place does the Bible suggest the existence of female angels (Zechariah 5:5-11). I will continue to pray for enlightenment on this perplexing mystery. And yes dear reader, there are female angels. How do I know? One stood in my presence.

A RENEWED FAITH AND RETURN TO GOD'S ASSIGNED TASK

God rescued me from my death spiral and gave me back my health. Little things that were problems started to change for the better. My printer that would not feed paper for the previous few months started working as soon as I returned to God's manuscript. But it was harder to return to the manuscript than I envisioned. The task seemed overwhelming. So, I directed my time toward tasks around the house. I had been rescued but was delaying work on the manuscript. So once again, God reached down to remind me of the importance of finishing the task He gave me.

ANOTHER RESCUE AND ANOTHER WARNING FROM GOD

A year or two earlier while working on this manuscript, a voice spoke in my head. It was Satan, and he told me that he would kill me before I could publish this work. Had it not been for God's warning, he would have succeeded.

My wife and I traveled from Georgia to North Carolina to meet our son and daughter-in-law to witness the 2017 solar eclipse. The night before the trip, I only got a couple hours of sleep. For the whole trip, I struggled with drowsiness. The urge to sleep also followed me on the return trip. Finally, I stopped for coffee as I knew I was in a dangerous driving condition. I asked my wife to drive as I was afraid I would kill us in an accident. However, as sleepy as I was, something told me I could not go to sleep, as I usually did, while she was driving. As soon as I sat in the passenger seat, a voice spoke to me: "you cannot go to sleep, you must stay awake." This was not a one time warning. It kept repeating like a broken record. I struggled with sleep, but heeded this message repeating in my head.

As we left North Carolina into Tennessee, we drove down a mountain along side a winding two lane road through the Ocoee River gorge toward Ocoee Lake and dam. The white water Ocoee River finally empties into Lake Ocoee which has very deep water as you approach the dam. As we drove along the lake approaching the dam, I was still fighting sleep but determined to keep awake due to the repeating message in my head. Suddenly, I looked up and our vehicle had crossed the center line and was half way across the oncoming lane headed for the lake. I screamed at my wife and she recovered before we went through some small trees and into the lake. She had gone to sleep and we were one or two seconds from the point of no return.

Later that evening, I struggled with the thoughts of how close we came to death. I then realized why God warned me not to go to sleep. Then, a gentle message crossed my mind, "I spared your life, today, because you have not completed the task I gave you."

IF GOD WILL NOT LET SATAN KILL ME, SATAN WILL FIND OTHER WAYS TO HINDER ME

On Thanksgiving weekend in 2018, I was asked to substitute teach a Sunday school class. I went to the office to make copies for the lesson. However, there was a sign that said the computer must be restarted in order to print. In order to restart the computer, I reached behind and hit my left eye against the corner of a shelf. It blinded me in that eye. To my misfortune, not only was I blinded, I was blinded in my best eye for sight. Satan never sleeps. If God will not let him kill me, he will seek other ways to keep me from finishing God's work. But rather than slowing me, it only strengthened my resolve. I count it an honor that God has left me another eye to finish His work. To show His mercy, He has now improved the vision in my remaining eye to 20-20 so I can continue His work without hindrance. Those who serve the Lord, He empowers, provides, and protects. As much as God loved the Apostle Paul, he would not remove an affliction in his eyesight. I count it an honor that He has tested me with a similar affliction.

SATAN NEVER SLEEPS

When I finished writing this manuscript, I believed the hardest part was over. All I needed, now, was a domain name and an Internet host to make this work available to the world. Again, I was wrong. Satan never sleeps and never stops. While researching for the best domain name and hosting site, I discovered that I had prostate cancer. But, the Lord has always watched over and protected me along this long journey. He gave me complete healing so I could complete the task He assigned me. I now see the cancer for what it was, another distraction and attempt by Satan to keep this manuscript from the Lord's Church.

Through all these events, I began to feel like the Old Testament man of God, Job. God would let Satan test me, but would not let him take my life.

THE SPIRIT OF ELIJAH

I have provided the recounts of these events in my life so you can better understand the purpose of this manuscript and the connection to my holy visitation. Recently, I awoke early and went to my iPad to read the morning news. But a feeling came over me that I needed to better understand the Spirit of Elijah. Because at the time, I was struggling with scripture telling of John the Baptist coming in the Spirit of Elijah. I searched the Internet and God led me straight to the answer. It was posted by the Burning Point Ministries and written by Ty Unruh in 2017.¹

Malachi 4:5-6

⁵Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: ⁶And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

"The spirit and power of Elijah will not be an anointing for all believers or a generation of believers as some ministries and teachings have suggested. The spirit and power of Elijah was not released to all of Israel in the time of John, but to John alone. In our time, the Lord will need to reach the whole earth, so there could be thousands who are chosen to walk in the spirit and power of Elijah. The exact number and the choosing is up to the Lord. We can not pray for this anointing and we should not. It is completely the Lord's decision. To attempt to force something to happen or to take a call unto ourselves could be disastrous. Part of growing up in the Kingdom of God, is learning to be content with what the Lord has given us or called us to."

“Those who are chosen to carry the spirit and power of Elijah are not special in any way. In fact, these people will come to know all too well just how weak, incapable, and useless they really are. These vessels will be placed in specially designed spiritual wildernesses that will absolutely devastate them. They will be allowed to suffer much in order to be prepared for the Master’s use. Generally, it will take years and oftentimes decades for the Lord to prepare these people for this particular calling. They must be emptied of their self-life as Elijah and John were, so that they will carry out the Lord’s will instead of their own.”

“If you are not called to this ministry, then you should thank God. The preparation process is brutal. Those who are called to this ministry will know it. The Holy Spirit will make it clear by the burning fire shut up in their bones. It’s something that burns so hot, that it takes you over and consumes you. You begin to care deeply for the things of the Lord, and your concern for the state of the church becomes overwhelming. When this anointing burns in you, the burden of the Lord overtakes you. You begin to hate the religious system that currently calls itself the church. You can not tolerate lukewarmness in the church. The fire of God controls you.”

“The message that those who walk in the spirit and power of Elijah must deliver in these last days, will not always be popular. We have entered into the final time before the Lord’s return, and judgment is beginning in His house (1 Peter 4:17). Jesus is coming to slay wicked people and destroy the armies of the earth who hate Him (Revelation 19:13-15 and Isaiah 63:1-6). Therefore the Lord will require these messengers to prepare His people by bringing a revelation of “the day of vengeance of our God” (Isaiah 61:2). The Spirit of the Lord was upon Jesus to “proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord” at his first coming. However the rest of that proclamation must be finished prior to His second coming. Therefore the Spirit of the Lord will rest on those who are going forth in the spirit and power of Elijah to proclaim the day of the vengeance of our God. This message will release a healthy and necessary fear of the Lord which will help prepare the bride.”

NOW I UNDERSTAND

Now, I understand. The Burning Point Ministries’ article explained how I fit into God’s plans for these latter days. After all these years, I finally understand why I was called to His ministry to teach and write this manuscript. The article seems to have rightly described me as a poster child to herald Christ’s return. It explains why God called such an unqualified, worthless person as me to His ministry. It rightly described my trials and tribulations and disdain for today’s form of worship. It was point-on that it would take decades for me and others like me to complete their works assigned by God. It rightly stated that the work would consume me, and it has. All I think about is the urgency of completing this manuscript and making it available to the Church.

I now fully understand why the angels visited me. Yes, it was to warn me that time was short and I needed to complete God’s work. But, God did not reveal why it was so important that He sent His heavenly messengers to one of such low esteem. It was not until I read the Burning Point Ministries’ article that I understood. Surely, I am one of the thousands chosen to reveal the Spirit of Elijah to a wicked and Godless world. Our messages were to prepare the Church for Christ’s return. Ours are the messages for revival to escape the false doctrines of a slumbering church of God’s displeasure. God is sending a rescue message to the church.

I know the Lord’s return is imminent because of a message He sent me the previous month. I was striving to complete this manuscript so I could publish it on Amazon Books and make it free to the world. Then, the Lord impressed upon me that this was not the best way. I knew then that it must be published on the Internet. There, it would be freely available in multiple languages to

the whole world as a teaching tool to enlighten pastors, preachers, Bible teachers and all Christians seeking truth from a failing church.

WHERE DO YOU STAND WITH GOD?

I pray the Holy Spirit has opened your heart and mind to this manuscript. I pray it has blessed you and provided a deeper understanding of God and His expectations of each of us as a redeemed member of His Church. You should now know where you stand in the journey God planned for you.

In understanding God's plan, we can reconcile the reasons for the weak power of today's church and powerless, uncommitted Christians. False doctrines have led us ignorant of God's requirements for His redeemed. Enlightened knowledge, however, comes with a sobering realization. Those who completed this manuscript can no longer plead ignorance to God's expectations of a Christian. He is leading every Christian to a place they can serve Him. Those who refuse may face chastisement, loss of rewards, and the joy of their salvation.

Where do you stand with God? Are you walking in the light of the Holy Spirit, trusting Him for everything in your life? Have you surrendered all to God and His service? If you cannot answer yes to these questions, you have not crossed Jordan to abide in Christ. It is only there that we have fellowship, walk in the light of the Holy Spirit, and experience the power of prayer reserved for those who serve Him in faith and obedience.

Now, enlightenment presents the reader with a decision most Christians are unaware that exists. Will you step out in faith, cross Jordan, enter His Rest, and abide in Christ?

James 2:17

Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead....

FULFILLMENT OF MY TESTIMONY

As I close the epilogue of this manuscript, I have validated my testimony and fulfilled the commission that God so graciously gave me so many years ago. I recall a verse that He gave me in the call to His ministry.

Luke 12:12

For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

I pray that I have been faithful to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and truthfully presented the messages He shared so freely. As I reread pages from the manuscript, I see His fingerprints on most every page. As I read many passages, tears fill my eyes as I realize I did not write them. I stand amazed when I realize that I have no idea where or how some passages appeared. I realize that I was merely a vessel of use. The Holy Spirit wrote the manuscript. I was merely His Earthly means to convey the Lord's message to His Church.

Lord, I pray that I have been faithful and worthy of the trust you placed in me. Thank you for calling me to your Holy ministry. I am truly honored and grateful for the precious mysteries you have shared.

Ephesians 4:1

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

Ephesians 6:19

And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel.

Amen!

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A MYSTERY

1. MYSTERY OF THE AGES by Herbert W. Armstrong. Worldwide Church of God, Copyright 1985. Library of Congress ISBH 0-396-08773-6, ISBN 0-396-08808-2 (pbk), Page xii).

THE PRESENT CHURCH AGE

- 1 THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH, An article by Kelly Shattuck based on research by and "The Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion" by sociologists C. Kirk Hadaway and Penny Long Marler <http://www.churchleaders.com/pastors/pastor-articles/139575-7-startling-facts-an-up-close-look-at-church-attendance-in-america.html>
- 2 SIX PROBLEMS WITH THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH TODAY, An article by W. R. Dick Lockhart, January 6, 2016, <https://bloggingscripturehisway.blogspot.com/2016/01/six-problems-in-evangelical-church-today.html>
- 3 IN PRISONS WITH STAINED GLASS WINDOWS, a sub-article taken from THE CHURCH TODAY presented by Into the Light Ministries, Branson, MO, USA._ <http://www.intothe-light.org/stainedglasswindows.asp>
- 4 THE SCANDAL OF BIBLICAL ILLITERACY: IT'S OUR PROBLEM. An article by R. Albert Mohler, Jr, posted on Christians Headlines website. Mr. Mohler is President of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, and host of "The Albert Mohler Program," a daily national radio program broadcast on the Salem Radio Network. <https://www.christianheadlines.com/columnists/al-mohler/the-scandal-of-biblical-illiteracy-its-our-problem-1270946.html>
- 5 STATISTICS ABOUT THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AND WORSHIP ATTENDANCE GAP. An article by Daryl Wilson of The Sunday School Revolutionary! Website. October 29, 2012. <http://web.kybaptist.org/kbc/blogs/ssrb.nsf/dx/statistics-about-the-ss-and-worship-attendance-gap.htm>
- 6 The timing of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus is one of the most misunderstood events in the Bible. However, the answers are available in the Old Testament. The celebration of Good Friday and Sunday Sunrise Easter services illustrate biblical illiteracy permeating from today's pulpits. Jesus was buried between 3-6 pm on a Wednesday and resurrected from the tomb between 3-6 pm on the following Saturday, exactly 3 days and 3 nights (Matthew 12:40). A later chapter details the events of Jesus' last Passover.
- 7 HAS AMERICA'S FORM OF CHRISTIANITY LEFT THE CHURCH IN A "SPIRITUALLY DEAD" CONDITION? "AN INDICTMENT AGAINST AMERICA." Articles reported by Jessica Martinez, Christian Post Reporter, March 13, 2014. Excerpts taken from blog post of Shane Idleman, founder and lead pastor of Westside Christian Fellowship in Lancaster, California. <http://www.christianpost.com/news/has-americas-form-of-christianity-left-the-church-in-spiritually-dead-condition-116055/#0w258i1hJ9VUutHp.99> <https://westsidechristianfellowship.org/articles/3-15-14-an-indictment-against-america-pastor-shane-idleman/>

- 8 SEVEN DEADLY SINS OF THE CHURCH: #1 - EPIDEMIC COMPLANCY, an article that appeared on Religiously Incorrect website. Date and author not listed. <http://www.religiouslyincorrect.com/Articles/7Sins1.shtml>
- 9 THE ERRORS OF PROTESTANTISM, An article published on Protestant Errors website by a group of traditional Catholics. <http://www.protestanterrors.com/>.
- 10 THERE IS NO BIBLICAL BASIS FOR MODERN CHRISTIAN CHURCH DOCTRINE. From an article titled "Do You Believe in Jesus" by Allan Cronshaw. <http://brotherofyeshua.com/TheLie.htm>.
- 11 Taken from the Restored Bible Truth Assembly website. <http://www.restored-bibletruth.org/index.php/the-five-fold-ministry/57-various-roles-of-the-levites.html>

THE FIRST ADAM'S WORD: The Egypt Experience

- 1 Many say that God created man for fellowship. This assumption comes from Genesis 3:8, *"And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden."* Man has extrapolated this scripture to teach that God and Adam walked and conversed together in the cool of the day. However, the scriptures do not support this perceived truth. Contrary to creating man for fellowship, Isaiah 43:7 and Revelation 4:11 proclaim that God created man for HIS GLORY and PLEASURE.(translation: honor and desire).
1. THEOLOGY FOR THE LAITY: THE REDEMPTION OF MANKIND, from The Light and Life newsletter, Volume 47, No. 5, September-October, 1994. Written by Father Paul A. Duffner, O. P. The Light and Life newsletter is a bi-monthly publication of the Rosary Center of Portland, Oregon. <http://www.rosary-center.org/ll47n5.htm>
2. CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, PART ONE, SECTION 2, CHAPTER ONE, ARTICLE 1: "I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH," PARAGRAPH 6: MAN, from an article posted on http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p1s2c1p6.htm. Date and author unknown. St. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:45 that the human race takes its origin from two men: Adam and Christ. The first man, Adam, he says, became a living soul, the last Adam a life-giving spirit. The first Adam was made by the last Adam from whom he received his soul to give him life. The second Adam stamped his image on the first Adam when he created him. That is why he took on himself the role and the name of the first Adam, in order that he might not lose what he had made in his own image. The first Adam, the last Adam: the first had a beginning and the last knows no end. The last Adam is indeed the first; as he himself says, "I am the first and the last."
3. THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR SALVATION by L. R. Shelton, Jr. from a message delivered over The Word of Truth Radio Network, http://www.eternallifeministries.org/lrs_Spirit.htm. Internet article obtained from Mt. Zion Bible Church. <http://www.mountzion.org>.
4. The scriptures do not specifically address the Holy Spirit's protection of a believer seeking salvation. However, many verses indirectly speak to this. An example is Philippians 1:6

(NLT), “And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.” As this account is a type of the role of the Holy Spirit in salvation, we must hold it as fact. For the scriptures to be true, all types must be true.

5. I recommend that you pause from our study to watch a video on the Internet. This excellent video will greatly enhance your perception of Israel's Red Sea crossing. The video presentation is a great Biblical history lesson. “The Red Sea Crossing” is twenty-seven minutes long and located at http://www.arkdiscovery.com/red_sea_crossing.htm. The presentation is on the DVD entitled REVEALING GOD'S TREASURES by Ark Discovery. The DVD is available for purchased at <http://www.arkdiscovery.com/store.htm>.
6. ETERNAL SECURITY: WHO BELIEVES IN IT? Posted on the BLB Blog (the official blog of Blue Letter Bible) on September 19, 2012 by Jim Milligan. <http://blogs.blueletterbible.org/blb/2012/09/19/who-believes-in-eternal-security-an-introduction-to-the-next-blog-series/>.

THE WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE: The Second Adam's World, A Faith Walk

- 1 Publications often reference Israel's wilderness journey as the FLESH walk. This is true in an abstract view but misrepresents God's purpose. The intent of the journey from Egypt to Canaan was to build FAITH and trust in God. The fact that Israel failed every test of faith they encountered demonstrated they walked in the flesh and not faith.
- 2 I recommend that you pause from our study to watch a video on the Internet. This excellent video will greatly enhance your perception of Israel's wilderness journey to Mt. Sinai. The video presentation is a great Biblical history lesson. “Mt. Saini ” is 17 minutes long and located at http://www.arkdiscovery.com/mt_sinai_found.htm. The presentation is on the DVD entitled REVEALING GOD'S TREASURES by Ark Discovery. The DVD is available for purchased at <http://www.arkdiscovery.com/store.htm>.
- 3 The Gods of Egypt that the 10 plagues defeated demonstrated that only God was supreme:
 - A. HAPA – God of the Nile. Plague: Nile water turned into blood
 - B. HEKET (**had head of a frog**) – God of Fertility, Water and Renewal. Plague: Swarms of frogs
 - C. GEB – God of Earth (soil and dust). Plague: Dust of Earth turned into swarm of lice.
 - D. KHEPRI (**had head of a fly**). – God of Creation and Movement of the Sun and Rebirth. Plague: Swarm of flies.
 - E. HATHOR (**had head of a cow**). – Goddess of Love and Protection. Plague: Death of cattle and livestock.
 - F. ISIS – Goddess of Love and Protection. Plague: Ashes turned into boils and sores.
 - G. NUT – Goddess of the Sky. Plague: Hail rained down as fire.
 - H. SETH – God of Storms and Disorder. Plague: Swarms of locusts.
 - I. RA – The Sun God. Plague: Five days of darkness.

J. PHARAOH – God of Egypt. Plague: Death of the first-born.

- 4 The Israelites left Egypt with herds of livestock. Yet in 75 days, they appeared to be hungry and starving. This is a huge mystery that the Bible does not explain which leaves us searching for a plausible explanation. Israel lived in Egypt for 400 years and apparently worshipped some of the Egyptian gods. We can see evidence of this when Moses stayed on the mount 40 days meeting with God. Assuming Moses dead, the Israelites honored Hathor, the Egyptian goddess of Love and Protection, with a golden idol of a calf.³ Hathor had the head of a cow. The cattle may have been sacred and used only for leather and barter. This is confusing when the scriptures say they ate at the fleshpots in Egypt. An article written by Elmer Towns on the website <http://www.gotquestions.org/israelites-eat-flocks.html> offers several plausible explanations
- 5 The reference to the word LORD appears several times along Israel's journey. In each instance, the same Hebrew word is used, "Jehovah" (Strong's reference 3068), which means "the eternal one." This is confusing in interpreting the wilderness account unless you recall that God exists as a trinity, three godheads in one. We saw the Lord as the Holy Spirit in the column of fire and smoke leading Israel. Here we have the Lord descending from Heaven as Jehovah to meet Moses on Mount Sinai. The Lord Jesus, the third part of the Trinity, was present at the Red Sea crossing, opening the passage from the First Adam's world. God is revealing the plan of salvation through Israel's journey; therefore, the roles of all three members of the Trinity must be present in the redemption process.
- 6 The Lord Jehovah announced in Exodus 23:20-21 that He would send an Angel before them to bring them to the place He has prepared. This Angel (Strong's reference 4397) is none other than the Lord Jesus and confirmed in verse 21.

THE WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE: The Second Adam's World, A Flesh Walk

7. As Israel stands at the brink of the Promised Land, we rationalize in our 21st century mentality that we are talking about Canaan. In reality, God promised a much larger territory. An article written by Elmer Towns on the website <http://www.gotquestions.org/israel-land.html> defined the scope of God's promise. *"According to Genesis 15:18 and Joshua 1:4, the land God gave to Israel included everything from the Nile River in Egypt to Lebanon (south to north) and everything from the Mediterranean Sea to the Euphrates River (west to east). So, what land has God stated belongs to Israel? All of the land modern Israel currently possesses, plus all of the land of the Palestinians (the West Bank and Gaza), plus some of Egypt and Syria, plus all of Jordan, plus some of Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Israel currently possesses only a fraction of the land God has promised."*

THE CHRISTIAN'S WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE

1. Beyond Evangelical, The Blog by Frank Viola, ARE YOU IN THE WILDERNESS? <http://frankviola.org/?s=are+you+in+the+wilderness>

THE SECOND ADAM'S WORLD: Crossing Jordan

1. Previously shown, the Holy Spirit led Israel and the God Jehovah dwelt in the Tabernacle Holy of Holies. In the Song of the Ark, Numbers 10:35, Moses pronounces the ritual formula for the movement of the ark: "Arise, O Lord, and let your enemies be scattered, and let them that hate you flee before you." The parallel formula in verse 36 marks the end of the movement for the day: "Return, O Lord, to the ten thousand thousand of Israel." The formulas belong to ancient tradition about the movement of the Ark. They show the ark in a procession symbolizing the presence of God with the people. In verse 35, Moses uses the formula to effect departure from a camp in the wilderness. And in verse 36, he uses the parallel formula to effect rest in a new camp.
https://kb.osu.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/1811/58690/1/HAR_v9_137.pdf
2. THE BAPTISM OF JESUS. The Bible does not specifically tell us the place of Jesus' baptism. However, the clues in scripture, historical records and fulfilment of the scriptural types leave little doubt. There is ample evidence of the area of Jesus' baptism. Matthew and John gave us clues in the scripture. Matthew 3: 1-17 has the Baptist "preaching in the wilderness of Judea," and "people from Jerusalem, all of Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him. Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him." Mark 1: 4-9 also places the event in the Jordan River, at a place accessible to people from Judea and Jerusalem. In line with these two evangelists, tradition has recognized the baptism in the River Jordan east of Jericho. This area in the wilderness of Judea would have been most accessible to people from Jerusalem. <http://www.netours.com/content/view/255/30/>. John 1:28 also gave further confirmation by recording "*These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.*" John refers to Enon near Salim as one place where John the Baptist baptized people, "because there was much water there". Separately, John states that John the Baptist was baptizing in "Bethany beyond the Jordan". This is not the village Bethany just east of Jerusalem, but is generally considered to be the town Bethany, also called Bethabara in Perea on the Eastern bank of the Jordan near Jericho.

Later, church tradition from the earliest days of Christianity, established shrines and churches near the baptismal site. Traditionally from the Madaba Mosaic Map, Discussion of Perea and the Dead Sea: "*For pilgrims coming from Jerusalem, the visit started at the river Jordan, after a stop in the oasis of Jericho. At the ford, where the road crossed the river, five miles from the Dead Sea according to the Pilgrim of Bordeaux, seven miles for Theodosius, and six for the Pilgrim from Piacenza, certainly south of the modern Al-Hussein Bridge, they commemorated several biblical episodes: the miraculous crossing of the children of Israel narrated in Joshua 2, the crossing by the Prophets Elijah and Elisha (2 Kings 2:5-14), and the hill from where Elijah was taken up to heaven. The pilgrim Egeria was also shown a hill on which stood the altar built by the Tribes of Reuben, Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh, as narrated in Joshua 22. At the same spot, they started commemorating the Baptism of Jesus, as narrated in the Gospels.*"

Collectively, all evidence tells us the baptism of Jesus occurred in the Jordan just east of Jericho near the crossing of Israel into the Promised Land. For scripture to be true, all types foreshadowing future events must also be true. Therefore, Jesus had to be baptized at same place Israel crossed the Jordan.

3. THE WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE. The accounts provided in the manuscript narrative came from the web site <http://www.jewishhistory.org/miracles-during-the-war-of-independence/>.

Below is the web site account of an additional miracle not mentioned in the manuscript narrative.

"In the north, the Arabs were encamped at the top of Har Canaan, which overlooks Safed. It was a virtually impregnable position. The Jews could not gain control of the road to Safed or this city itself as long as they were there. Then the Israelis brought up the Davidka, a tremendously noisy mortar that was extremely inaccurate and of little tactical value. One Friday afternoon, the Israelis fired a Davidka several times and then a miracle happened: it rained. There, it never rained in May and June. The Arabs were now sure that the Jews had the atomic bomb. What else could make it rain. Consequently, they fled their impregnable positions on top of Har, Canaan. The Israelis captured Safed and drove the Arabs out of the entire northern area of the Galilee."

4. THE MIRACLES OF THE SIX DAYS WAR. The accounts provided in the manuscript narrative came from the web site http://www.chabad.org/multimedia/timeline_cdo/aid/525341/jewish/Introduction.htm.
5. THE YOM KIPPUR WAR. The accounts provided in the manuscript narrative were taken from the web site <https://unitedwithisrael.org/the-yom-kippur-miracle/>.
6. THE WAR WITH HAMAS. The accounts provided in the manuscript narrative came from the web site <http://www.israeltoday.co.il/NewsItem/tabid/178/nid/24811/Default.aspx/>.

A PARALLEL EXPERIENCE: A Shadow of Redemption Through the Law, The Tabernacle

1. The Tabernacle by M. R. DeHann, M.D., Zondervan Publishing House, ISBN 0-310-23491-3, page 35, Paragraph: PURPOSE OF THE FENCE.
2. The Tabernacle by M. R. DeHann, M.D., Zondervan Publishing House, ISBN 0-310-23491-3, page 42-43, Paragraph REDEMPTION PRICE.
3. To enter the courtyard without presenting a sacrifice was instant death. One can only come through God's protective barrier against sin by way of a blood sacrifice of a substitute symbolizing Christ. Over, under, through the fence or entering the gate without sacrificing all brought sin into the presence of God. God's judgement against sin meant death to the transgressor.
4. ADAM CLARKE'S COMMENTARY on Numbers 2:2, SCHEUCHZER'S DESCRIPTION AND PLAN OF THE ENCAMPMENTS OF THE ISRAELITES IN THE WILDERNESS. *"The third, and the farthest from the center, took in all the other tribes of Israel, who were **at least about a mile from the tabernacle**. For it appears from Josephus, iii. 4, that the nearest approach they dared make to the ark, except during the time of worship, was a distance of **2,000 cubits**."*
5. ADAM CLARKE'S COMMENTARY on Numbers 2:2, A PLAN OF THE WHOLE ISRAELITISH CAMP. *"The tabernacle, which was 100 cubits long and 50 broad, I place in the center*

*of the camp, at the distance of 840 feet from the camp of the Levites, which is placed exactly in the same manner as described in the sacred writings. I find therefore that the whole space of the camp is 259,600,000 feet. Now, according to the manner we have just divided the camp for each tribe, the total being 125,210,000, it follows that the space between the tents contained 134,390,000. If, with Eisenschmid, we estimate the Roman mile at 766 French fathoms and two feet, (consequently 21,141,604 square feet to a Roman square mile), **the Israelitish camp will contain a little more than 12 such square miles.***

6. ADAM CLARK'S COMMENTARY on Numbers 2:2, SCHEUCHZER'S DESCRIPTION AND PLAN OF THE ENCAMPMENTS OF THE ISRAELITES IN THE WILDERNESS. *"The Israelitish army was divided into three principal divisions. The first, which was the smallest, but the strongest and the most powerful, occupied the center of the army: this was the throne of God, i.e., the TABERNACLE. The second, which was composed of the priests and Levites, surrounded the first. The third, and the farthest from the center, took in all the other tribes of Israel, who were at least about a mile from the tabernacle. For it appears from Josephus, iii. 4, that the nearest approach they dared make to the ark, except during the time of worship, was 2,000 cubits."*
7. THE STREET OF TEN FRIENDS, My Scripture Studies, THE FOUR ENSIGNS *"I have begun to learn that the ensigns of the four living creatures on each side of the Tabernacle show us the attributes of our Savior and Messiah. There is the face of a suffering servant, the man Messiah, the face of a lion His leadership and power, the ox, His strength and determination, and finally the eagle as the swift execution of judgment."*
<http://www.myscripturestudies.com/2008/08/four-ensigns.htm>.
8. AN EXPOSITION OF THE SCRIPTURES: THE BIBLE KNOWLEDGE COMMENTARY by Dallas Seminary Faculty, 5. The Four Living Creatures (Revelations 4:6-8).
9. The Tabernacle by M. R. DeHann, M.D., Zondervan Publishing House, ISBN 0-310-23401-3, page 36, Paragraph FOUR COLORS.
10. Got Questions Ministries, <https://www.gotquestions.org/altar-fire.html>
11. In biblical times, a man's weight established the equivalent weight of a TALENT of silver or gold. This, of course, was ambiguous and not definitive. It is analogous to the CUBIT unit of measurement based on the length of a man's arm from his fingertips to his elbow. Therefore, it is impossible to establish the exact amount of silver in the Tabernacle foundation. Some authorities say a TALENT weighed roughly the same as a man of that day, about 50 kg or 110 lbs. Some say a talent typically weighed about 33 kg or 75 lbs. For the purpose of this study, we will use the greater number, 110 lbs., as it more closely relates to the weight of a man of biblical times. [https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talent_\(weight\)](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talent_(weight)).

12. The Tabernacle by M. R. DeHann, M.D., Zondervan Publishing House, ISBN 0-310-23491-3, page 42-43, Paragraph: REDEMPTION PRICE.
13. The Tabernacle by M. R. DeHann, M.D., Zondervan Publishing House, ISBN 0-310-23491-3, page 32, Paragraph: ONE MORE LESSON.
14. Camping with God by Stephen F. Olford, Copyright 1971 by Loizeaux Brothers, Inc., ISBN 0-87213-675-2, page 65, Paragraph THE CENTRAL ERECTION.
15. The Tabernacle by M. R. DeHann, M.D., Zondervan Publishing House, ISBN 0-310-23491-3, page 84, Paragraph 2.
16. The Tabernacle by M. R. DeHann, M.D., Zondervan Publishing House, ISBN 0-310-23491-3, page 49, Paragraph: THE INNER CURTAIN.
17. WHAT TIME WAS THE "EVENING" SACRIFICE? AS IT WAS FROM THE BEGINNING By Ken Hunt The two daily sacrifices are another distinct clue as to the time when the Passover was sacrificed. One of the daily sacrifices was to be in the morning, and one was to be 'between the two evenings.' In Numbers 28: 3-4 we read of the daily morning and evening sacrifices in the tabernacle (they then quote the verse, and point out that "evening" is in the Hebrew "between the two evenings" - Keith Hunt)...Historical testimony shows the time of the sacrifice of the morning lamb to have been about 9 a.m. (Edersheim, 143). The rabbis stated that the 'between the two evenings' lamb was slaughtered at 2:30 p.m. and the pieces laid on the altar at 3:00 p.m. (Edersheim, 144), <http://www.keithhunt.com/Evensac.html>.
18. WHAT WAS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ALTAR OF INCENSE? Got Questions Ministries, <https://www.gotquestions.org/altar-of-incense.html>.
19. WHAT IS THE DATE OF THE EXODUS? Blog of Amazing Bible Timeline, Posted February 25, 2013. Usshers' chronology places the date of Exodus in April of 1491 BC. His dates were published in the King James Authorized Bible as early as 1701 AD and are the ones used on the Bible History Timeline above. Thiele, a modern Biblical chronologist, calculates it to 1446 BC – a date often used by modern Evangelicals. Josephus relates it to the expulsion of the Hyskos from Egypt circa 1552 BC. The Septuagint, on which the Catholic Bible is based, makes it 1512 BC. That gives a hundred-year range of dates, https://amazingbibletimeline.com/blog/btqa_exodus/

CHURCH DOCTRINES AND THE TABERNACLE

1. Matthew Henry Concise Bible Commentary, WE ARE PRIESTS, Revelation 5:10.

2. LET US PRAY, by Watchman Nee, page 1, "What Is Prayer?" Copyright 1977, Christian Fellowship Publishers, ISBN 0-935008-26-8.
3. John Piper is a teacher and chancellor of Bethlehem College and Seminary and founder of the website desiringGod.org. He published the following article on January 11, 1981: "On What Do Answers to Prayer Depend?, Part 1, Obedience," <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/what-do-answers-to-prayer-depend-on-part-1>
4. John Piper is a teacher and chancellor of Bethlehem College and Seminary and founder of the website desiringGod.org. He published the following article on January 25, 1981: "On What Do Answers to Prayer Depend?, Part 2, God's Will," <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/what-do-answers-to-prayer-depend-on-part-2>
5. THE POWER OF FAITH by Smith Wigglesworth. Page 1 of Chapter 2, Devine Revelation. Copyright 2000 by Whitaker House, eBook-ISBN-13:978-1-63074-798-1.

A PARALLEL EXPERIENCE: Redemption through Christ, the High Priest

1. THE JEWISH ENCYCLOPEDIA .COM, The High Priest, by EMILE G. Hirsch. *"Aaron, though he is but rarely called "the great priest," being generally simply designated "as ha- kohen" (the priest), was the first incumbent of the office, to which he was appointed by God (Ex. xxviii. 1, 2; xxix. 4, 5). The succession was to be through one of his sons, and was to remain in his own family (Lev. vi.15; comp. Josephus, "Ant." xx. 10, § 1). Failing a son, the office devolved upon the brother next of age: such appears to have been the practice in the Maccabean period. In the time of ELI, however (I Sam. ii. 23), the office passed to the collateral branch of Ithamar (see Eleazar). But Solomon is reported to have deposed Abiathar and to have appointed Zadok, a descendant of Eleazar, in his stead (I Kings ii. 35; I Chron. xxiv. 2, 3). After the Exile, the succession seems to have been, at first, in a direct line from father to son; but later the civil authorities arrogated to themselves the right of appointment. Antiochus IV., Epiphanes, for instance, deposed Onias III. in favor of Jason, who was followed by Menelaus (Josephus, "Ant." xii. 5, § 1; II Macc. iii. 4, iv. 23)."*
<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/7689-high-priest>
2. THE GREAT HEROD, Reign in Judea. The Sadducees, who were closely associated with priestly responsibilities in the Temple, opposed Herod because he replaced their high priests with outsiders from Babylonia and Alexandria, in an effort to gain support from the Jewish Diaspora. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herod_the_Great
3. THE TEACHING MINISTRY OF JAY MACK, Where Life and the Bible Meet. The Examination of the Lamb, First Corinthians 5: 6-7. <https://jaymack.net/english/life-of-christ-commentary/lx-The-Examination-of-the-Lamb.php>

4. RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS, How Many Lambs Slain at Passover? From DR. SAMUELE BACCHIOCCHI'S book, GOD'S FESTIVALS – PART 1, - "The Spring Festivals," compiled by Keith Hunt. Josephus informs us that the Syrian Governor Cestius Gallus requested the high priest to take a census of Jerusalem to convince Nero of the importance of the city and of the Jewish nation. The method used by the high priest was to COUNT the NUMBER of lambs SLAIN at Passover, namely, 256,500. Then he multiplied that number by 10, the average number of persons served by each lamb. At the LOWEST computation of TEN person per lamb, this would give a population of 2,565,000 or, as Josephus himself puts it, 2,700,200 persons (Josephus, Jewish Wars 6, 9, 3). On an earlier occasion, Josephus computed the number of Jews present in Jerusalem at Passover to be not fewer than 3,000,000 (Ibid., 2, 14, 3).
5. Catholic Education Resource Center, WHAT WAS A TYPICAL CRUCIFIXION LIKE? by Robert Gidley, Catholic Education Resource Center. The victim was escorted by a Roman guard, who were responsible for guarding the victim until his death. One of the soldiers would display a sign (titulus) with the crime written on it. Once the crucifixion area was reached, the victim would be offered a drink of wine mixed with myrrh to act as a mild pain killer. Robert Ridley belongs to All Saints Episcopal Church, Redmond, Washington. Article was copyrighted in Lint 2000. <https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/controversy/common-misconceptions/the-facts-of-crucifixion.html>. *Note: This article is reprinted with permission from the author, robert@robertgidley.com, on August 4, 2019.*
6. JESUS AND THE CROSS, the Suffering and Death of Jesus Christ"
<http://answers.google.com/answers/threadview/id/747213.html>
7. Catholic Education Resource Center, THE FACTS OF CRUCIFIXION" by Robert Gidley, "What Was Flogging." Robert Ridley belongs to All Saints Episcopal Church, Redmond, Washington. Article was copyrighted in Lint 2000. <https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/controversy/common-misconceptions/the-facts-of-crucifixion.html>. *Note: This article is reprinted with permission from the author, robert@robertgidley.com, on August 4, 2019.*
8. Catholic Education Resource Center, The Facts of Crucifixion" by Robert Gidley, "What Was A Typical Crucifixion Like?" <https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/controversy/common-misconceptions/the-facts-of-crucifixion.html>. Another excellent reference with additional details is provided in note 7. *Note: This article is reprinted with permission from the author, robert@robertgidley.com, on August 4, 2019.*
9. ChristianBlog.com, CONSTRUCTION OF THE CROSS-ROMAN ENGINEERING, <https://www.christianblog.com/blog/aliveinthe%20word/construction-of-the-cross-roman-engineering/>.
10. The **Tamid** daily sacrifice refers to the two perpetual daily sacrifices in the Temple at the 3rd and 9th hours. The sacrificial ritual for the first lamb began at dawn (1st hour, 6 AM) when the

priests cleaned the Altar and brought in the lamb and tied it to the altar. At the 3rd hour (9 AM), they sacrificed the lamb. This was the time of the first hour of prayer and opening of the Temple gates. At the 6th hour (noon), the priests brought the second lamb and tied it to the altar. This was also the time for the 2nd hour of prayer. They sacrificed the second lamb at 9th hour (3 PM). This heralded the 3rd hour of prayer, the Hour of Confession. <https://www.agapebiblestudy.com/charts/Tamid%20Sacrifice.htm>.

11. PASSOVER IN TEMPLE TIMES, by: Executive Committee of the Editorial Board., Jacob Zallel Lauterbach. <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/passover-from-the-bible-to-the-temples/>
12. In the Jewish Temple before slaughtering of the Passover Paschal Lambs began, the priests performed two rituals. A Shofar was used in the first ritual. It was a musical horn typically made from a ram's horn (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shofar>). There were essentially four traditional Shofar sounds: Tekiah – One long blast. Shevraim – Three medium length blasts. Teruah – Nine short staccato **sounds**. <https://www.shofar.co/?item=89§ion=170>. The second ritual was the singing of the Hallel, a Jewish prayer from Psalms 113-118 sung on Jewish holidays.
13. PASSOVER SACRIFICE (Hebrew, "zebah Pesah"; lit. "sacrifice of exemption") By: Executive Committee of the Editorial Board., Jacob Zallel Lauterbach. <http://jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/11934-passover-sacrifice>
14. WHERE AND WHEN WAS THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW WRITTEN? Answers.com® Categories Religion & Spirituality Christianity The Bible New Testament https://www.answers.com/Q/Where_and_When_was_the_Gospel_of_Matthew_written
15. THE TRUTH STANDS FOREVER Website. <https://www.thetruthstandsforever.com/the-inscription-at-the-cross.html> Copyright 2014-2019 E. Cockrell and Carmen Puşcaş. Granted permission to use by Eli Cockrell and Carmen Puscas via e-mail dated March 28, 2019.
16. CRUCIFIXION, NAIL PLACEMENT. Article posted on the Wikipedia Website, owned by the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization. Page was last revised on 22 February 2019. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crucifixion>

EPILOGUE TO AN AMAZING JOURNEY

1. THE SPIRIT AND POWER OF ELIJAH. An article by Burning Point Ministries and written by Ty Unruh in 2017. The exert quoted was from the paragraph "The Outpouring." <http://www.burningpointministries.com/the-spirit-and-power-of-elijah>

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Page 1B, Cover Page, Moses opening the Red Sea

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Page 1C, Cover Page, Brazen Altar

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<https://wordandway.org/2017/08/21/did-a-solar-eclipse-darken-the-skies-during-jesus-crucifixion/>. Image was modified to add the Titulus on Jesus.

Page 1E, Cover Page, Jesus our High Priest

Yahoo Advanced Image Search, Free to Share and Use. Jesus-Our-High-Priest.com. "Breathing Space: a Better Covenant, revgregsmith.blogspot.com. Yahoo search criteria used: Jesus-our-high-priest.com

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Page 80, Joshua meets Mine Angel

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Page 118, Coverings of the Tabernacle

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Page 121, View inside the Tabernacle Sanctuary

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Page 124, Priest Administering to the Altar of Incense

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Page 129, Furniture aligned as the cross

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Page 130, High Priest administering to the Ark of the Covenant

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Page 165, Paschal Lamb with Titulus

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Page 170, Passover Lamb Prepared for Sacrifice

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Page 170 Jesus Scourged

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Page 171, Jesus Condemned to Crucifixion

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Page 171, A Titulus (Wooden Sign Board)

<https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/controversy/common-misconceptions/the-facts-of-crucifixion.html>. Note: *This article with pictures is reprinted with permission from the author, robert@robertgidley.com, on August 4, 2019.*

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Page 172, The Roman Cross

<https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/controversy/common-misconceptions/the-facts-of-crucifixion.html>. Note: *This article with pictures is reprinted with permission from the author, robert@robertgidley.com, on August 4, 2019.*

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Page 174, Jesus on Cross with Titulus on the Cross Beam

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Page 176, Crucifixion Nail

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Page 184, Jesus on Cross with Titulus around Neck

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Page 192, Jesus Presents His Blood on the Heavenly Mercy Seat

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Page 193, Jesus Puzzle Photo

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