

# **FROM BONDAGE TO FREEDOM**

Thoughts come from a wide variety of sources. Some from messages I have heard from individuals, some from assembly Bible studies, some from home life and some from books I have read. The Holy Spirit is the Teacher who makes them real to me.

- "The Believer's Bible Commentary," by William MacDonald
- "Typical Teachings of Exodus," by Edward Dennett
- "Exodus," by F.B. Meyer
- "What the Bible Teaches, Exodus," by John Grant
- "The Life Application Bible." Tyndale House and Zondervan

## **EXODUS 1**

### **A FAMILY BECOMES A NATION**

In the record of the life of Israel as a nation, I was reminded that in 430 years a company of seventy people that came into Egypt as a family, had multiplied to 600,000 men beside women and children. That means the children of Israel numbered between two and three million people. That changed them from a family to a nation within a nation. A comparative length of time would be from the landing of the Pilgrim fathers at Plymouth, Massachusetts until the present time. The proliferation of population of the children of Israel was not from immigration into Goshen by people of other tribes. The Lord gave the families many children that formed the nation. These were children from one common heritage so the identity of nation was maintained as "the children of Israel." Their allegiance would be to the name the Lord gave as a promise to the patriarchs. Their position in Goshen put them in the first place the Hyksos armies would come to when they threatened the nation of Egypt. The pharaoh of Egypt would be worried Israelis would join the invaders, so put them under the bondage of slavery.

Egypt, because of the fertile strip of land, seven miles wide and 500 miles long that bounded the Nile, would have been quite vulnerable to attack by other nations if it wasn't for the deserts beyond that green strip. Life in Egypt with a great company of slaves to labor for them, would have been comparatively easy. That kind of ease does not produce people of good character. Self-indulgent ease has a tendency to boredom and discontent. It takes the pressures of cold, storms and struggle for survival to make people strong in character and strong in faith. When meaningful labor has to be extended personally, there is developed a strength that goes beyond the physical to the moral. The seduction of prosperity leads to the deception of idolatry. Things become more important than people. Pleasure becomes more important than labor. My own opinions become more important than faith in God. Prosperity eats away like a cancer at morality. The dangers in "Egypt" are far more serious and far-reaching than we can imagine. "The world" is an enemy to the children of God.

God's people are "called out of Egypt." It may be necessary to remove the legitimate things we have that give us a life of ease and comfort in order to get us out of the magnetic pull of the world-system that cannot please God. The "god of this world" will continue to blind the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel ... shines in."

Opposition and oppression against the people of God is allowed by God to make us awaken to the character of the "cosmos." It may seem unfair when the "wicked prosper." The bitterness of one's lot in life may pressure us to the breaking point. But like Israel had to be made discontent with the "leeks, melon and garlic" of Egypt, so we who are children of God by faith in Jesus Christ, can never find our contentment in worldly success.

Some dangers that come from success in the world are first of all pride of accomplishment. Dissatisfaction with what we have personally, and what we have in Christ is another result of worldliness. Comparison with others in the world, including the rich and the famous who are esteemed because of their own efforts, will make a believer to look beyond what we have in Christ to empty bubbles that are unseen. To live by faith in Christ means the way up is down; the way to get is to give; the way to happiness is weeping; the way to live is to die. Under the faithful pressures of our heavenly Father, there comes a garden out of the wilderness, bounty out of the watered desert. There is a city that has foundations whose builder and maker is God. The greatness of the redeemed soul is that it bears the characteristics of our God, not the world around.

Egypt-living will make a slave out of one who pursues its way. It will seek to claim our children and grandchildren and the generations following them, and entice them to follow its covetous, immoral, ungodly way of living. If one resists, there will be such antagonism that our children and those who follow will be cast into the river and be dead to God and His grace forever. The world and its leader will never allow compatible living between one who follows its ways, and one who "takes up his cross daily" and follows Christ. The true

Christian craves much more than the fleshpots of Egypt. God offers deliverance from the slavery the world has and gives us the liberty of "abundant life" through true commitment to Christ.

*They started small, there was only a few who were known as Israel's sons.  
Four hundred and thirty years later they a large nation had become.  
Yet in an unusual way God had them keep their own identity  
That He might make of them a nation - a kingdom of priests to be.*

*Slavery is usually painful because our will has to submit to another.  
A slave to people or habits keeps one bound by an unbreakable tether.  
However, there is one slavery that is blessed, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ.  
Such a favor it is that to be His slave is like a lovers' tryst.*

*In an antagonistic world, we need to recognize His authority.  
Even though I live and work here, the Lord has a higher claim on me.  
Often things go smoothly, but inevitably there will come a test.  
It is allowed by God to train me, and to see if I love Him best.*

*The siren call of the world's pleasure does have a little attraction -  
But I know from watching those who seek it, it gives little satisfaction.  
Popularity and fame try to tempt me into thinking this is the way -  
The God who I know and serve, delivers from its pressure and sway.*

*The children and grandchildren I have are a constant concern of mine.  
I know that what they need in life, in the world-system they will never find.  
So, I pray daily, yea, constantly they will only find their joy in the Lord.  
And they will commit themselves personally to conduct life by God's Holy Word.*

*The world does attract the senses and the senses attract the mind.  
I know that no matter what it offers, true peace one will never find  
By pursuing its ways and will - No! In God I place my faith!  
Fully confident I am that for every need, He supplies abundant grace.*

**"Gracious, heavenly Father, as I follow on this journey through the scripture, may I always be impressed as I am today, of the emptiness and futility of seeking satisfaction in the world. My heart is fixed on Thee. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."**

**EXODUS 1:12.** "But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel."

### **CONFLICT.**

*A new king arises against an eternal God.  
He didn't know who really is Lord.  
The power of a man is a trivial thing,  
Against God from whom life itself does spring.*

*A fully armed nation arises against a nation of slaves.  
They're unaware of God's promises to their fathers He gave.  
In spite of affliction, the slave-nation grows -  
The promises of God's grace to all of them He shows.*

*Afflicting taskmasters against God-fearing wives -  
Each child comes early; a blessing in disguise.  
God intervenes in such remarkable ways,  
To fulfill His promises and do what He says.*

*There's a lesson I learn when conflicts arise -  
When God steps in, it should be no surprise,*

*That what He has promised, He will surely fulfill,  
And in spite of a conflict, wants me doing His will.*

*"There are some tensions and a few conflicts around, Father God that seem to affect adversely the harmony of the believers in some of these places. If there is some message Thou dost want me to give to them, make it unmistakably clear. If I am to keep silent when asked about some of these matters, help me to do just that, In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 2:1-14**

### **GOD USES PEOPLE**

In this journey through ancient times when God reveals Himself to us, it is easy to see how God uses people in unusual ways in crisis times to work His will. The Spirit of God has recorded these important events so we can learn to count on God no matter what is going on around us. Amram and Jochebed had real faith in times of doubt. Her faith led her to take action and form a watertight basket to put Moses in. Amram's faith strongly supported his wife's activity as she went about doing her part to save their son, Moses. These people had courage in times of fear. They were "not afraid of the king's commandment." God honors faith when His people trust Him and use common sense.

The pressure of the Egyptian world around them, and the hardness and difficulties of their lot in life did not hinder their vital faith. Love triumphs even when all around is hate. A mother cannot stop loving her child even though the laws of the land try to supersede the laws of God. Love and faith are close companions in life. Love sees value and faith acts upon what love sees. If we live in fellowship with God, we will learn many times over the value of the proverb - "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not on thy own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths."

It is hard to have our children leave before we think they have learned from us all they should. Moses' mother and father only had a short time in their child's life to impress him with who he really was, who God is and why he must remember the promises of God to His people. Some children seem to learn young and some never learn the value of faith in God. When a son or daughter leaves for further study or a job in a distant place, we realize our work for them is done. When they leave the quiet security of rural living for the city - we must cast our children upon God. When missionary parents have to leave their children for lengthy periods of time or when we may have to leave our child on a hospital bed in the care of others - then we rest in God who often works in ways much different ours.

Moses' parents didn't let the bondage of Egypt they were in to affect their higher commitment to God and their children. Spiritual initiative in times of bondage and pressure to conform to the ways of the world, can be one of the best things we can do for our family. God may choose to work in ways quite different from ours. We need to look at the opportunities that arise unexpectedly as blessings from God. Faith and works compliment each other and they depend on each other. There was no doubt joy and relief that overcame the sorrow Amram and Jochebed had first when Moses was placed in the ark on the Nile River among the bulrushes. What delight they had when back into their home Moses came until he was called to go to the home of Pharaoh's daughter. There are times when we must commit to an action in the time of choice, and then trust God to do what He knows best.

Moses had his training time in the ways of God when he was young. He had his training time in the ways of Egypt as he grew into maturity. By the grace of God, he never forgot what he had learned in his youth. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." His training in the things of God would have helped him understand that sometimes faith in God means we have to patiently wait for His guidance. His training in the words and works of Egypt would have made him think he could get away with murder if no one saw him. When God's people have been under the pressure of the world so long, they may have more concern with man's law than God's will. Prolonged opposition had made the Hebrew slaves resigned to their fate without a sense of hope of change. They had even taken to worshipping the gods of the Egyptians. God arranged a turning point in Moses life when he had to choose the pleasures of Egypt or the people of God. Ideals and practicality need to be balanced in our lives so our Lord Jesus can use us in His way - not necessarily what we are inclined to do.

*Doubt is not uncommon when there is pressure from without.  
Courage in times of fear is what the Christian faith is all about.  
Even when we don't know what the outcome of faith will be -  
We can go forward in God's work, acting confidently.*

*A few choices only affect ourselves but most also will affect others.*

*It is important that we act in faith, we are watched by our sons and daughters.  
Faith and works balance each other when acted on in sincere love.  
There comes results we can only explain as blessings from above.*

*When our children are at home, we may often take for granted  
Their childhood will always be there to keep us so enchanted  
We may forget that we only have a few years to prepare them for the future.  
Our responsibility is not done until their souls we have well nurtured.*

*The world will beckon them to leave in order to be successful.  
When they get the desire to go, then things get much more stressful.  
Our hands have to let go when we see them go down the road.  
The best we can do for them then is to let God take over our load.*

*Then we watch, and wait, and worry as God uses them without us.  
Soon we are surprised to see, they too, in God do put their trust.  
God begins to use them and through them, others get light.  
We can, in a way relax when trusting them to do things right.*

*Out of sight but not out of mind our children both natural and spiritual -  
Are never far from our mind when we pray, we know prayer is essential.  
God is the One in whom we rest our hope, He has His plan for them.  
The best I can do when they leave our home, is to commit them unto Him.*

**"Father, when they left home, I knew You were able to use other people to help them learn what I couldn't seem to teach them - even after all those years. Watch over them, Father. Do for them what I cannot do. Be for them what for some reason, I am unable to be - Please! In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."**

**EXODUS 2:10.** *"And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, 'Because I drew him out of the water.'"*

#### **HOLY MOSES.**

*Caring parents who knew the value of a child-  
A mother who knew uniqueness when she saw it-  
Quiet crooning in a far corner when the baby was awake-  
But he grew, and so did his voice.  
Holy Moses – set apart for God from his birth!*

*An act of careful calculation – slime and pitch applied –  
Until waterproof – it really did float – the ark that is –  
And in a safe watery place he lies  
With watching eyes – now from a distance –  
Holy Moses – set apart from the crowd!*

*Dark Egyptian eyes watch, and careful hands lift the lid –  
A loud infant cry and hearts all around melt with love;  
The child, pre-ordained is raised in the fear of God –  
Then taken to "The Big House" and named, "Drawn Out."  
Holy Moses – set apart from his family!*

*An act in haste from a man well-grown –  
The distance increasing in miles and culture –  
A king-leader in training becomes a shepherd in learning.  
Lessons are unlearned and learned, in God's school.  
Holy Moses – set apart to give form to and lead a nation!*

*"Be ye holy for I am holy," God speaks to me.  
A difference obvious to both eye and ear,*

*Is expected from all who march to the heavenly drum-beat.  
Separate in morality, spirituality – even in culture –  
A holy people, a holy nation, a holy priesthood - and I am one with them!*

*“O God, I know this is not a trivial work I am involved in, even though there are times when it doesn't seem like much is being accomplished. Please keep me from forming my walk, words and work by those around me. I need daily power to walk in the light in fellowship with Thee, with my Blessed Lord and with His people. I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”*

## **EXODUS 2:15-25**

### **A GLIMMER OF LIGHT**

Over 400 years is a long time to wait. But God has His plans and God has His way of bringing things to pass. The second son of a slave family, brought out of the River Nile where he was hidden in a basket - what person could ever have constructed such a story! Not only was he brought into the highest family of the nation, to be the son of Pharaoh's daughter, but educated in all the ways of Egypt and aware of all the pleasures awaiting him. But still, deep inside his soul, was the childhood training that reminded him to think of the future. Do not live just for the present. A choice had to be made in his mature years, "Should I live for the present, or prepare for the future?" Wise people still consider these choices and prepare for the future.

The way the decision came about in actual action was probably not the way we would have written the story if we were writing this as a novel. And unpremeditated murder; criticism from those you sought to help; an angry Pharaoh; a desert journey - what an intriguing story! Truth is more interesting than fiction. God arranged many generations before, that a God-fearing family descendant, living in a distant land would be in the right place to provide for a coming deliverer.

The forty years Moses spent in worldly living in Egypt stopped and was exchanged for forty years of quiet living in a pastoral setting. A God-fearing man becomes Moses' father-in-law. God has His people in places we may never have heard of. They too are waiting and wanting to do His will. A temporary act led to a permanent relationship with Zipporah and then a family. We may not realize the importance of some choices we make more or less on the spur of the moment. God does guide us even when we are not aware of the full effect of His guidance at the beginning.

Moses had to learn the value of quiet fellowship with God and His people contrasted with the noise and clamor of the world in Egypt. Pleasure and business always seem to create turmoil, unrestrained ambition and ungodliness. God had put His future leader in a place of silence and reflection and then took him through a time of depression and despair when he named his firstborn son, Gershom ("a stranger here"). Gradually that gave way to a growing faith and the ability to assume responsibility in small things like caring for sheep in a wilderness. He would have learned a lot about shepherding sheep that would stand him in good stead when shepherding God's people. It is always a good thing to apply ourselves with diligence to small tasks with little consequence. In that way one learns how to deal with big things that affect the eternal destinies of many people. Moses must have developed a lot by the time Eliezer, his second son, was born because his name means, "God is my help."

There were, no doubt, a lot of things Moses had to unlearn before he could be trusted with the leadership of millions of people. An inexperienced person leading a lot of people is a danger to himself, but a far greater danger to others. For 67 years Ramses II did great things at the cost of thousands of lives. In battles all the way to Mesopotamia, to the building of cities and huge monuments, the slave-labor of Israel was essential to his plans. In spite of his greatness, he died. "It is appointed unto man once to die." The fleeting of time is a reminder to us all that what we do for God is urgent. Our life will soon be over. And still, the people of God "sighed." The sighing, the hopelessness of a nation is grievous to behold. But God does allow sin to run its course by man's freewill, that ultimately that same freewill will turn in repentance to Him and He can lead them into the promised happiness. When the Lord Jesus was here, He sighed because of human suffering and human unbelief. Above all of these activities of men and women, God watches until the right time comes.

"God heard," and the great sigh of a nation in bondage came to the ears of the only One who can give abundant life. "God remembered," the covenant He had made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob He had promised to keep to its fullness. "God saw," and everything He saw of human suffering, He had allowed to bring idol worshipping people to the place where they might come to repentance and faith in Him. "God knew," and everything that was going on with His people was directed to bring a desired nation of God-

fearing, God-worshipping people to be what He intended them to be. He is the same with us as He was with those people of an ancient time. In the church today He has made us a kingdom of priests that we might worship and serve Him in reverence and godly fear.

*Divergent events taking place miles apart -  
Have one common purpose in mind.  
A life of faith may seem to have a small start -  
Before the purpose we find  
Is to bring together a people and God  
Through the work of a chosen man.  
Both have to acknowledge Jesus as Lord -  
Before they will understand.*

*God works on individuals that they may unlearn  
Things that will hinder their faith.  
It may be sometime before they have earned  
The confidence others in them will place.  
A year or more is not wasted time  
To replace the wrong with what is right.  
When a person is conscious of God leading him,  
He walks with the Lord in the light.*

*The divergent nature of the world with faith is incompatible.  
The two leaders are not in any way the same.  
To walk in the world's way is to a Christian unsuitable,  
He is responsible to act in Jesus' name.  
Choices we make stay with us for life -  
Others too are affected by what I do.  
Between the world and God's kingdom there will be strife -  
One is deceptive - the other is true.*

*"Father in heaven, I thank Thee for the glimpses of light in this dark world that I can see when Thy people come together. Also, when the light of Thy Word shines into my mind, I am conscious of the brightness of divine understanding that shines from its pages. I praise Thee for the light in darkness, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 3:1-12**

### **MEETING GOD**

To even write such a title is done with a trembling hand. Even though the Lord God is my Father, I am conscious of the fact that He is the Almighty God, the Creator and Upholder of the universe, with all power in heaven and earth coming from Him. Some things are not learned well when we are young. I am approaching Moses' age when he saw an unusual sight. A burning bush would not be all that uncommon, but a fire in the middle of a bush that does not burn up, most certainly is. God made use of common things in an uncommon way to work His will with me. The ordinary things of daily life that are in some way - extraordinary, impresses me with the fact that God is here always. He is omnipresent. In the common activities of life, God is with us. He still is - Emmanuel. The bush in its lowly and stationary place perhaps would remind Moses, who had forty years to meditate on God and life; of Israel bound in slavery in Egypt. The fire in "the midst" of the bush would remind him that in spite of the situation they were in, God was there too.

Moses had come to the desert in the strength of life and mature years. But there was much he had to learn. Before he met God at the bush, he had years of training at home. He would have learned from his marriage the value of another person and our need of an equal to develop our personal and social skills. He would have learned from Zipporah how to give and receive love - and criticism. Interaction with her would have taught him the value of little things and our need of others. He would have learned from his two sons, patience when they react and respond differently to what he taught and expected. Every person is different and there is no template to guide us how to train and teach a child. We are to "train up a child in the way he shall go," not necessarily in the way I expect him to go. Moses was to be a father to a nation. He had to learn how to be a father in his family.

The desert itself was part of the training process God brought Moses into. When the sheep were brought in the darkness of early morning to the pasture before the heat of the day, he would have learned how to "lead them on softy." He would have learned the value of "coming apart into a desert place to rest awhile." People, like sheep, have to be led - not driven. They have to have rest at appropriate times. But Moses who also during those hours of watching the sheep, had lots of time to meditate on what he saw around him and what he thought within him. His intellect would have directed him to - and through, those questions of life that everyone asks. "Why am I here?" "Is there a God?" "What is He like?" "How can I know Him?" "Does he know and care about me?" And then one day, forty years into the training time, God spoke. In a few minutes of hearing God's voice, everything changed. God does not despise the humble and He is with His suffering people whether they know it or not. Moses learned the answers to the questions in mere moments. "I AM the God of the promised covenant." "I have seen the affliction of My people." "I know their sorrows." "I am come down to deliver." "I have seen the oppression." What glory, what assurance, what joy in such a few words from the Great I AM!! Moses had learned, and was now ready. God knew that. Now Moses knew that.

Moses had also learned his own heart in those forty years. He knew what he was and wasn't. He had learned what is really important to a man, and was now ready to learn what was important to God. God wanted a kingdom, a nation of worshipful people who would enjoy His fellowship and He could enjoy theirs. When God calls a person, it is an individual matter and we are expected to respond personally. Moses' question, "Who am I that I should go...?" indicated his uncertainty didn't go away in a moment. When one feels their incompetence, that is a good sign of a humble person God can use. Trust and humility go together and humility brings hope. Moses was uncertain as to how to explain God to the Hebrews who had turned after other gods, and he had a fear of their reaction to him and his message from God because of their unbelief. This same attitude resonates in our day among the people of our nation. We have gone so far away from God as a nation, that "Your God and my god are different, but that doesn't matter so long as you're sincere," is not an uncommon statement. Others say, "You have your faith and I have mine, and we will all 'get there' in our own way." Some things we have to trust God to do in His own way. Moses was assured, and we can be too, that God said, "Certainly I will be with thee... I have sent thee."

*Many of life's experiences are mundane and very predictable.  
We can easily get used to routine as long as things are peaceable.  
Then in just a few minutes of time, or an unexpected conversation -  
A change takes place that affects all of life, and calls for consecration  
To God, His work and His Word we know, we must now take to others.  
Some may be living in far away places, and some are our sisters and brothers.  
When God decides we are ready to rise up and boldly confront the foes -  
He doesn't do that because we think we are able - He acts on what He knows.*

*For some all of life is a training for a short time of effective service for Him.  
Others may be called to daily plod a path of service suited for them.  
One is not more important than the other, the Lord makes the major decisions  
As to what we do and where we do it, whether we have a low or high position.  
We may have to unlearn what we thought we knew, and cast it away as dross.  
Then God can bring us to realize that we should glory only in the cross.  
When that is really true, there is a humility that is not pretended.  
Then is when we have become the kind of person God originally intended.*

*When we represent God, there is a genuine desire to hide our pride from men -  
That they may hear the Word of God only as we seek to explain truth to them.  
They need to hear what God says Himself more than what I think is the meaning.  
To exalt God and present Christ clearly, we need to be humble, but not demeaning.  
The learning process usually follows the same track: how to deal with others alone.  
In the meditations of one's heart, perhaps is our desert where we learn to tell what Christ has done.  
From the solid ground of personal experience, God is able to take His trained persons -  
And use them in the work of building His kingdom when we have well-learned His lessons.*

***"Father, I think I have been a slow learner. But I know I have been entrusted with things that are way beyond my capacity. However, You gave them to me to do. So, I pray here today that by Thy grace, Thy strength may be perfect in my weakness. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 3:5.** “And He said, ‘Draw not nigh hither: put off the shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.’”

### **HOLY GROUND**

*God called him from an unusual place.  
The watcher heard God’s voice but didn’t see His face.  
Forty years in the wilderness learning God’s leading to trace –  
On to Holy Ground.*

*“I am the God of thy father” and those gone on before.  
They knew Me too, long before you were born.  
Now it is your turn to bow and pick up the torch –  
Leading to Holy Ground.*

*“I have seen the affliction” all they have had to endure.  
I know their troubles and all they go through.  
They need a leader and I have chosen to pick you –  
Learn the value of Holy Ground.*

*“I know their sorrows” and every tear they have shed.  
I understand their weakness – they will have to be led.  
I see their sorrow and number every bowed head –  
But they have never been on Holy Ground.*

*“I am come down to deliver them,” I made Abraham a promise.  
They are My children – for them I have a purpose.  
Through them, all will know the riches of My grace.  
You are to lead them to Holy Ground.*

*“I have seen the oppression,” from Egyptian world around;  
Their voices I hear – such a plaintive sad sound;  
Through them to the world will great blessings abound –  
When they get to Holy Ground.*

*“I will send thee,” and be with thee, I’ll not leave thee alone.  
With highest authority right from heaven’s throne  
For the next forty years, you are going to be the one –  
I chose to find Holy Ground.*

*“I AM THAT I AM,” that’s all you need to say,  
When they challenge your right to show them the way.  
I have visited you here, and will be there every day –  
As you move on to Holy Ground.*

*“I will stretch out My hand” and there will be judgments that fall.  
They will continue to come until sinners call  
For mercy and deliverance that never comes to all –  
Who don’t care about Holy Ground.*

*Today I have learned, O my Father and God,  
That through the Spirit’s unfolding of Thy Holy Word,  
I too, have been traveling – these footpaths I’ve trod  
Have been on Holy Ground.*

***“Holy God, the God of my fathers and my fathers’ fathers: I move in bare feet to the place of communion and fellowship with Thee. May I never let the contamination of the world dirty up the place where I meet with Thee and with Thy people. I wash my feet in the cleansing of the Word of God and listen anxiously to all that Thou would say to me. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”***

## **EXODUS 3:13-22**

### **NO OTHER NAME**

I feel like a bystander watching from a distance, a prepared man meeting with his God and being commissioned to do God's work that God might work through him. There is no question this is holy ground. I too stand with my shoes off, feeling the impression of the ground beneath my feet. Feeling as insignificant as Moses, and even more so, I sense the pressure of the moment and the awareness of being singled out by God. There is rarified air here to breathe. There is a world I am made more conscious of when my feet are bare. I can understand the phrase, "My heart is like wax." I have a real sense of the reluctance Jewish writers had rather, than mispronounce or misuse the name of God, to use the word "Adonai." Even printers had to find some way to identify the One who is indescribable, so they capitalized the word "LORD" in a feeble attempt to exalt Him.

How then can one explain who God is? We can't. He is beyond description. Anything or anyone who is infinite can not be compared with what we know by our limited experience and ability. We can only rely on what we have experienced of God personally. Anyone who comes to God "must believe that He is..." - He exists. Faith in God is essential. There are evidences of Him all around us, and even in us. The Creator wired into our being an unrest until it finds rest in God. Anyone who comes to God must not only believe He exists, but must be willing to earnestly seek Him. Many seek Him in ways of their own design. They may seek Him in nature, but that is a work of God - not God Himself. Some will even stop there and say, "Nature is God." Others may seek God in themselves and so will contemplate their own person and personality, thinking that the "image of God" is God. These begin to worship the creature rather than the Creator, and come to a self-centered decision that they themselves have become a god. They say man is his own god.

The best way we can overcome our reluctance to give people the truth of God is to tell them of our own experiences with God. Moses was instructed by God as to how to do this. We are not left without guidance in this ourselves in this regard. "Go home and tell what great things God hath done for you." Our testimony of faith in Christ and He working in and through us, cannot be refuted. It cannot be claimed that what a person has experienced is not true. We can form an opinion as to it being of God or not. If an activity in our life's experiences has evidence of godliness in it, it will bear the imprint of the life of Christ on it. The things written in the scriptures give us portraits of the Lord Jesus and His life as an example, "that we should walk in His steps."

This I do know: God is a Personality - He is not an idea or a figment of mans' imagination. There cannot be less in the Creator than is in His creation. He is in everything but is distinct from all. The uniqueness of the Lord Jesus Christ when He was here revealed God to us. He was like us but different. Because He made us, we bear certain characteristics of Him. Our contact with God comes when our dead spirits are awakened. and the quickening power of the Holy Spirit of God gives us life. Then we begin to understand what previously were only questions. Then there comes real life which grows and nurtures, rather than a deadness which lies motionless in spiritual darkness.

This I know: God is changeless. The passing of time and years do not affect God. He exists in an eternal "NOW." He has nothing to learn, for He is omniscient. He has nothing to acquire because He is omnipotent and has created all things "by the word of His power." He is full of grace and mercy. He is by His nature, love. He has "all power in heaven and earth." God is changeless in that He has nothing further to become. He is the Creator of life and glory. He is the upholder of all things. He is the Father of the fatherless and the husband to the widow. We know in the Lord Jesus Christ "dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." He is changeless. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever."

This I know: God is Reality. He cannot be nor does He need to be in any way altered. He is without the need to adapt to anything for "by Him all things consist." His creation changes by the word of His power. We change by our nature and the passing of time. There is nothing to compare Him with. There is no way to describe Him. If we could describe Him, He wouldn't be God. We can, in a limited way, describe what He is not. At our disposal are the few words to speak of Him in the negative. "He is of holier eyes than to look upon sin." "God is greater than..." and we use the greatest things we know of to make a kind of negative comparison.

This I know: God has plans. There is a unity in His creation. There are divine imprints in everything from an atom to the universe. There is an obvious order to things from seasons to years. Those are mere physical, and to a degree, observable things, that give evidence of a plan. From His Word we know He has a plan to redeem lost souls, the same as He revealed to Moses a plan of deliverance of Israel from Egypt. Redemption was planned by God to be accomplished when the sinless substitute died in the place of the

sinful person. In Egypt it was going to be the sinless Passover lamb for the firstborn of each family. For us it is the reality that "Christ died for the ungodly." He became one of us so we would have a substitute who permanently meets our need. God has a kingdom to come in His plans. He has a family He calls His own in His plans. "We become children of God by faith in Jesus Christ." He has been choosing out from among the nations "a people for His name." He wanted Israel to be a kingdom of priests, but Israel failed to fulfill His demands of a holy nation. Now He has created by means of a "new creation," a kingdom of priests from all people who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and will "worship the Father in spirit and in truth."

The nature of God is described and observed by Moses as a flame of fire. "Our God is a consuming fire," is another description. He is like the Sun that reveals what has been hidden by the dark. The warmth of the sun gives comfort and has power to bring forth life hidden and dormant in the seed. The sun can purify and give light to guide the footsteps of the traveler. God is a covenant keeping God. He formed covenants with those of old. Now by means of a new covenant with the blood of Christ to ratify it, He has formed this agreement with those who believe. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish." "He that hath the Son hath life." Those who have already died in Christ are secured forever with Him. We who are alive now are assured that we have the life of God that He promised. Even though by His very nature, God cannot be described, we do know Him as the Great I AM. We know there is "none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." God, in the perfections of our Lord Jesus Christ, has drawn near to us, and we do not need to be afraid. Moses had his commission to fulfill in his day to the people of Israel. We have ours in our day to the lost in the whole world.

*"Father, I am not wanting to avoid the thoughts of Thee, Thy glory, Thy purposes, Thy will - but it seems to me right now, it would be wrong to multiply words. I know my thoughts are read like a book by Thee. So I just want to honor and praise Thee - and thank Thee for revealing Thyself to me as a Gracious, Loving, Heavenly Father, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 4:1-17**

### **TAKE SERIOUSLY GOD'S CALL**

In our journey through life we may have gotten so used to familiar things and the quietness of our existence that we forget our responsibility to God and other people. It is possible to be so contented and complacent that we do not want God to intervene and change us to meet the needs of others. I perceive the older I get the more prone to apathy I become. In the experience of Moses with God in the wilderness of Midian, everything he had become used to was about to change. And he was eighty years old. Life had become calm and peaceful as he had unlearned the ways of Egypt and had taken on the quiet life of one living almost like a mystic. God had to awaken His servant to the importance of a higher life. His life-history was not over. It was just about to begin.

Signs and wonders have a way of awakening people to something or someone important. "Wonders" are to reveal Divine Power and Majesty. Usually these are terrible to behold. We have witnessed recently the wonders of an unleashed tsunami taking lives and property of thousands of people. It moved ships on to land, and things on land into the sea. Cyclones, tornados, hurricanes and huge storms have caused quick destruction of the works of men. These wonders seem to be reserved for use by God in speaking loudly to nations that have forsaken Him and in arrogance, have made themselves other gods. Signs are those proofs of God used to reveal Divine Grace and Truth and are often blessings that make people realize the tender interest of God in us. God used these signs to give His reluctant servant, Moses, the incentive to move forward in faith and meekness.

Moses feared the negative response of God's people. Their refusal of his message of deliverance and their rejection of him personally, were his objection to the call of God. When God directs a person to do His will in His work, or to be the Lord's messenger in His message - that is a very serious matter. We dare not take lightly those things that are important to God. God is not limited in what He can use to carry out His plans. In the case of Moses, He was going to use what he already had. "What is that in thine hand?" On another occasion God used what a woman had in her house - a little flour and oil. The things God told Moses He would use were his rod, his own hand and river water. What could be farther from our preconceived idea of signs!

Moses had his list of objections to doing God's will and His work: lack of fitness, lack of words, lack of authority, lack of power in speaking, lack of ability to adapt, lack of success, lack of acceptance. It is not hard to apply these objections to ourselves when we don't want change to come in our lives. We have a desire to do what we have always done and be left alone to live out the rest of our lives in quiet retirement.

God used what Moses had in his hand, a rod: a dry, sapless, lifeless rod, to make him conscious of himself and who he was. He was an individual with personal traits that God could use. The very rod he held in his hand, probably lifeless for years, would be known as "the rod of God." A frail, fearful, mortal man can be made into God's servant. He began then to be conscious of the abilities God had given him. God gives us talents by our natural birth and spiritual gifts when we are born again to use in our service for Him. He does not send us powerless into the battle for the souls of men any more than He would send Moses powerless to work for Him in Egypt. The lifeless, dry rod became a fearful serpent. Moses was given divine power by God to take it by the tail and it returned to what it originally was. When we look beyond ourselves and our inadequacies, then we become conscious of the need that God has called us, and enabled us, to fulfill.

The sign of Moses becoming leprous would have caused real concern in him because it affected him personally. We need to be aware of the fact that the world contaminates those who are in it. It is impossible, apart from God, to be kept "unspotted by the world." In the tender mercy of God, Moses, was taught the grace of God reaches out to us personally and continually. Apart from our own efforts, God is able to provide the cleanness that is needed to serve acceptably. The cleansing power of God over the incurable problem of leprosy teaches us that God is able to use what He has cleansed.

It was necessary for Moses to understand that God was not limited to what Moses had or who he was. God is able to use the very creation He made above what is normal to produce an objective that is consistent with His will. He can change the water in a river into blood. He does not give us power over creation, but enables us to interpret and apply the acts of nature to divine purposes. Creation is affected by man's sin. We are expected to take action for God in spite of our inadequacy and our doubts. There are weights that hinder our faith, and unbelief can cripple us in our service. We are given the responsibility to lay these aside and take action by faith. God intends us to take His call seriously and in spite of our trepidation and inexperience, to go forward with Him in faith.

*"I have never done that before, and I really don't know how."  
That is not your problem, yours is to God's will just bow.  
"I am not able to speak very well; my tongue often seems to be tied."  
You're not expected to do what you can't, just to in God's will abide.  
"I don't think people will listen to me; I've done some things wrong before."  
Just do what God says, that is enough, don't add to it any more.  
"I am sure they will reject me and maybe refuse to act on anything new."  
Leave the results to God to produce results, just do what He tells you to.*

*Making excuses is not an uncommon practice to avoid those things we fear.  
Just remember when God assigns a task, He doesn't ask for more than you can bear.  
It is not by might or personal power, but by the power of God alone -  
The Holy Spirit enables God's called one to do what needs to be done.  
Faith does not dictate the result; faith is in the One who commands.  
He controls the outcome of things, is the One who holds the world in His hand.  
Go ahead and do what God says, and leave the outcome completely to Him.  
Lay aside all the weights that hinder and remember that unbelief is sin.*

*The signs and wonders are up to God to use if He deems them necessary.  
Our obligation when called by Him is to take action and do not tarry.  
It is a serious thing when we are told to take a message and tell unto all.  
It is a serious thing if we neglect or wait to arise and answer God's call.  
When God says, "Arise and go," He doesn't mean for us to wait for our time.  
Any command He gives to me is much more important than any act of mine.  
Away with excuses! Wait no longer! Hear, arise and go forth in faith!  
Place all your confidence in His sovereign will, He supplies the needed grace!*

**"Father, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I ask today that this journey to the other side of the world we are about to make will be filled with evidence of Thy working in power and grace among Thy people and the unsaved. Thy servant does not know the language. May this not be a hindrance in any way to what Thou art going to accomplish. Amen."**

**EXODUS 4:1.** "And Moses answered and said, 'But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, the Lord hath not appeared unto thee.'"

### **THEY WILL NOT BELIEVE ME.**

Why should or would people believe a man has been called to leadership? What is there to prove to people that God is behind his authority to bind or loose?

Really, it isn't something a leader needs to be too concerned about. If one is sure that God has spoken to him – if one is sure the Holy Spirit has put that concern in his heart for God's people and God's work that he cannot deny – he doesn't need any more assurance. When a man is involved in a work for the Lord, the work itself is all he needs to be concerned about. His work will recommend him. Leave the recognition of leadership to others to affirm.

God can make that affirmation by the Holy Spirit and place it in the hearts of His people. Other people will observe and know when one can be trusted and is being used by God as a spiritual guide. There maybe occasions and places like Titus at Crete, when another person who is a leader in his own right, identifies a leader by his word based on recognition of a work accomplished.

Moses knew what had to be done. God had picked him to do it. That is all a leader has to be assured of. How God chooses to confirm that to you and/or others, is really up to Him, for we are His servants. He is our Master and Lord. We serve under His leadership.

*“Lord God, it is hard for some to grasp that leadership is a work, not an elected designation. Help me to help these men understand this. Confirm to them in whatever way Thou dost choose they are your servants for this work in their hands. In the middle of the situation they are in, help them to obey without hesitation the guidance given them. Please do not allow their fear to hinder then doing what Thou hast put in their hands, and help them to bring it to a proper conclusion. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”*

### **EXODUS 4:18-26**

#### **READY NOW**

With the rod in his hand, a reminder of the promises and power of God with which he will do signs, Moses leaves the "Mountain of God" and returns to his family. There is a change in him since they last saw him, and his dealings with God was about to affect them all. When we come to really know God and are willing to yield our will in obedience to His will, it has a definite ripple effect. It will make those who know us best more conscious of God and aware of the fact that He cannot be ignored. Obedience changes a person. When Moses respectfully spoke to his father-in-law, Jethro seemed to understand what had happened. Moses stayed in Midian "wrapping things up," longer than was necessary. God spoke to Moses again to urge him to get moving in God's business. "The king's business requires haste" can certainly be said of God's business. "He that believeth shall not make haste" seems to be a contradiction, but is rather a warning to us not to act in the urgency of the flesh in view of the fact it is the Lord we serve. When God gives us clear direction, there is no need to wait for our own convenience.

The return of Moses to Egypt meant leaving those things that had become familiar to him. Now instead of adapting himself to familiar surroundings, as a servant of God with a mission, he has to adapt himself to God and work under divine guidance that has allied his will with God's will. We are not called to be "free lances" in the work of God. God gives us His objective in plain terms. "Israel is My son...let My son go that he may serve Me." Moses had plenty of time during the days of travel across the desert to reflect on all God told him. He knew beforehand there was going to be opposition. His flesh had made him hesitate in Midian. The world of Pharaoh awaited him and God had told him there would be opposition from Pharaoh. The devil would use his powers to keep God's people in bondage as long as he could by copying what God would do. In that way he would get at the messenger and try to make Moses stop before the goal was reached. In any work of God we are called upon to engage in, we can expect opposition. Some opposition will come from expected sources and some will come from places and people we least expect.

Zipporah did not seem to be a help to Moses. For some reason he had not carried out the rite of circumcision that identified Hebrew males. A covenant had been between God and Abraham hundreds of years before that through the Jews that nation would bless the world. Perhaps Zipporah had not let circumcision be done to her sons. Now she had to yield to the pressure of God, but did so grudgingly. She only submitted to doing this circumcision because she had no choice. When she threw what she had cut off at Moses so he could live, it was plain to see she was very unhappy with the whole call of God. There are times when we have to count the cost of serving God and obeying His call, more important than the desire of those who are closest to us. The disciple has to be willing to "forsake all" and follow the Lord. This is not an easy thing to do. She had to be sent back to Jethro and would not see her husband again until the exodus from Egypt had taken place.

To serve God means the vessel must be ready for use no matter what it might cost. The power we need to do those things that are necessary in God's service, must come from God alone. The faithful support of those closest to us is a wonderful thing. But if it is not forthcoming, it does not mean we can avoid doing what God has called us to do. God intends the covenant He makes with us to be kept. We will have to "lay aside every weight," legitimate or not and lay aside people who would claim the first place in our lives. We must go forward in faith in God. We can be confident that God is with us in the work and He will bring it to His desired conclusion.

Key to a successful work for God is a surrendered will and a consecrated heart. The training of the servant takes time. To bring about true humility, power under control (meekness), a submissive spirit and the rejection of complacency, does not happen quickly. However, when God knows we are ready for His service, often action is called for right away. Faith has been increased by taking in God's Word. Trust in Him has been demonstrated in the course of everyday life. A special link with God Himself has been forged so there is real fellowship with God. Then we can anticipate that God will use us and we move ahead in the work He has given us without fear.

*Sometimes we think we are ready, but haven't been tested yet.  
It is possible to gain many skills and in spite of them, forget  
It is God who is working in us to will and to do His good pleasure.  
We need to remember we are but clay, lest pride comes on us without measure.*

*On the other hand, all we may be able to see are our inadequacies.  
Then we use that as an excuse to avoid what God intends us to be.  
True humility can take honest stock of what we are and we aren't.  
When there is true evaluation of ourselves, God will tell us when to start.*

*The objectives He has are not obscure, but He doesn't always tell everything -  
Until we have started to move ahead and then He may have to bring  
To our attention some things left undone that we must attend to now.  
When they have been dealt with, the goal is much clearer, to meet it He tells us how,*

*We are ready when we can look above the obstacles and see what God's intention is.  
We are ready when we can honestly say, "Not my will - only His."  
We are ready when we have counted the cost and are willing to go forward in faith.  
We are ready when we don't make any demands, and are able to display God's grace.*

*It isn't always made plain at first where the path of God's leading goes.  
But it is enough for us to act with assurance because our heavenly Father knows.  
Each step away from familiar ground is a step that demonstrates trust.  
That is what makes it possible for God to give important work to us.*

*Some people live to make money, the value of that will soon be past.  
The person who lives by faith trusts God wherever their lot is cast.  
There are those who for their life's ambition seek public acclaim and fame.  
One who lives in obedience and by faith, find their greatest joy in Jesus' name.*

***"Father of all grace, maybe I have done things for the wrong motives in the past. I honestly don't know myself well enough to discern my reasons for acting in certain ways. Perhaps it was my immaturity or lack of experience that hindered the work I should have done better. Now at my age, I hope I am better able to apply myself to Thy work with a closer fellowship with Thee. I truly want Thy will to be done in my life. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 4:31.** "And the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that He had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped."

#### **THE LORD HAS VISITED.**

*A distant flame that won't go out – a burning bush –  
And one draws near to see.  
Beyond the course of nature – an unseen Source –*

*And one removes his shoes and hears the Voice –  
The Lord hath visited!*

*Instructions given; warnings too – a clearly defined plan –  
And one begins to fear.  
Common things: a rod, a hand used to show unseen Power –  
And one acts as he is told – and it works –  
The Lord hath visited!*

*Doubts arise and fears of self going where danger lies untamed –  
And one steps back from faith.  
Authority gives assurance that eyes and feet and mouth are His to use –  
And one learns that even in times of fear –  
The Lord hath visited!*

*His wife, his sons, his reticent unused tongue –  
And his fearful self, all rise and go.  
God's rod, God's promises, God's assurance, God's warnings –  
And one moves to a sword-less battle –  
The Lord hath visited!*

*The end may be obscure as yet, and clouds are dark –  
And I move with tentative steps as told.  
I know the One who tells, instructs, commands – expects my obedience,  
And I prepare for the unknown – in faith, because  
The Lord hath visited!*

*"Father of all patience and grace: I must disappoint You a lot. There is something in me (I'm sure it is some kind of self-orientation) that is still afraid to move out in full confidence in Thee. Yet in my own cautious way, I have full trust in the commands I have received; that they are right and I can fulfill Your expectations only by divine power. Before me, in the next day or so, is a work that has been given to me. I fear, yet I trust Thee. I am Thine. Here am I, send me. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 4:27-31**

### **BROTHERS**

It was forty years since Moses had left Egypt. Because he had been in the household of Pharaoh and Aaron was a slave, they probably didn't know each other too well. They had learned how to discern the voice of God, so when God spoke to Moses and told him to go to Egypt, and spoke to Aaron and told him to go to the wilderness to meet Moses - they both knew it was the voice of God. The bond the children of God have with each other is the fact they know God and are able to discern His will. "This is life eternal, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." One may have looked and thought he saw a stranger coming toward him, or they may have met coming around some rocky outcrop, but when they met, they knew each other. Many times, we have met people we never knew before, but when we find out they are children of God, both are encouraged by the connection God arranged.

As those two brothers met where God directed them, "the mount of God," there would have been a lot of common ground and catching up they would want to talk about. More importantly though was the communication God had given Moses regarding the liberation of Israel from slavery. Moses held nothing back of "all the words of the Lord." Communication with those we labor with in the work of the Lord is very important. Our fellow laborers need to know what is behind our commission and how we plan to carry it out. Even Moses distrusted himself because he felt deficient in his speech. His brother would become his colleague when they went to Pharaoh to get the release of the Hebrew slaves. A person we can trust is a wonderful support when we are engaged in the work of the Lord. "In the mouth of two or three witnesses, let every word be established." There is personal and moral safety when we have a reliable colleague. We are able to strengthen each other in the Lord. In careful consultation the best way to accomplish a work can be reached.

The strategy began with the elders of Israel being consulted and informed as to what God was going to do. Some things should not be put off when God has given guidance to us to go forward. One person may be

very confident that God has spoken to him through the Word of God and in respect for each other, give the other laborer the credit for God using him. One hears from God - the other speaks for God. It is important that we let God choose our companions. The elders of Israel would have been respectful of Aaron as one of their own leadership group. When they heard Aaron tell them all the Lord told Moses and had seen the signs, any objections against Moses were removed. They not only believed God had called Moses to lead them out of Egypt, they worshipped the Lord who was the One who promised to free them.

There will be times when things seem hopeless to God's people. The saints feel like things have gone way beyond the possibility of recovery and there is nowhere to turn. It is times of this kind of desperation God moves to help the humble and contrite ones who tremble at His word. The Israelites recognized Moses as their leader. Now they had to follow these leaders in the path to freedom God was starting to open up before them and wait for Him to bring to pass His desired purpose. When that happens in our lives we can reverently say in quiet confidence, "The will of the Lord be done," and wait and watch God work.

*I thank Thee, Father, for those in my life  
Who share what I believe;  
The one who is closest is my wife -  
Together we are a team.  
She often connects with those I can't reach -  
And in private conversation -  
She reinforces much of what I teach  
By personal application.*

*Others I have worked with many times -  
I have proven to be faithful friends.  
In working together, we did find  
Our objectives usually blend.  
What one can't do the other one can -  
Two really are better than one.  
Each one is his own unique man -  
But unified until our work is done.  
Brothers in the flesh and in the Lord -  
Generally, have similar goals.*

*Fellowship in the work of the Gospel  
Is one of the ways God uses those who labor.  
When their efforts prove to be successful -  
Neither one can claim special favor.  
It is God who works choosing who He will  
To bring His objectives to pass.  
He will continue using the humble until  
Laboring days are all in the past.*

***"Father, I thank Thee for fellow-laborers in Thy service I can consult with. May we each always recognize our responsibility to Thee. May our companionship be that which Thou dost choose. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 5:1.** "And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness."

#### **MY PEOPLE.**

*Right after worship when our spirits are high,  
It seems like the Lord is so near, I can fly  
Right into heaven without a parting sigh  
For all that is left behind.*

*Then down with a jolt I fall, and pressures begin;  
They hit me so hard I can really feel pain,  
And the cares of this life hit again and again,*

*For the problems that rise up and bind.*

*Instead of getting easier, things get harder and harder.  
Instead of fulfillment, dreams go farther and farther.  
Days of labor and toil seem longer and longer –  
Oppositions come from those that are blind.*

*Then I remember, we have a promise to go  
To the land of promise – it was the Lord told us so,  
And His word is true, and His people can know –  
Because He said so – the promised future is mine.*

***“O God and Father, I rest in Thee with assurance that all Thou hast promised will be fulfilled in Thine own good time and way. Such confidence gives peace when all around is turmoil and unrest. I am so grateful for all Thy promises. I thank Thee in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”***

## **EXODUS 5**

### **THE CHALLENGE OF THE WORK**

There is something fundamental that everyone who serves the Lord must remember. That is, the work of God is truly - His work and His alone. He has the plans, knows the progress and the desired end. He gives us the privilege of working for Him in His work. It is His work, not ours. Moses and Aaron had heard the Lord speak to them and had spoken themselves to the elders of Israel as to what that work was. The work of God is a delivering work. The objective was clear to them all. The expectations of Moses and Aaron was not that Pharaoh would let them go, because God had told them he would not. It probably shook those men of faith quite a bit when they heard Pharaoh say, "Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice..." They had heard the Lord's voice and had acted in the fear of the Lord as men of faith do. Not everyone we reach out to is going to respond the way we expect. Unbelief may show itself in arrogance or ignorance; in bravado or skepticism; in smooth words or words of challenge. We will be surprised at how many ways people use to excuse themselves from their responsibility to God.

Underlying this careless response to God was the main reason for Pharaoh's denial of the request for freedom for Israel. He had free labor working for him and his worldly ambitions for cities and monuments. That work depended on the great pool of free labor provided for by God's people. It is not unusual for people to reject the Gospel because there are consequences that people know will come when they put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as their own Savior. There is no question about it - life changes when one obeys God. The servant of God must trust God to do what He wants with the message he gives. He must honor God himself and exemplify his respect for God in every way possible. He must remember God, and the fact that God is in control of the events in which he is found. Then he must wait for God to do what He is going to do - in His own time and way.

The work of God is a dangerous work. There will be many perils awaiting one who goes forward in faith to accomplish divine purposes. Paul the apostle wrote of many places where perils came upon him. They came on land and sea. They came from nature and devils. They came from believers and false brethren. Satan will never give ground without a fight. Egypt as a type of the world reminds us that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers; against spiritual wickedness in high places." For our encouragement we need to remember that God uses present events often for future reasons.

The work of God is at times a disappointing work. We had hopes of pressing right ahead and seeing favorable results right away, but that does not happen very often. The harshness of the reply and the increased labor because of Moses' request seemed to bring very negative results. That labor of the slaves increased. The slave drivers were caught in the middle. They first complained to Pharaoh and then turned on Moses and Aaron. There will be times in our service for God when things seem impossible and we seek for someone or something to blame. When that happens, we need to turn to God and seek to learn from Him what He is doing and why in this present situation.

The work of God is a directed work and that direction comes from God. It is appropriate to come to God in earnest entreaty. When Moses got alone with God in the bitterness of his soul, he wisely kept that hidden from others who had never significant dealings with God themselves. Many people will not understand why a servant does what he or she does. It really is useless to try to explain things that motivate us in the work of the Lord if people already have their minds made up as to how things should be done. God has His own

agenda and when He fits us into it, others won't see things and needs in the same way we do. Most people live life in a measurable way: so many hours for sleep, so many for eating, so many for working and so many for leisure. A lot of people measure the value of life by the money they accumulate. In the service of the Lord when delivering people from Satan's bondage and the world's power, we have to look at our work apart from what it is going to cost and the margin of profit we seek. One soul rescued from hell is worth more than the whole material world. When we have done what God has directed us to do, then we can leave the results in the hands of "the only wise God."

*Quite often it is hard to easily understand  
What God has designed and what He has planned  
As the outcome of a work we have been called to do  
But generally, we will know when the task is through.*

*There will be a lineup of opposition like a maze -  
And confusion will reign unless we remember what God says.  
"Arise and go" does not take a great deal of intellect,  
To know God expects us to get up and go - get on with it.*

*The favor of men and what they think of a task,  
Isn't what makes it right or not, so when we are asked,  
It is wise to give as precise an answer as you possibly can -  
So, people will know you are not acting under the dictates of man.*

*God does not ask us to do things of which we are not able.  
Some served Him in teaching, and others waited on tables.  
Each knew they were doing what God intended at that time -  
A simple work for God makes His favor on us shine.*

*When we don't understand ourselves, what seems to go wrong -  
It is a good thing to trust God's will to carry us along  
To the goal He established and will reach in His own way -  
As He allows us to participate and He guides us each day.*

*"I thank Thee, Father, for giving us the privilege of doing some little things for Thee. There have been occasions when souls have been saved and saints built up in their faith. I know these are great things that You do as a result of using Thy servant. In Thy will, please use my clay lips tonight as I preach the Gospel and guide us by Thine eye as we travel to fulfill this call Thou hast given us. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

**EXODUS 6:6-8.** *"Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgment: ...I will take you to me... I will be to you a God... I will bring you in... I will give it you for an heritage."*

#### **PROMISES.**

*"I will bring you out" – from those burdens you'll be free;  
The load you have now will soon be gone.  
God gives you His word – you some day will see  
The true Canaan-land, and you will call it home.*

*"I will rid you out of their bondage" – impressed by chains;  
Liberty will release you – you will be free to stand.  
Freedom from God will blot out all sin's stains,  
And as one of God's children, you can enjoy Beulah-land.*

*"I will redeem you," He said – God paid all the cost.  
His arm of great strength reaches to the uttermost place.  
The guilt was too great – without Him I'd be lost;  
But all that was needed, He paid it all by His grace.*

*"I will take you to Me" – we are the people He chose.  
No longer our own, we belong to the King.  
As heirs of His promise, we have nothing to lose,  
By the full-hearted surrender of our "everything."*

*"I will be to you a God" – there will never be another,  
For He redeemed our souls with a cost so high.  
Through ages eternal, we will worship forever  
"The Lord is our God" the redeemed loudly cry.*

*"I will bring you in" – to the place He has promised  
We move with strong pace and faith full assured.  
With all those of faith, we too are the blessed,  
Enjoying each day all His grace has procured.*

*"I will give it you for a heritage" – all here we enjoy.  
Redemption and fellowship – God's people now have  
A foretaste of heaven – when His word we employ;  
Finding great joy in each promise He gave.*

*"The promises from Thee, Father God, have given to Thy people all down through the ages, the grace to endure hardships and sicknesses, war and defeats, pain and suffering with grace and courage. I have never been called upon as yet, to go through what many of my brothers and sisters in the Lord have had to experience, but I know by experience in a measure, the joy of claiming the promises Thou hast given. Accept my heart-felt thanks, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 6 - 7:13**

### **FEAR OF FAILURE**

There are times when we are called to step out again in faith even when our last experience in life produced nothing as far as we were concerned. We felt like we failed. Moses probably hoped Pharaoh would respond to the request for deliverance and wasn't really prepared for rejection. He took the lack of response of Pharaoh as a failure on his part. We usually do not know much more of God's will than that which affects us right now or in the immediate future. Setbacks are not necessarily failures. Failures and the ability to fail are actually ways of discipline. They are hard to take because we measure our activities by successes not failure. After failure there is the temptation to say, "I am done." I will not try that again. An observation has been made that anyone who has not failed, has not accomplished anything. The fear of failure paralyzes a person to where they are of no use to God or men.

If we thought we would accomplish a victory and personal pride is in any way involved, failure is a good way to bring us down to size. If we thought our success was because of our ability and strength, failure will bring us back to where we depend on God. A sense of failure may come because of nervous tension that leaves us drained of emotional and spiritual strength. A farmer will go back and do the same thing over again after a crop failure because he knows the principle of sowing and reaping, he works under, ultimately depends on God to be successful. A fisherman will return to the sea day after day even though he comes in sometimes empty-handed because he understands the principle of nature that sea creatures live under. If he is patient and perseverant, he will catch fish. We can never blame God for lack of success, but it is good for us to understand that failures are one of the ways God works His will with us.

On the other hand, we need to remember when we are called by God to high service for Him, that calls for high living from us. There is incumbent on the servant of God, the necessity of walking worthy of God and of the vocation to which He has called us. Respect, integrity, dignity and honor are necessary characteristics of those who are called to represent and speak for God in an ungodly age. Dignity under the shadows of failure actually shines light on what may not have been understood and really learned in any other way. Under the tension of opposition and antagonism is where the representative of God shines the brightest in spite of perceived failure.

The forbearers of Moses and Aaron are listed in this chapter because those people of faith left their imprint of confidence in God on their sons. Even though they labored as slaves in Egypt and are probably buried in unmarked graves along with millions of other slaves in that country, their legacy still lives on. We can visit

the graves of faithful servants of the past and it can stir us to rise to the challenge of our day the same as in the times in which those worthy people lived. A family grave site may produce a fresh resolve to go on for God in spite of obstacles and failures which we have experienced.

Moses didn't understand the underlying fear Pharaoh had of him until God told him. Sometimes when we are down in spirit and have a tendency to doubt what we are called to do, God has us in the place and state of mind where He can reveal things to us, knowing that now this will not be a cause for pride and self-exaltation. Pharaoh thought of Moses as a god, but Moses didn't think that of himself. Now he realized it was God who was working through him even in perceived failure and would give success in His own time. At eighty years of age he was still learning what God is like and who he is himself.

When these two old men went into Pharaoh again, there seemed to be a quiet confidence that whatever was going to happen, success or failure, they would leave the results to God. The miracle of the rod becoming a serpent, even though it was duplicated by Egyptian magicians, was unmistakably a work of God. The other serpents being swallowed by Moses' rod-serpent, would have given all who witnessed that event, the fact of the supremacy of God over all the gods of Egypt. This God is the same today. He is our God and I will trust Him in success or failure.

*"I can't understand! How could it be that I failed so bad!"  
These kinds of words are often heard when one is feeling sad.  
By this means we can learn what it really means to be a tool in God's hands.  
Success and failures are under His control, the results are His decisions, not mans'.*

*To try to take credit for what God does, leaves us in a vulnerable position.  
It usually is indicative of one who is self-centered, not a good spiritual condition.  
God makes the decisions as to the final result of a task we are sent to do.  
He knows before hand the end of a thing, we don't until all is through.*

*When failure appears to be the outcome of some special work God gave to me,  
The best thing I can do is humbly and quietly wait for the results to see.  
God has His own agenda and plans; may I never insert those of mine  
In a place where they should never be, that rest in His will I can find.*

*I may not know any more than the beginning because that is all I need to know.  
When God's time comes, if He chooses maybe to me, He will show  
The hidden things that I couldn't bear at the beginning of the task,  
By them I may realize the outcome was far more that I could think or ask,*

*There is no doubt that failures have come and now I look back to see  
How gracious God's mercies are when He withheld the unknown path to me.  
Now I rejoice where I would have cried - success was entirely different  
Then what I expected; now I can know the blessed outcome of the event.*

***"Father in heaven, I can see in this place now what I was unsure of before. It seemed to others we were having an adventure and they wondered why we were coming here. Now I know these people need spiritual food Thou didst give me to prepare for them and I praise Thee for this. Thanks so much for leading us here. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 7:22.** *"And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he harken unto them; as the Lord had said."*

#### **HARD HEART.**

*It starts so small – one's ear is deaf to others.  
Entreaties to consider, learn and listen come even from mothers  
To sons and daughters, soon grown past dependency –  
Hearing, but not listening to the words and voices of reason.  
"No-longer-innocent" eyes tighten at the edges.  
Lines around the mouth find it difficult to rise –  
As the unseen self of the heart, self-centered, gathers.*

*Choices now made without the advice of others –  
Overlook and override wise counsel from father and from mother.  
Maturity is only in the body-size and the “heart” is marble-sized,  
Brittle and unmoved by grace, and truth, and love.  
In the mirror is the face one likes the most,  
While other faces, pained by what they see and hear –  
Fade into the distant fringes of life – the heart hardens.*

*Compassion, empathy, sympathy – one time given freely by others,  
But not reciprocated, now is gone from you – and even mothers  
Turn away and wipe tear-dimmed eyes as a great potential heart shrinks –  
And turns to solid rock, resisting the flow of heart-sick tears,  
And even the fountain of living waters, and the river of life  
From God Himself are spurned, ignored, despised –  
While the hardened heart turns from light and goes, hopeless, into eternal night.*

*“Holy God, what a fearful thing it is when one who chooses to live without the knowledge of God, is hardened inside. When first he said, ‘Who is the Lord...’ his blind mind was closed to what any far-seeing mind could grasp. May I be led and willing to communicate truth, to those whose heart can be softened by the softening, cleansing power of the word of God. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”*

## **EXODUS 7:14-8:19**

### **THE FIRST THREE PLAGUES**

In following the experiences of God's people in Egypt, there came a period of three to six months of terrible plagues on the land where the Jews had been in slavery for 430 years. Nothing like it happened before or since. It may take generations of gradual departure before the Lord God moves to bring about righteous retribution, but it will come. In Egypt the question, "Who is the Lord that I should obey Him," was probably at first the question of one who really did not know or at least didn't have a clear understanding of God. God's people had become more like the Egyptians and worshipped the "gods on the other side of the flood." In our day and place, that question is being asked by those who have deliberately chosen to turn away from truths that have been taught and practiced for many generations. How serious and challenging is the judgment on those who know what is right and have turned to what is wrong!

The plagues that afflicted the Egyptians answered the question of who the Lord is. They clearly overrode the gods of the Egyptians and gave physical proof of the true God. The plagues also are not only miraculous actions that rapidly accelerate the work of nature. They bring awareness of God as the One who is the Supreme Creator and Sustainer of all things, and teach the awfulness of sin. Signs have a message to give, not just warnings. Throughout all of man's history, humanity as a whole has rejected the seriousness of sin. From time to time God brings the whole problem of sin into focus through signs that give warnings. At the time of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus, natural events were accelerated by noonday light giving way to darkness. Then at the time of His death the earthquake was so severe that the rocks broke. That was not a tremor that only shook buildings. Whatever happened at the temple, the rending of the veil that hung before the Holiest of all, would have made all the priests there awaken to the fact that God has spoken. No wonder when the Gospel was preached a little over a month later, many priests believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. When God uses acts of great power to accelerate the forces of nature, He has a serious point to make.

Self-will and pride are destructive and if left unchecked will destroy all around it. In a way it was an act of mercy when the ruthless Pharaoh and those who served him, were destroyed that the land of Egypt and the people of the nation might survive. Sin affects the whole world. By the evil of one nation's leadership, many will suffer and die. It is a lesson that most in leadership do not learn until it is too late for repentance and recovery. I fear that favored nations today are soon going to experience the righteous wrath of a Holy God.

The first group of three plagues affected the whole land without exception. Before each of these plagues took place there was warning given and opportunity to repent. There is a long warning before the first three plagues; a shorter warning for the second three and none before the last three. It is interesting to note that each series of plagues began with Moses coming to Pharaoh early in the morning. The full impact of the plague that fell was visual to everyone. No one could say they didn't know something supernatural was taking place. When the plague was predicted by Moses, that was very precise so there was no question as to what would be expected. The magicians of Egypt understood they were dealing with a deity much greater than theirs.

The plagues of the Nile River turning into blood lasted seven days. The gradual effects of the plagues grew increasingly worse as the days past. The fish died, and the river began to stink. The water itself stank and wells had to be dug to get water. When God judged in the past and when He judges today, and in the future, it doesn't require that longer judgments come. The effects can be felt for a long time. When disasters have happened in our country and even in other parts of the world, the effect is felt for days, months, and years to come. It is very foolhardy to think that God can be ignored and despised and think there will be no consequences.

Even worse than the water turned into blood, were the frogs that overwhelmed the whole country. The noise they make and the stench that came when they died and were heaped up in piles, would have been almost unbearable. Finally, Pharaoh responded to the effects of the plague and made his first compromising suggestion. The presence of frogs everywhere would have been terribly abhorrent to those who would be walking and stepping on them, or lying in the bed and find frogs there. Eating a meal with frogs on the table would have been almost more that one could take. Pharaoh was still considering the effect of the plagues to be temporary so he requested that the plague be stopped tomorrow. He would have expected the frogs to go to the river rather than dying on the spot all at once the next day. God has His own way of dealing with opposition and we are wise when we don't try to guess how the One with the keys of life and death will use them. The wisdom of God is so far greater than ours that we dare not question His acts of retribution any more than we try to define or measure His acts of grace.

The plague of lice, when God turned dust into lice, convinced the Egyptian magicians that they were up against a Supreme Power. They could manipulate things that existed but they could not create any form of life. Shaved head or smooth skinned animals could not resist the itching creatures that God made out of the dust. The animal-gods of the Egyptians were not able to defend themselves from the terrible discomfort upon them, any more that the fallen men who worshipped them. They said truly, "This is the finger of God."

*The finger of man may seem so small  
But not the finger of God.  
When by His finger God answers a call  
Then we learn the ways of the Lord.  
To bring lice from dust that could stop a nation  
Indicated a Supreme Power that is great.  
If with one-digit, God points in condemnation,  
What a difference His whole hand will make!*

*And yet I am held in the palm of His hand  
Held safe by the Father and the Son.  
I am nothing but a mere weak and mortal man  
But the indwelling Holy Spirit has come!  
God used His finger when He was here on earth  
To write in the dust words that had conviction.  
A sinful woman was to Him of great worth -  
Perhaps words written brought salvation.*

*When the Almighty God points His finger there is  
In that one finger that identifies a need,  
More power and authority than in all humanity exists  
Though many may never to His will give heed.  
There is this solemn fact that we should consider -  
God has all authority and power, so lest we linger  
Or allow ourselves to wander hither and thither-  
The wise person will remember to act when God points His finger.*

***"Father, in this bastion of pantheism where we are today, I am thankful and truly moved in my spirit when I see Thy finger pointing to the place where Thy children are gathered, and they have accepted me in Thy name. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 8:1** *“And the Lord spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go, that they may serve me.”*

## **MY PEOPLE #2.**

*[Mat. 2:5]*

*“My people, Israel,” people of promise from days in ancient Ur;  
God Himself, identifying them – not because they were great,  
But because in sovereign grace, He chose a small tribe, so obscure,  
And claims them, His, through Abram, the father of people of faith.  
Nothing in them deserved such attention from God, the great “I AM.”  
They were despised by the tribes around who bowed to gods so dark,  
Yet the Lord whose plans are so far beyond the simple plans of men;  
Set His love upon them there, and chose to move them to a promised land afar.*

*[Acts 7:34]*

*Down in Egypt for hundreds of years, bound in slavery’s chains;  
The bondage increasing yearly ‘til cries of pain rose up to God.  
Listening from high in heaven above, God’s steps in to lay His claims;  
“My people in Egypt” I am going to deliver them I give My word.  
Moses, His man, came back from away in the desert where he learned,  
That God does His work of deliverance when His mighty arm is made bare.  
He identifies Himself this time as the God of power, not love that had been spurned,  
And with His mighty power brings them out – and then in – and was with them there.*

*[Rom. 9:25-26]*

*Generations come and go, and nations rise and fall –  
The Lord God of Israel promised, His prophecies never fail.  
Some people were willing to follow Him, responding to His call;  
And others in pride and selfishness against their God did rail.  
Yet God in mercy still looks on and says they are still His people;  
The plans and purposes He laid out, will every one come to pass.  
Proofs of fulfillment are there to see, giving evidence that it’s needful;  
For every prediction, prophecy and promise from God’s word will surely last.*

*[2Cor. 6:16]*

*Today “My people” refers, it’s clear, to those who choose to be;  
Separated unto God from the worldly systems around.  
It is not a high-minded or prideful act, but they have come to see;  
God dwells in them and walks in them – they are not their own.  
God desires to act as a Father should, to those who are twice born –  
He calls them to step away from wrong, choosing what is right.  
We are not to yoke with unbelievers – children of Almighty Lord –  
We are called by Him, “My people.” children of day, not of the night.*

*[Rev. 18:4]*

*“Come out of her, My people,” comes a strong voice from on high.  
Babylon seemed so strong, and many choose to join  
What seemed to them, success, from Babylon they could buy  
Everything the flesh could want – it is hard to stand alone.  
Stepping out with faith in God – they put life on the line;  
Looking back, they see the flames of all the world holds dear.  
Righteous God who judges men, says of the separate ones – “They’re Mine.”  
At His side, and forevermore, where the Lord is - they’ll be near.*

**“Father God, the God of Thy ancient people Israel, and the Lord God of Thy people today: with appreciation and humility, I thank Thee that I am part of those that are able to be called “My people” in this day. Please impress on all of us the great blessing and great responsibility of being part of such an honored group. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”**

## **EXODUS 8:20-9:12**

### **THE SECOND THREE PLAGUES**

The plagues that came upon Egypt grew in intensity as each succeeding one came. Stubbornness is self-centered and is an act of rebellion against God. One of the more serious effects of stubbornness like Pharaoh had, is its effects on those we are with. It often blinds the person to the mind and truth of God. When that attitude is released, God is able to work His will in our lives.

When the plague of flies covered all the people, animals and even the ground on which they walked, and would be on the faces of the Egyptians and would be drawn in when they breathed, Pharaoh finally had to admit the fact that "God is." But he only acknowledged Him as the God of the Israelites - "Your God." That same attitude is there in many today who trust in the knowledge of science but have to admit there is more that science cannot explain. They admit that "God is" but is nothing to them. The flies did not go into the land of Goshen where the Jews lived. Pharaoh realized in that way the distinctness of the Israelites and was willing to let them "sacrifice in the land." Compromises are sought among those who are Christians and those who claim to be Christians. "Do not go too far," is not an uncommon attitude today. "You have your truth and I have my truth," is a statement often heard today from those who profess to be Christians when they talk to God's people. It is an attempt of Satan to keep God's people comfortable in an ungodly world system. It is wrong to try to negotiate some kind of compromise between truth and expediency. We either obey God or we don't obey Him. There is no such thing as half-obedience. Partial obedience is not obedience at all.

As the plagues continued, for the first time, death was introduced as one of the results of human disbelief and rejection of God. Pharaoh had heard the warnings and continued to resist and reject God. God didn't harden Pharaoh's heart by overriding his freedom to make choices. He simply confirmed what Pharaoh chose. Ignoring the voice of God repeatedly will some day result in one not hearing it at all. How challenging it is to be reminded that the decisions and choices we make have a far-reaching effect. The livestock of the Egyptians all died because of one man's choice to refuse to obey God. This effect of human sin is felt all over the world and will not cease until the time when the lion will lie down with the lamb during the millennium. Pharaoh found out that not one of the cattle of the Israelites had died, and he hardened his heart against them and the God of Israel. It would appear from later reading of the plagues when other cattle died, that he must have confiscated some of their cattle.

When Moses next stood before Pharaoh in the early morning, he didn't speak to him but threw dust into the air in the sight of Pharaoh so he not only experienced the plague of boils but saw it happen right before his eyes. No longer did the magicians try to copy the plagues. They knew it was a work of God. Truth will always win over deception. Righteousness will be the victor over evil. The boils and their painful effect were on the bodies of man and beast alike in Egypt! Pharaoh had seen the evidence of the power of God creating life out of dust. He watched nature being released from its normal restraints to bring judgment on him and his nation and still he did not repent. When God used the key of death so the cattle died, still he would not respond to the call of God to deliver His people. The physical pain of his people and even that inflicted on him touched him personally and still his resistance to God continued. It was a battle of the will. "He that being often reproved and hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy."

God will work His will and there is no power that can stop it. No self-willed person can stop the wheels of divine justice and judgment once the time of repentance is deliberately ignored. A principle that affects every part of life is both a warning, and an encouragement. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

*There is no real explanation can be given for the hardness of the human heart.  
No matter what happens afterward, once in a course we choose to start  
We will have to accept the consequences, many over which we have no control  
To stop or change their direction, or their effect upon our soul.*

*Many things written in the Bible are there for our personal instruction.  
We learn what leads to life eternal and what leads to eternal destruction.  
To pay attention to what we read and from that apply lessons we learn -  
Will do us good in days to come when we wonder which way to turn.*

*God had for many years withheld His divine retribution  
But a time came when no longer would He tolerate His people's condition.*

*It is possible we may mistakenly believe there are no consequences  
To the wrong decisions we make, and unfortunately lower our defenses.*

*Learn from the past, those things are written for our learning and admonition.  
Lest we forget and think God will ignore the wrongness of a given situation,  
Stop in advance to think of what the outcome of an action may be.  
It may be what happened to others, will be a warning to me.*

*Our longsuffering God patiently waits for His Word to work His will.  
But the responsibility to act appropriately lies in the area of my choices still.  
When there is judgment going on around me, and yet God keeps me safe,  
I recognize this as a blessing from Him according to the riches of His grace.*

***"Father, this day has been a restful day after eighteen hours a day for the last week of public speaking and busy activity. I thank Thee for this opportunity to get back in a position of hearing Thy voice in a still small way, rather than through the loud voices of those who have been preaching Thy Word. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 9:27.** *"And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, I have sinned this time: the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked."*

#### **INSINCERE.**

*Words without weight,  
Smiles only on the mouth,  
Eyes that seem too wide open,  
Feet that move shiftily,  
Fingers that move for no reason,  
Lips that seem dry.*

*Sweat – not from work,  
Words that seem softly sweet,  
Tone of voice that is syrupy,  
False humility that uses the right words;  
A change of attitude that seems too quick,  
A head tilted conspiratorially close.*

*A decision made out of character,  
Confession that seems rehearsed,  
Hands with sweaty palms,  
Too many things don't add up –  
Affected sincerity is short-lived,  
I know – and so does God.*

***"O God who looks on the heart, not on the outside as we do: I beseech Thee to keep me from ever passing on anything insincerely – even if it is truth. May Thy Spirit always direct my thoughts and actions in the path of true sincerity. Keep me from any form of deception that would lead people to misunderstand the truth of Thy holy word. May the words of my lips, and the thoughts of my heart always be acceptable to Thee, O my Lord. Amen."***

#### **EXODUS 9:18 - 10**

#### **THE THIRD THREE PLAGUES**

The hardness of the human heart is very difficult to explain. When there is no fear of God before the eyes of men, there is no real standard for them to live by or to make moral judgments by. Self-centered, stubborn people do not learn lessons from the past. They live only for the moment and they think the last disaster and momentous event that happened will be the final one. Arrogantly they deceive themselves into thinking there is nothing worse that can befall them. They have "experienced it all." Pharaoh was told he would be an example to the world to show God's power and man's weakness. Six plagues had past and still Pharaoh's heart was hardened. He did not receive the instruction the plagues had been sent to teach him. He chose to remain in darkness rather than accept the illumination that obeying God will give us. This on-going hardness against a Sovereign God, and refusal to obey Him, is practiced today and is increasing in supposedly "Christian" countries.

The last group of three plagues was no longer given to answer the question, "Who is the Lord that I should obey Him?" Now the plagues turn to punishment, and for the first time in the plague of hail, thunder and lightning running along the ground, human beings died under the judgment of God. Pharaoh and all his people had learned of God's power and impotency of the false gods of the Egyptians. He had experienced enough lessons to make him know the greatness of God but still he resisted God in a feeble attempt to exert his own will. His self-will should have taught him he had no power against God and God's people than a dog does when it howls at the moon to turn off its light. Instead of being known now as a great leader, he is known world-wide as a loser and a warning for those who will not yield to the Sovereign God. When God is obeyed and we work in harmony with the natural powers of life, we find the earth yields its fruitfulness and we are blessed by God who sends "the rain on the just and the unjust." If we are continually resistant to God's grace and will, we will learn that God can control the forces of nature He created to bring fearful judgment as well as great blessings.

Everything unsheltered was broken down under the forces of nature's power unleashed. Hail destroyed every green thing. The fearsomeness of thunder and lightning was everywhere. There was nowhere in Egypt to escape the uncontrollable power of thunder, lightning and hail. For the first time human beings died and any animals left in the open. Following right behind that plague was the most awful insect that can invade a country. The last vestige of green that was on the ground would have been devoured by the locusts and the ground was black with locusts eating everything before them. Nothing of plant life was left alive. Even Pharaoh's servants remonstrated against him saying that nothing of value in Egypt was left. The half-hearted and deceitful confessions Pharaoh made were valueless as he tried to get a compromise and get Moses to respond on his terms.

Often people try to rationalize events and obvious divine interventions from the limited framework of their own experience. Faith in God goes way beyond what we can visualize. We have to acknowledge God's ways are past finding out. Even after the three days of darkness that was so thick it could be felt, Pharaoh tried the tactic of compromise. Total surrender to God means that a person has come to repentance and God can then deal with that person. Pharaoh never did accept that God was God over all. He wanted his own position in Egypt to be supreme and he wanted the free labor of the Jews to be available to him to accomplish his own goals. In anger he put Moses out from his presence forever. Moses last warning of the death of the firstborn was given and there was no more offer of repentance. Judgment was promised

Every person who rejects the Lord and is determined to go his or her own way will someday call and God will not answer. They will bow their knees before Him but not in repentance. All will acknowledge that "Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

*To try to describe the attributes of God is not possible by any man.  
When the stubbornness of man remains unchanged, God has a resulting plan.  
All power in heaven and earth is His to accomplish His perfect will.  
His plan is known only to Him and that He will surely fulfill.*

*I don't need to understand all the bad things going on around.  
All over this world the results of man's sin are everywhere to be found.  
People do things to try and justify their egos and their doubts.  
They are searching in all the wrong places to try and bring peace about.*

*For God to be just, sin must be faced and be legally punished.  
It is inevitable sin can't be avoided, and death is the result when it is finished.  
Warnings are given that people might escape the consequences it brings  
When from rebellious and deceitful hearts of men the wages of sin then springs.*

*God is longsuffering and He is not willing that any men would perish.  
It is a wise choice when people submit and God's will choose to cherish.  
He wants all men everywhere with Him to eventually live.  
And that we all will find the blessings from His fullness that He gives.*

*At first, we have pity on those who hear the Gospel.  
But when truth is rejected and those who hear join with the scornful -  
Not willing to believe the message because to them it is new -*

*Then we learn that the judgment warnings are coming and are really true.*

*Lessons from the past are passed on to us for our lasting good.  
God wants to save people if only from their hearts they would -  
Turn from their sin and earnestly the waiting Savior seek.  
If we are wise, we will take the instruction and not their wrong ways repeat.*

**"Father, I am thankful for those who heeded the warnings they heard in the Gospel here, and turned in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. May opportunities that arise today and every day to speak for Thee be blessed by Thee. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."**

**EXODUS 10:24.** "And Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said: Go ye, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed: let your little ones also go with you."

#### **PARTIAL OBEDIENCE.**

*"Only the men," the world says -  
As it seeks to claim your soul.  
It's not fair for you to impose your will,  
On those who are not so old.  
The children belong where their friends are found,  
They belong with their group of peers.  
Let them stay, while you go on -  
Don't you dare to arouse their fears.*

*"Only the people," the world says -  
All your possessions came from us.  
We made it possible you could have these things,  
It's from the world you've really been blessed.  
Our claim of ownership is based on this -  
All you have came from the world at the start.  
Face the fact, you'd have nothing if it wasn't for this -  
All you have that's your own is your heart.*

*"Leave your possessions," says world, they belong to us,  
But God's people reply with plain words,  
"You'd have nothing; you'd not even breathe,  
If your breath was held back by the Lord."  
The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof,  
Every person owes God all they will have.  
Those who obey Him, and worship in spirit and truth -  
Will not hold back from giving to the Lord they love.*

**"Father of grace: when called to obey Your word and Your will, may I never withhold anything from You. I know often there is a tendency to half-heartedness, and the world places low value on the things of God. Keep me by the Spirit of God from ever letting partial obedience take the place of what You want more than sacrifice. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."**

## **EXODUS 11**

### **WHEN WARNINGS ARE REJECTED**

After nine plagues had nearly decimated Egypt, God had to act in righteous judgment. Unanswered warnings, in time lead to the necessity of divine retribution. The tenth plague of the death of the firstborn of every family member from Pharaoh's household to the first born of all the cattle- was really a judgment. Judgment is God's strange (not often used) work." God is full of grace, full of mercy, full of compassion and is limitless in His love. But none of this negates His righteousness, His holiness and His judgment. The first nine plagues really answered the question Pharaoh had asked the first time Moses and Aaron spoke to him to let the people of God go. By the time those nine plagues had happened Pharaoh knew who the Lord was. His question, "Who is the Lord that I should obey Him?" brought to ruin his whole nation, and yet he would not respond to the request to let God's people go. When this attitude is in the leaders of a nation, it affects the whole nation. When this happens to a society that is persistent in refusing the ultimate authority of God,

in order to stop the breakdown of all moral order, God sends judgment. When a crisis is reached in a smaller group like a church or even a family, and the warnings are rejected, there is no alternative but judgment.

Judgment compresses into a short time what normally what would take months or years of wrong-doing. It happened to Sodom as a result of immoral living. It happened in Babylon because of their treatment of God's people. It happened in Jerusalem as a consequence to trying to mix holy things with ungodly idolatry. It happened to Egypt because of their refusal to acknowledge God in spite of all the supernatural events that came from nature let out of control. It happened at the cross - when God's righteous, holy judgment fell on the Lord Jesus Christ when "He was made sin for us, He who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

One wrote:

On Him almighty vengeance fell  
Enough to sink a world to hell  
He bore it for a sinful race  
And thus, became my hiding place.

We really have no conception of the judgment Christ bore when "The Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Infinite holiness demanded infinite justice. Infinite justice demanded infinite satisfaction. The perfection of the Lamb of God made possible the complete satisfaction of a Righteous God. When the Lord suffered as "a green tree", as an absolutely perfect substitutionary sacrifice for sin, God could accept the declaration of a finished work - "It is finished." If that was done in "the green tree, what should be done in the dry." There will never be satisfaction by God from the "dry tree" of human effort.

*Who would have thought a human heart could ever be so hard.  
That God would not be even thought of nor worshipped and not feared.  
The terrible malaise of unbelief is no longer just far away.  
It seemingly has crossed all barriers and is found everywhere today.*

*In spite of all that dark unbelief there is shining in this place,  
The light of God's presence and saving power shining in some people's face.  
Religious and moral darkness cannot stop the work God intends to do.  
His testimony is evident and more will be seen before the day of grace is through.*

*It is necessary to face the fact that times will get increasingly worse.  
Yet among these who fear God and love His name there is a real thirst  
For His Word and His ways to be lived out in the life of each one who loves His name.  
And the grace of God is not hard to see in those who believe the same.*

*I know many will never believe what we say or accept the truths we teach.  
But warnings have to be given, and solutions too in order for people to reach  
The place where they realize there is a real God in whom they must believe.  
Hopefully, they will repent and turn from their sin and Jesus Christ receive.*

***"Father, I knew this morning my thoughts are somewhat disjointed and hard to be put together in a sensible way. But here in these Himalayan Mountains with these people of Thine, I can see the contrast of light and darkness very clearly. Bless Thy Word here I pray. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 11:7.** *"But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel."*

#### **A DIFFERENCE.**

*The country where they lived, seemed to be one and the same.  
Some were rich and pleasure-seeking people, others had nothing to their name.  
Four hundred years passed, away from God, then Moses came –  
To make sure they knew the difference.*

*The words they used in speech, both sides clearly understood.  
Communicating truth from Moses, it was rejected when they heard.  
Rejecting Moses, they were acting in defiance to the Lord –*

*He who was the One who made the difference.*

*Country, clothes and culture – often there is no difference.  
Some call out to God – others seem to have no conscience –  
Recognizing God is near – He manifests His presence –  
Because there is a difference.*

*People look on the outside and that is all they see.  
Some are years in bondage, and others living free.  
God looks on the inside – you can hide your heart from me –  
But God knows there is a difference.*

*When thoughts of God's redeeming grace bring joy from deep within;  
And a life is set at liberty, and the soul set free from sin –  
And your voice, and mind, and soul can't stop from praising Him –  
Then God knows there is a difference.*

*Friends of mine go one way, and I go on another.  
Some people live life openly, and others under cover.  
But I can tell from words and ways those enjoying life eternal –  
Even I know there is a difference.*

*"Father, I am sure that nothing ever catches You by surprise. My concern is that if I act on my own, most everything would catch me by surprise. So my prayer is that I will always be conscious of Your leading in every unknown that looks good but may not be. Please never let me make decisions based only on externals. Help me to know the difference between right and wrong, true and false, holy and sinful. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 12:1-10**

### **A LAMB... THE LAMB... YOUR LAMB**

There was an uneasy foreboding that settled across the land of Egypt as if all the people were holding their breath in dread of what would happen next. In the land of Goshen, the people of God would have been growing increasingly certain of God over "the gods you served before the flood." As moral and spiritual darkness settles over the world today, those who know the Lord personally and can say with assurance to God, "Abba Father," can see increasing brightness in the "eastern sky" of our faith as we look for the Lord to come. Deliverance is coming as the Lord Jesus Christ promised.

Pharaoh had his mind made up long before the plagues began that he was the supreme ruler. He was the greatest of all in his own eyes. All of the terrible, destructive events that had decimated his country did not soften his heart at all. The attempts at compromise he made were simply stalling tactics that he thought would get him past the present distress. Never did he intend to submit to the God of heaven. He just wanted God to stay out of Egypt and leave his country alone so he could get back to his own way. Even so, God gave him many opportunities to repent and change his mind. God says, "I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked." But judgment does follow the rejection of divine mercy, grace and love.

Then God began to deal with Israel that had been spared from the plagues and had learned by observation that "If God be for us, who can be against us." His instructions to Moses and Aaron were very precise. "A lamb" was to be selected from among all of the other lambs because of its visible perfection. There was no question as to moral perfection because it was to be a sacrifice of a sinless nature and animals are not moral creatures. In that way a lamb is a sinless creature able to be a substitute for a sinful person temporarily. The Lord Jesus Christ was of a sinless perfect nature. His moral standards are written on the hearts of humans who have been made in the image of God. The sinless, Eternal Son of God remarkably "was found in fashion as a man." He who always was, and always will be the Eternal God, became like us in our humanity apart from sin, for He was spotless in His character. In that way He could be a perfect substitute for us.

A lamb that was selected from the flock was from then on, known as "the lamb." For three and a half days the lamb was carefully scrutinized lest some hidden defect, either inward or outward, be found in it making it unsuitable for a sacrificial substitute for the firstborn. The Lord Jesus Christ came into the world and was hidden in relative obscurity for thirty years. When He came out of obscurity at His baptism by John in the Jordan River, He was identified by John as "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." For

three and a half years of careful scrutiny He was watched from every angle. Some said, "Never man spake like this Man." Others said, "We have never seen it on this wise before." Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Pilate said, "I find no fault in this just Man." The centurion and those with him said, "Truly this Man is the Son of God." The inward and outward perfections of Christ assure us that He and He alone is "The Lamb of God" who can satisfy the righteous demands of a Holy God.

As the firstborn learned, "a lamb" became "the lamb" that would die as the substitute for the firstborn. He would recognize that special little animal was going to die in his place even though it had done no wrong. Only because it was perfect would it die as an acceptable sacrifice. The Lord Jesus Christ was "A Lamb" and "The Lamb." Of that there is no question. Now we are able to go to the final and most important step. "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore, let us keep the feast." Every aspect of perfection God demanded is seen in the perfections of the Lord Jesus Christ - the Lamb that God provided.

God in His grace has made it possible that we can live forever because "A Lamb" that became "The Lamb" is now "Your Lamb." God is satisfied to accept me on the basis of the perfect substitute for me - the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Out in the field who would have known which the chosen one would be,  
But one special lamb was carefully observed and subjected to scrutiny.  
The head and the feet, the eyes and the ears, the fleece and even the nose -  
Would be checked over with very concerned eyes to see which lamb would be chose.*

*Watched carefully and kept safely lest some hidden fault be seen,  
The Lamb became the center of attention, nothing else could come between.  
Life and death were in the balance, perfection was what was needed.  
The firstborn knew he would die if God's instructions were not heeded.*

*Under the condemnation of our nature upon which sin was passed,  
We needed a lamb to take our place lest we lose our soul at last.  
God provided a Lamb of His choice who satisfied His righteous claim.  
There is no other who is suitable, the Lord Jesus Christ is His name.*

*It isn't enough to know we need "a lamb," we need Him personally.  
God's Lamb has been provided as "The Lamb" who on the cross died for me.  
So now I have not just any lamb, but the One who took my place.  
The "Lord Jesus" is "my Lamb" who has saved me by His grace.*

*There is no need now for me to fear though I know judgment is coming soon.  
Not only for me did the Lord Jesus die, I can tell others "Yet there is room"  
For them to come into the kingdom of God by taking Christ as their personal Lamb.  
Then they too will be ready when called to make the journey into the "promised land."*

*There are many today who tell to others there are many ways to come to God.  
It is my responsibility to make sure they believe according to His Holy Word.  
Everyone needs a Lamb and the Lamb needed is the Lord Jesus Christ alone.  
A person knows Jesus as their personal Lamb, I am safe all the way to my heavenly home.*

**"Father, with gratitude I thank Thee today for the Lord Jesus taking my place as my Substitute. I thank Thee that He is my Lamb. Help me today to plainly proclaim the Gospel so others will be saved. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."**

**EXODUS 12:13.** "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."

#### **THE BLOOD.**

*The life-giving flow designed by God -  
Moving through the body carrying nourishment -  
Life sustaining oxygen needed in every part.  
Miles of movement; quiet rushing to parts*

*Small and large, asking silently –  
For needs unable to be met in another way.  
Colors sending signals – red, white and blue –  
Each one giving a message known to skilled eyes.  
Unseen protectors are there in every place –  
Waiting for invaders to make an unwelcome presence known.  
A wonder we must have- or die.  
Yet something is wrong – passed on from Adam.  
Death is in the blood of mankind – and fatal.  
We cannot do anything about it.*

*Innocent blood – sinless- no heritage of sin.  
Life is obvious and the blood flows freely –  
Through a body sinless, without blemish.  
No repair work done over long periods of time.  
No sign of past injuries or disease to negate value.  
Everything working as it should – the life-flow is perfect.  
Watching eyes and probing fingers search the body –  
No imperfections to be seen, but careful watching goes on.  
Three and a half days pass with anxious watching –  
As the evening sun lowers in the west.  
Sighs of relief – the innocent one is perfect –  
The blood is untainted – the sacrifice is accepted.  
The substitution is satisfactory – but atonement is temporary.  
Is something wrong – is the life-blood sinful?  
No – it is truly sinless – but different – it's not the same kind.*

*Unique in birth – human, yet innocently conceived of the Spirit.  
A virgin mother chosen by the God of David's promise –  
A carpenter-protector of kingly vintage and David's town.  
In favor with God and man as years pass innocently -  
Questions and answers scrutinized but rightly judged.  
Words graciously spoken – truth presented clearly – personally –  
Evidence mounts as three and a half years pass openly.  
Traps set and sprung fail to succeed in finding fault.  
Taken in the place of prayer where Father hears and watches –  
The Lamb of God is led to the slaughter by sinful men.  
Loud cries from dark within many hearts and tainted blood –  
Innocent blood flows – sinless and personal for me.  
The Lamb is slain – and God is satisfied it is pure.  
I am cleansed, accepted, freed – because His blood is that of a sinless Man.*

*“O Holy God my Father: I am thankful to Thee for revealing to me many years ago, the value of the blood of the Lamb of God. The True Passover Lamb is one of our own kind who was found perfect in every way. I know that He was a willing sacrifice and did satisfy every requirement of Thy righteous demands. I know He was the only One who could take my place in death. How grateful I am that His blood was shed for me. I worship and praise in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”*

## **EXODUS 12:11-32**

### **REDEMPTION BY BLOOD**

The first nine plagues in Egypt were miraculous events given as signs to awaken Pharaoh and all of Egypt to the fact that there is One God who rules over the affairs of men. All of Egypt was guilty because by men, do kings rule. Not only the nation ruled by the kings, but kings rule by the willingness of the people to be ruled. The final plague of the death of the firstborn was a judgment. A miracle compresses the normal processes of nature into a moment. In a similar way, judgments compress into a short time the results of wrong-doing. "Be sure your sin will find you out," is a principle we cannot avoid. The judgment of Egypt compressed into one night the severe results of sin. When the Lord Jesus Christ was on the Cross at Calvary, the judgment of sin was laid on Him. "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." The

compressed judgment of a world of lost sinners was placed on the perfect innocent Lamb of God who provided our redemption with His death and shedding of blood. God hid the suffering Savior in darkness that did not allow us to see the actual terribleness of sin. Egypt was judged by the death of the firstborn. Israel was judged by the death of the paschal lamb. The world has been judged in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross when "Christ died for the ungodly." "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

When the Passover lamb was slain in the evening, the blood was caught in a basin and applied to both sides and the top lintel of the door with hyssop as God instructed. The families of obedient Israelites, in faith, stood with shoes on their feet and ate the roast lamb and unleavened bread in readiness for leaving Egypt as God said. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you," was the word from God they trusted. The actions they took indicated the faith in God they had. Quiet families eating in the night of oppressive silence would have enhanced the foreboding sense of fear as the Egyptians wondered what was going to happen next. Some of them must have copied the Israelites and chose to join them in the exodus from the land.

Silently midnight came, and silently thousands of the firstborn of man and beast died instantly all over Egypt in that night of death. Pharaoh, his servants, the animals they worship as gods - it didn't make any difference - the firstborn died. There was no way to stop the judgment God had repeatedly warned them of. And then came the wailing all over the nation! There was no way to consol those who had lost their firstborn. The promises of God, good and bad, always come to pass no matter what people might think. There is no way mere mortal men can thwart the divine decrees of God. "Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission."

Safely behind closed doors with the evidence of obedience and faith in God, the people of God ate the roast lamb, bitter herbs and unleavened bread. The lamb had been slain, the blood had been shed, the blood had been applied outside to the doorframe, and inside they all waited for the call to leave. Deliverance was promised and they believed it would come. "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore, let us keep the feast." At the Lord's Supper we remember the fitness of the sacrifice, the perfections of our Lord Jesus Christ when we remember Him. We also make a public proclamation of His death so those who observe the feast and those who participate in the feast of remembrance realize the death of Christ has taken place. Judgment has fallen on Christ on our behalf.

With the blessing of redemption and the joy it gives, we appreciate the fact that the Righteous God is satisfied with what Christ has done. Like the Israelites who were "bought back" from captivity by the sacrifice of the lamb, so our redemption has been made by the sacrifice of Christ. His perfect life was substituted for our sinful lives taking the penalty of our sins away and restoring us to God. We trust Him and accept His gift of eternal life Christ paid for with His life. We begin a new relationship with God as His redeemed people. This cuts us off from the world and sets us apart to God. The world is crucified to us and we are crucified to the world. "Old things have passed away. Behold all things are become new." Now the life we live, we live unto the "Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me."

*To some the shedding of innocent blood seems completely unfair.  
What is really so serious about sin is the life of that one can't be spared.  
The terribleness of sin and of death is not by most people readily grasped.  
The velvet bands of sin seem so easy, sinners don't know they are held fast  
Until they seek to ease their conscience by breaking them with their own power.  
They realize then the binding power of sin they have absolutely no power over.  
For many then it is too late and they perish without accepting payment for sin.  
God had made provision for salvation when Christ came to die for them.*

*A life given for another is acceptable by God for His gracious forgiveness.  
When we have accepted the Lord Jesus, He gives us His spiritual richness.  
Like the lamb that died for the firstborn, God's Lamb was sacrificed in our place.  
We live now in Christ forever; we are made children of God by His grace.  
Unlike the Passover lamb, our Lamb is the same in His humanity as we are.  
He laid down His life in grace, and rose again by His own mighty power.  
Now we are freed from that bondage by grace, raised to live in Christ by faith.  
This new life we live had its beginnings when our Lamb took the sinner's place.*

*Israel was told to remember the night when the blood to the door was applied*

*Believers are told to remember our Lamb and show how the Savior died.  
They were to gather once a year as a nation so deliverance they would never forget  
We gather to remember our Savior each week, if we miss, we have much to regret.  
Because this is our Lord's command, "Do this until I come."  
When the True Lamb of God took our place, the Passover type was done.  
Our freedom is not just from the world, we are free to walk with Christ in the light.  
As we journey from here to heaven, our future shines evermore bright.*

*"Father, the blessings of our joy of deliverance takes me further to the joy of anticipation. Sitting with these loving believers on the floor and listening earnestly to Thy Word was a little view to me of the joy the Lord must get from His own children. May Thy Spirit empower me to bring some joy to my Savior I pray, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 12:33-51**

### **THAT NIGHT OF THE LORD**

All of the plagues God had sent upon the Egyptians had been met by opposition of one kind or another from Pharaoh. The first demand for freedom to worship God in God's own way, was met with an insult and contempt. "Who is the Lord, that I should obey Him?" When a nation through its leaders begins to treat the rights of its people with disdain, then ultimately God will step in to deal with the nation Himself. The same is true in assembly life. An assembly that doesn't deal with sin but ignores immorality like in Corinth, God deals with that assembly Himself. "For this cause, many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." Offers of compromise that followed the request for freedom to go and worship God, showed the hardness of the heart of Pharaoh who considered himself a god. For the Lord's people to worship the Lord God as the One True God in the country, would have led to worse persecution and maybe even a war between the idolatrous Egyptians and the Hebrews. To go a short distance away would have been no different. To leave families behind shows the lack of value Pharaoh had on children as far as worshipping God is concerned. The thoughts and praise of God little children make, is of high value to God. "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." It is important that we include our children in the gatherings of God's people so they learn who the Lord is and why He is to be obeyed. The compromise of three days journey was so the Lord's people would still be close enough to have the influence of the Egyptian world nearby.

"That night" saw Pharaoh concede to the demands of the Lord. Conciliation between what is of God and what is of the world is impossible. Those two are diametrically opposed. There can be no surrender of that which is of God to that which is of the "god of this world." The attempts at compromise might be couched in smooth words, but does not change the character of worldliness.

"That night" the hardness of Pharaoh's heart reached its peak. The same rain that brings forth the fruit of the ground to bless people, brings thorns and thistles to curse the people. The meekness and quietness of a believing wife who submits to her unbelieving husband, may bring antagonism upon her because her godliness convicts him of guilt. "That same sun that melts the ice, hardens the clay." God's "good and perfect gifts" when rejected by hard-hearted people results in far greater condemnation than if they had not been offered freely by His grace.

"That night" the people of Israel went out full of wealth from the Egyptians who offered the jewels of gold, silver and raiment. This was payment received for years of labor for which they had given as slaves. That night good came out of evil. The Egyptians had learned through the plagues that the captive Hebrews were blessed by God and were glad to see them go, and were anxious to hasten them away because of fear of them. We may never fully understand the impact of holy and consecrated people on the world around us. But God does know the value of the testimony of His own people. The Holy Spirit of God may bring conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgment to come through God's people. We may never get the opportunity of verbal testimony to those who avoid us because of our faith in Christ, so the Lord can use the visible testimony of holiness of life and character to leave people without excuse.

"That night" the Lord brought out of Egypt His own people after four hundred and thirty years. He kept His promise to Abraham, He brought them out Himself so no one could say they were delivered by a man. More than that, they went out in strength. There "was not one feeble person" among all of those two million or so people [Ps.105:35]. God got all the glory for that great deliverance. "That night of the Lord to be observed" is still a great testimony to the power of God and the promises of God.

*"That night" was a special time when the mighty arm of the Lord was revealed.*

*There came into the view of the nation what before was in a way concealed.  
They had learned that God exists and He has greater power than to men known.  
But that night the keys of life and death God holds was plainly to those people shown.*

*We are wise to remember again the One we worship and serve is Almighty.  
His judgments are righteous and fair, in Him is nothing that is flighty.  
He has just reasons to do what needs to be done to carry out His perfect will.  
When His arm is made bare in judgment or blessing, it is His perfect will to fulfill.*

*Anyone who carelessly considers their will in life to be supreme,  
Should stop and review from scriptures what God has allowed to be seen.  
His plans are not just for tomorrow, eternal ages are already known to Him.  
There is none who know fully His mind, not even the wisest of men.*

*So, we take stock as to what has already happened, and learn lessons from the past.  
Then we are able to discern some things that happen in this day in which our lot is cast.  
We know that nothing happens by chance, so in God we fully place our trust.  
Then we are confident in spite of troubles, God is doing the things He must.*

*I may not know just why some are called home when they are young.  
Or why the weak remain in that condition, when God takes away those who are strong.  
But I know in whom I have believed, and in Him I have placed my faith.  
And I know that His blessings to men come because of the riches of His grace.*

*At the moment it may not seem like a blessing, because I cannot see the end.  
God does not owe me an explanation as to why difficult things He sends.  
He just expects my allegiance and my loyalty to Him to be real.  
Maybe in time to come I will know what at present He chose to conceal.*

*"That night" brought to light what for four hundred plus years had been hid.  
In less than one day came to pass an understanding of all that He did.  
Looking back over the history of a nation we see unfolded a national identity.  
Revealed to our limited gaze is what God eternally did see.*

**"Father in heaven, after all those years of waiting for the promise of deliverance to come, how quickly was that promise fulfilled. I wait for the Lord's coming as He promised and I know it will be done in a moment of time when He comes. I wait in patience and anticipation in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."**

**EXODUS 13:9.** "And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the Lord's law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the Lord brought thee out of Egypt."

#### **A MEMORIAL.**

*It is easy to remember when you personally are there,  
Events that shaped and gave direction to your life.  
As generations pass the effects are not so clear,  
To the people who weren't there that fateful night.*

*To keep before His people the mighty hand of God,  
He has chosen visible signs they all can see.  
Unleavened bread and herbs – according to God's word –  
Seven days a year a feast to keep.*

*Memorial stones are piled on the Jordan River's bank –  
Each stone there a memorial to a family God has blest.  
Into the land of promise claiming land each step they take,  
The memorial a reminder of promised rest.*

*Memorials are important to me each first day of the week,*

*Bread and wine to remind me of Jesus' death.  
We remember there our Savior – worshipers the Father seeks,  
And we show by these memorials "Amazing Grace."*

*Memorials are important as together we review –  
The ways of God in dealing with His own.  
May we never count unworthy the events memorials show,  
Each one displaying in some way God's own Son.*

*"Heavenly Father who knows the limitations of the minds of Thy earthly children: I thank Thee for giving to us ways to remember events that are important to Thee and to us. Some of these are impressive because of their simplicity – particularly the breaking of bread on the first day of the week, The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our assembly and lately, the Arlington assembly were certainly valuable to the young people who hardly know anything of the past of their assembly. I give thanks in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 13:1-16**

### **CONSECRATE THE FIRSTBORN**

Among the two million or so Israelites who moved out of Egypt in an orderly fashion were thousands of the firstborn who would have died if the lambs had not died and their blood applied to the door posts and lintel in the way God instructed. Those who were firstborn now belonged to God, both man and beast. This miraculous beginning of modern history written in chronological order started with a charge from God to not forget what He had done. During the night of the first month of the year, the month Abib, God's redeemed people moved out directed by the promises of God. This was truly a day to be remembered. The sacrifice of lambs was the key to the firstborn being able to join with the nation in the exodus from Egypt. "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore, let us keep the feast." We are able to enjoy the freedom and privileges of the redeemed people of God because of the sacrifice of the "Lamb of God." Such a call to remembrance of Him is not something to be taken lightly or twisted in any way to make it suit our own plans. The Passover feast was to be kept as God intended, when God intended. The same is true of the Lord's Supper.

The oldest in the family was God's by redemptive right. They had been redeemed to serve. If it was the firstborn of an ass (donkey), in order for it to live for special service, a lamb had to die for it, otherwise its neck would be broken. When any child in the future would ask the meaning of this, he or she would be told that it was to commemorate the death of the firstborn in Egypt, and how the firstborn of Israel would live because of the death of the lamb. Those who were the firstborn were to do priestly service for the children of Israel. At Sinai the tribe of Levi was substituted for the firstborn of every family. Money payment of five shekels was paid down for them in the generations that followed [Num.18:15-16] while they were still infants.

Perhaps every firstborn son from the time he could understand the meaning of the Passover, on through the rest of his life, would be caused to think each first day of the first month - "I live because a redemptive price was paid for me." We remember weekly in the remembrance the One who was "the Firstborn among many brethren," and the "Firstborn from the dead." Because He paid the price of redemption by giving His life which He lived perfectly, we live who were condemned to die because of our sin.

The impact of that Passover sacrifice was to guide and guard everything the children of Israel did, and it was to be a constant reminder of who they were. It was to be a motivation for holy and righteous living in every home in the nation. It would remind them of how God saved their firstborn and freed them from slavery. It showed them the value God places on human life compared to the evil gods of the pagan worshipers who believed their gods demanded human sacrifices. It pointed forward to the day when the Lord Jesus Christ would pay the redemption price for sin once for all by His death on the cross of Calvary. It was one way, people who were searching for peace in their soul and forgiveness of sin, could understand the truth of being born again.

*I really don't know just how the firstborn thinks  
When they first realize their place in the family.  
It seems like they feel certain obligations that position brings  
That those born later don't feel or see.  
Maybe God made them that way after that Passover night  
So that they will take life's challenges more seriously.  
I know there is a sense that if they do things right*

*Those following might their proper example see.*

*It certainly was important to God when He  
Chose the firstborn to be committed to Him.  
He wasn't satisfied that there be just some fee  
And then the first born would be free to sin.  
He intended the firstborn to Him to be true  
With a life for God to be dedicated.  
It was not a casual thing priestly work to do  
To that work he was to be consecrated.*

*But now it goes farther than just one out of many,  
God wants us to be a kingdom of priests.  
Each believer redeemed by blood dedicated to Him completely  
To do more than just keep annual feasts.  
He wants us to present our bodies to Him  
As evidence of devoted priestly service.  
This is not done by us just as a personal whim  
But as those who pray that God can use us.*

*Christ our Passover did not die only for the firstborn -  
His sacrifice was made for us all.  
The new life He gives is not something we earn,  
It is freely given when we on Him call.  
This I can understand by experiencing it first hand,  
I have eternal life because Jesus has died.  
Now my personal desire is to serve as best I can  
The One in Whose life now and forever I abide.*

***"Father and God of all grace: my feeble attempts at grasping the value of the sacrifice of Christ, fall far short of the reality of it. But to the extent I can understand the worth of my Savior and with a desire that more might bring me to Him in gratitude. I bow to thank Thee and give honor to the One who brought me into Thy family. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

## **EXODUS 13:16-22**

### **THE WAY OF THE WILDERNESS**

God doesn't always work in ways that seem best to us. The shortest path is not always the best way to the destination of His choosing. God sees the end from the beginning and guides us according to His will, His wisdom and His way. He has given us the assurance we will arrive at the "promised land." The Bible assures us that He will lead us Himself today the same way as He led His people through the wilderness. The Cloud and Fire were to Israel what the Word of God and the Spirit of God are to us.

The wilderness was the land between the mountains and the desert along a valley where there would be pasture for flocks and herds. This is the way God led His people. Lessons had to be learned in the wilderness. God had to deal personally with His people. There was the law to be given. There was a tabernacle to make where God would dwell with His people. Through that same tabernacle He would teach truths about our Lord Jesus Christ by types that have instructed God's people all down through the past generations to this very day.

In years ahead the Lord would defeat the Philistines in His own way and time. At the time of the exodus He did not take them through Philistine country because they were not ready for the battles they would have to go through. Some of the barriers we are confronted with in life may be our greatest blessings. In those obstacles, courage and commitment are needed as God goes before us to make the crooked ways straight and smooth out those places that are rough if He so chooses. The ultimate objective of God's people is to glorify God. In all those things that happen to us, God is training us for the future that lies ahead of us. Without the testing times, character, allegiance, loyalty, honor, integrity and other characteristics of God's people would never be developed to be a testimony to the world the way God intended. All the people of faith we read of in the scriptures, and who we know of down through generations past, stand out because of what they have learned by "way of the wilderness."

There have been those who have stood out history who heard the Lord say, "Follow Me," and were willing to respond to that call with their heart, mind and soul. Today that call still reaches to those who are willing to obey it. Some obstacles we create ourselves when we act in the flesh. A harvest doesn't come until the winter and spring are past. The sowing is done in tears. Joy comes in the reaping time. Our education in the school of God may seem like barriers to our forward movement at the time it happens. But barriers do not mean the way to fulfilling the will of God is permanently closed.

In the case of Israel leaving Egypt for the Promised land, God chose to take them the long way around. The Lord Himself was taken into the wilderness to show the reality of His person. In the wilderness the children of Israel had to learn who they were. They had been four hundred and thirty years, strangers in a foreign country. It was necessary for them to remember the forbearers God had given promises to. Once they realized who they were to God and why He was leading them the way He did, then they would begin to hold themselves in respect and reverence for the Lord's sake. This called for self-control on their part. No matter what others may do around us, we need to remember who we are and conduct ourselves in the feat of God without compromising truth, righteousness and respect. Over-coming temptation, failure and fear calls for self-control.

The One who guided Israel by the cloud and fire, is the same Lord who guides His people today by the Spirit and the Word. The cloud was proof of the presence of God. To us it reminds us that our Lord Jesus Christ was veiled in human flesh and "dwelt among us." The fire is an obvious evidence of His deity that cannot be ignored. Those two emblems remind us of His promise, "Lo I am with you alway." The cloud and fire testify that our Lord is our Sun and Shield. He truly is with us. He is our Guide and our Defender. May our commitment be to follow Him wherever He leads us.

**EXODUS 13:18.** *"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."*

#### **GOD LED THE PEOPLE.**

*God led the way - no better guide could show His own the way  
From the darkness of the Egyptian night, to the promise of new day.  
The evil in the world where I live today is like it was back then,  
Those men who lead try to bring God down – promoting "up with men."*

*God calls His own out from the world to follow where He leads –  
To trust Him alone to show the way; trust Him to meet their needs.  
All they need to know God's there, is to follow in His light.  
He was there in the comforting cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night.*

*From way back then to here today, God still leads us along  
The road He alone can see leads to His heavenly home.  
If we look back there are pleasures there that end in awful death;  
But following light that God provides, confirms we're truly blessed.*

*As God leads us through life each day, some places seem too hard.  
Admittedly we couldn't make it through without the Lord.  
When these times pass and light still shines, we then can understand –  
God knew some change was needed, before reaching the promised land.*

*We may not realize just now why God leads us where He does.  
What seems to us unnecessary, will someday display God's love  
To us when we were tempted to take our self-centered way.  
God knew all along when He was leading us, we would understand some day.*

*"Gracious Father, who guided us for so many years and in so many ways to this place we are now, I gratefully thank Thee for giving us Thy word to show us Thy mind, and sending the Holy Spirit to guide into Thy truth. For us to travel this way of life with Thy leadership and knowledge assures us of safety even though some parts of the journey may be difficult. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

**EXODUS 13:21, 22.** *“And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them in the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night; He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.”*

### **LEADERS.**

#### **MOSES**

His parents saw he was a proper child to raise:

His mother was allowed to nurse her son in spite of Pharaoh. He would have learned who he was and to whom he really belonged when he was a small child.

A distant shepherd to learn:

God had arranged that one of the few true believers outside of Israel would be the one to teach him the fundamental necessities of leading. There is no better place to learn to lead than to lead sheep day after day in every kind of weather and in every place.

A chosen messenger to speak for God:

God does not always choose the one who wants to be chosen. He had gotten used to the quiet desert and his simple life with the sheep. God can use a person who is willing to labor, and make that person into one who He can give responsibility to. Moses had been a laborer; now God was going to make him a leader.

A spokesman for the people:

It is not easy to go before kings and those in authority, especially if they are evil despots. A man who had been trained in the ways of Egypt, knew how to go about the work God had given him. God can use what we have if we are willing to do what He says.

A leader of the people:

There are times when leadership seems to be a burden that one would like to walk away from. People have their own expectations and if it doesn't work out that way, they are quick to complain. There is a time to talk to the people, and there is a time to talk to God on their behalf.

#### **THE ANGEL OF THE LORD**

A Strong Deliverer:

The deliverance from Egypt by the blood of the Passover, would never be forgotten. The children were to be reminded by this service that it was God who had stepped in, not only to deliver them from slavery and from Egypt's domination of their national and spiritual lives (they had served the gods of Egypt), but He was delivering them to the land of promise. He was going to be with them all the way there. He does not abandon those who walk with Him.

A Wise Guide:

He went before them in the pillar of cloud by day and the fire by night. Neither the cloud nor the fire was taken away. If they needed shelter from the heat, the cloud was there. If they needed light to travel by night the fire was there lighting up the way. As the Guide led them, they went harnessed, by five in a rank. Even though they didn't realize it perhaps at the time, they moved together in rows as directed by the Guide. We can sense the presence of God when things come together in an orderly way.

A Comforting Presence:

He was in the cloud and fire. They couldn't see God but they could see evidence of God with them. They knew when to move and when to stop because of an awareness of His presence with them. Whether He was before them to lead and guide or behind them to protect, they were conscious of the presence of God. We too can practice the presence of God.

A Constant Security:

A child might wake in the middle of the night in fear, but the light of the fire would calm the child and he would go to sleep again with the light of the fire still on. An enemy might seek to enter the camp, but there was no way to hide from the light. The temperature would rise as the day progressed and normally people, would lie down to rest. But in such a vulnerable condition they would be an easy prey except for the cloud that would keep them from the complacency of too much heat. When protection was needed, the Shielding Presence moved to the rear of the column and the Protection was in place.

A Great Savior:

The Lord saved His people from the Egyptians at the Red Sea. The people of God knew they had been miraculously saved by the hand of the Lord. Each one of them was able to personalize the experience

for themselves. There was no question in any person's mind that God had intervened as Savior. In every way and in every situation, the Savior can be relied on.

*"O powerful and present God, the Lord of every situation. It is a wonder to me that Thou art willing to take a frail mortal man, and make him into a servant of Thine and give him a role to fill that normally he could never fill. Thanks for giving us the full picture; God is there unseen to fulfill the Divine roles behind the scene and make it all happen. The role of Moses was to be seen as the one through God gave a visible human form. What grace and condescension! To God be all the glory! Amen."*

## **EXODUS 14:1-18**

### **SALVATION OF GOD**

God does not always do what we think is best from our point of view. For the children of Israel to be led into a *cull de sac* from which they could see no escape, brought about despair, fear and whining complaints. The people of God had yet to learn "without faith it is impossible to please God." The world system in its arrogant dismissal of God, thinks that defeat of God's people is within its power and will not cease attempting to claim a victory over any child of God.

The six hundred chariots with two men in each one, along with all of Pharaoh's army were no match for God. When those times come, and the world seems to be closing in on us, instead of complaining, we need to remember God is for us and His past faithfulness to us assures us the world and its sin has no dominion over us. When we put our faith in God alone, our confidence in Him reminds us His salvation that He gave us, is assured. "Salvation is of the Lord." He saves us by His own design and power. Lack of faith in Him causes us grief. Full trust in Him brings deliverance.

From God came the words, "Fear ye not," when Israel wanted to go back to the world of slavery and domination by the ungodly. The flesh is an enemy that is always with us. The world is not. It cannot claim our allegiance unless we yield to the fears the flesh deceives us with. When God said, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord," He was charging the children of Israel to listen to His word and put their faith in Him alone. Salvation had been promised to them on God's terms and in His way, not in their preconceived notions to what was going to happen. We have to learn those same lessons ourselves lest we try to take things into our own hands. "Fear not," "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord," precedes the charge to "Go forward."

There is a time to wait, there is a time to pray, and there is a time to go forward and act in faith. To pray for more guidance after we have received guidance already is only an excuse to avoid the obedience of faith. To remain in comfortable circumstances, or to stall in fear is to doubt God's guidance.

Pharaoh probably felt there was nothing more God was going to do. He may even have thought God had nothing more He could do. The conceit and deceit of the world knows no limits unless God steps in to stop the vain imaginations and will of its evil intent. The world will pursue the people of God, determined to bring down those who follow the Lord. When we are called to follow Him, He will guard us behind and will go before us.

Salvation is a work of God. The cloud moved between the Egyptians and Israelites, giving darkness to the Egyptians while fire gave light to the children of Israel. Then there came the strong east wind. The waters moved back and the wet ground became dry so the children of Israel could easily cross the Red Sea. According to Psalm 77:17-18 there was also a storm that overcame the Egyptians when they were seeking to cross behind Israel. Then the tide returned and the water swept over the Egyptians, drowning them all. The salvation of Israel crossing the Red Sea following the exodus from Egypt, is a type of the salvation of the Lord we have experienced by God's grace through faith.

*No place to turn to, no place to hide.  
The mountains are too high, the water is too wide.  
To turn back now, enemies are there from which I flee.  
How can God let this happen to me?*

*"Fear not?!" That is easier said than done!  
"Stand still?!" That is easy, I've no place to run!  
"See the salvation of the Lord?!" I'm in an impossible situation!  
Where can I go to find this salvation?*

*"God is in control?!" That is easy for you to say!  
What is happening to me now may happen to you some day!  
The end is here, there is no more time!  
There is no salvation! No escape can I find!*

*Get up off my knees?! "Go forward?!" But where?  
That water is deep, and an east wind blows strong there!  
The storm is raging around me, where can I go?  
Just step out in faith and I surely will know?!*

*Whatever has happened!! The water is gone!  
The sea bed is dry that all that water was on!  
God has made a way of escape; He alone is my salvation!!  
And here I was struggling in self-pity and fleshly agitation!*

*O Lord, forgive me for taking my eyes off of Thee!  
Have mercy, and please hear my cry and my anxious plea!  
I know faith has eyes that are not normal to men.  
Help Thy servant to open faith's eyes and always use them.*

***"Father, I know I have been lax in my devotion. I really have no excuse. Thanks so much for feeding my soul even when I wasn't digesting spiritual food very well. Thanks for Thy Word hid in my heart that has helped me through this time change and physical weakness. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 14:13.** *"And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord which He will show to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye see today, ye shall see them again no more forever."*

#### **STAND STILL.**

*Danger around on every side, threatens to overwhelm the just –  
Unable to save themselves from loss, all that is left is trust.  
"Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." [Ex.14:13]*

*When questions arise too hard to be answered by mans' opinion alone –  
Call a halt, stop what you are doing – ask God what He wants done –  
"Stand still and I will hear what the Lord will command." [Num.9:8]*

*Going into areas unknown to us, but planned and directed by God –  
Go forward in faith, the Lord knows what has to be done –  
"Ye shall stand still in Jordan." [Jos.3:8]*

*Controversy comes, trying to divide with opinions of our own –  
Righteous acts of the Lord make sense of all He has done –  
"Stand still, that I may reason with you. . . of all the righteous acts of the Lord." [1Sam.12:7]*

*If we act too fast, we may have lots of time to regret a decision –  
Take time to think and consider the goal – nearer to your vision –  
"We will stand still in our place." [1Sam.14:9]*

*It may seem to be everything is gone, when the grief is rising high –  
Lift your eyes higher still and you'll know your Lord is nigh –  
"Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God." [Job 37:14]*

*God knows what He is doing, never doubt His faithful word –  
He reveals through it all He wants from you who call Him Lord.  
"Stand still a while, that I may show thee the word of God." [1Sam.9:27]*

*"O God, I praise Thee for not letting me rush about without calling me to halt from time to time. I know what can happen when I would act on my own. Help to stand still and listen - and wait, for Thy word and command in every situation. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 14:19-31**

### **SAW... FEARED... BELIEVED**

Salvation is a work of God. The lamb slain in Egypt and the blood applied was from a sinless, innocent life given as a substitute for the needy firstborn who would die without that sacrifice. It represents the love, the heart, the inner being of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ who gave His life for us, shed His blood for us, and provides safety for us when the blood is personally applied to the door of our hearts. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." The children of Israel saw on the salvation side of the Red Sea, the bodies of Egyptians. God's salvation is based on Sacrifice, and God's Salvation finishes the power of the god of this world over us. We are empowered to "resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh unto you."

Remarkably, habits and sins that characterized the people of God when they "were on the other side of the flood," now do not have dominion over us. "Thanks, be unto God who giveth us the victory." Deliverance has taken place. We are able to "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." Now we can see "the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore." Sin no longer is part of our new nature. It is an intruder who we are to throw out of our new life in Christ. We have been "made free from the law of sin and death."

When "Christ was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him," there came an awesome fear of the holiness of God who was willing to "lay upon Him the iniquity of us all." This was not a casual overlooking of sin and guilt. This was the whole power of the wrath of God against sin that was placed on the sinless Substitute. When God "spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all," we became participants in the death of the cross. We were crucified with Him, buried with Him and raised with Him and now are on the resurrection side of the cross. Sin, the world (Egypt) now is not in control. We live in Christ. No wonder we "fear the Lord."

Those Israelis "saw... feared... and then believed" the Lord. This first real step of faith changed everything. The toils of Egyptian bondage were past. The world has yielded its power to the power of God. We are now alive unto God in reality. Now as we move through these years of service for the Lord there are added to us those things that pertain to life and godliness. Those who believe the Lord, increase in faith, in love, in purity and patience. Those things which characterize the new nature and consequently the new life of the believer in the Lord, continue to enrich us.

Those who see, fear and believe, remember "the hole of the pit from whence we were digged, and the rock from which we have been hewn." We remember we "were bondman" in slavery to sin and its claims. Now we are free in Christ. There is gratitude, humility and a sensitivity to those who are set at liberty. It is part of the new life we have, to want to see those who are still captives set free as well. We reach out to them so they may "see, fear and believe." There are times when those who have been made free "become entangled again with the yoke of bondage." It is our responsibility to them to restore them, bear their burden, and seek to bring them again to where they can enjoy the freedom we have in Christ. It helps us to do this when we review again the salvation of the Lord at the weekly remembrance of the Lord's Supper. Also, when we sing our songs of deliverance and faith, the unity of the people of God strengthens us. In our devotional life of communion with God through reading the scriptures and prayer, we are caused again to "see... fear... and believe the Lord."

*I may never stand on the shore of that sea,  
It may never be a privilege afforded to me  
To go to the place where Christ died for my sin,  
That I might be free from sin's bondage through Him,  
But I have experienced the deliverance that is real,  
And to a degree I know how those people did feel  
When they watched water cover their enemies at last,  
And knew finally their days of hard bondage were past.*

*I have seen the great work which God did by His grace,  
When the Lord Jesus on the cross willingly took my place.  
I know a great victory He won over hell, death and sin.*

*From the moment I put faith in Him a new life did begin.  
Old things did pass away and all things became new.  
They were not annihilated but their dominion was through.  
Now I had power over them, not they had power over me.  
That was because of the work of Christ that gave me victory.*

*Yes, there is a fear of the Lord, but it is reverential fear.  
I am glad to come when He bids me to draw near.  
Faith has full assurance, on Him I truly believe,  
And know from the bounty of His fullness I daily receive.  
When I need grace, that needed grace is there.  
If my weakness seems too great, His strength the burdens bear.  
Perhaps faith seems feeble; He gives more faith through His Word.  
And again, I am renewed when I see, fear and believe the Lord.*

*On the freedom side of the flood is where I belong.  
When I am weak, by His power he makes me strong.  
If times come when the world's attraction seems to appeal -  
I go back to the Source of life, and faith reveals  
The end of that system that opposes what is right,  
And the cloud is there to comfort, and the fire gives its light.  
On salvation's side of the flood is where I am safe.  
Here is where I experience the abundance of God's grace.*

*"Father, this new day I look over the turmoil of the world under the waves of uncertainty, deceit and powerlessness to bring peace. Where I am on this shore I can live daily in peace and safety even though I can see evidence of the storm all around - and I give Thee thanks and praise, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 15:1-21**

### **MY STRENGTH... MY SONG... MY SALVATION**

The song of Moses may be the oldest recorded song in the world we have the words to. The "Song of Moses, the servant of God, and the Song of the Lamb" will be sung in heaven. When the sun rose over the Red Sea, the song raised was one of triumph and marked the beginning of a new day for Israel. This will be sung along with the song of the Lamb at the beginning of a new day for mankind in the future. The song celebrated God's victory over the Egyptians. It was sung with joy by the people of God with expressions of relief, praise and grateful thanks.

Singing together with God's people and that unity strengthens one's faith in the Lord. A song inspires strength for the body. Faith creates enthusiasm for the things of the Lord. The Lord Himself is the strength our body needs. That strength gives us confidence as we look into the unknown future. It actually anticipates what the Lord is going to do through us even though we won't know until we are in the event. God wasn't only going to bring them out of Egypt, but He was going to bring them into the inheritance of the promised land and would reign over them for ever.

The song they sang was for the soul of the nation and for the soul of each member of that nation. The song of Moses was because of the victory God wrought through His own power. From the beginning to the end of the song, it is in praise of God. There is no mention of Moses in the song. It ascribes all praise to the Lord. It exalted the Lord and His power and strength as He blew with His wind. This is the theme of true praise songs. All glory and honor belong to the Lord alone. These same ingredients are found in the song of the Lamb that will be sung when the new song is raised in heaven. "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests."

It is truly a fact that the Lord is my Strength, my Song, and also my Salvation. Redemption by the blood and salvation by power is a work of the Lord alone. God's works are great and marvelous. His ways are right and true. His justice is with integrity and righteousness. His salvation is just and forever. The testimony of those redeemed and saved today by God's grace, is the same as those redeemed and saved who stood on the shore of the Red Sea and sang.

The Lord is my Strength, my Song, and my Salvation - now and forever.

*They stood in weakness, fear and trembling.  
The end was near, Pharaoh and his host was coming.  
Then in mighty power the Lord did act -  
And a dry path through the sea was a real fact.  
To safety all walked forward, man and beast -  
None was left behind from the greatest to the least.  
In the fire the Lord before them to the far shore went.  
For bodies once so weak, now He is their strength.*

*Standing on the shore they could now turn and look,  
As they see the waters closing over the path they took,  
Relief at their deliverance brought joy to their souls -  
They in faith for the first time acted, they did what they were told.  
From within souls redeemed by power, and now saved by grace -  
Voices were lifted in gratitude as from their souls a song they raised.  
"The Lord is my Song," what a wonderful refrain!  
Now each one personally did glorify His name!*

*The enemy was gone, there is no reason now to fear.  
No longer do we wait; we've experienced salvation here.  
"The Lord is my Salvation," this had nothing to do with me.  
I had to stand still and look at Him that I might salvation see.  
Salvation for the spirit: body, soul and now spirit are saved.  
It is all a work of God when salvation by grace He gave.  
Now here on holy ground, strength for the body He did give.  
With a song for the soul and salvation for the spirit, by faith in Him I live.*

***"Father, the abundance of Thy provision had met my need: body, soul and spirit. I find myself a "whole" person, not a fragmented fearful man worrying about what is going on around me. I praise Thee for being my Strength, my Song and my Salvation. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

## **EXODUS 15:22-27**

### **BITTER WATERS**

The very path of the Lord's leading brought Israel to the bitter waters of Marah. Sometimes the difficult experiences God's people go through are for our education rather than for our correction or punishment. The tree that was cast down and cast into the water is a type of the Cross of Christ that takes away the bitterness of sin and gives us blessing and spiritual growth in the Christian life that follows the healing of the tree.

Bitter waters are not serious unless they make us bitter. We may be able to sing of triumph one day and shortly thereafter be in despair and disappointment. Israel was led three days into the wilderness and although it may not have looked as fertile as the land around the Nile River, it was a land of freedom. It was also where God had His school for disciplining His people. We may not always appreciate at the moment the paths and places God leads us to, but it is not into the world, but away from it. Of that we can be sure. We are "in the world" but we are not "of the world."

The first day of the march into the wilderness would have been a day of enthusiasm, relief and cheer as they thought about their deliverance from Egypt and God's great victory over the host of Pharaoh. There would be a new camaraderie that is common among wilderness travelers as they talked of the past and maybe sang a few lines of the new song of victory. Our first moves after being saved by grace are enthusiastic responses to God's love and mercy. There is a well springing up in us that wants to reach out and grasp every aspect of this new life in Christ. Faith seems strong and the obstacles seem to be unable to quench our joy.

By the second day, the breezes from the Red Sea were behind them. They were moving into an arid desert without trees and water. The way ahead seemed dry and hot. The enthusiasm of the day before faded somewhat as they drank from the water they would have carried with them. But that water wasn't fresh and

there was no place to refill their water bags. By night-fall they would have been tired and hoping tomorrow would be a better day. It doesn't take too long on our journey of faith for us to find out that everything is not going to be easy. In fact, when we walk with the Lord, we will find ourselves often in difficult places and in difficult circumstances. The wonders of our new life in Christ have not taken away the pressures of living a Christian life in a hostile environment.

The third day's journey became tiresome and monotonous to the travelers. This drudgery led them to try to find an object to ventilate their hard thoughts toward. Moses was the one they blamed for their discomfort. People may be benefited ninety-nine times by the efforts of those who guide them, but if even for one time, things don't work out the way they planned, they will blame their leader - or even God - for their disappointment. Grumbling, disenchantment and complaints may follow soon after blessing because the training process does have restraints, and most people resent those restraints of life and labor. We find in our Christian life a great enthusiasm at times, and we seem to be able to do anything God asks us to do. Then the glow of the "first and second days" fades to the pressures, problems and pains of the "third day." Our deceitful heart that still remains with us, causes us to complain and become bitter. Even the refreshment of the water we had hoped would quench our thirst, is bitter.

Our expectations in many aspects of life are based on stories we have heard and victories others have written about. When we get to these life experiences ourselves, we don't find them all silver-lined and full of smooth roads. Some of the roughest roads we travel will lead us to places of greatest blessing.

The wise person in the training school of God, will not jump to quick conclusions or pass judgments on the difficulties and disappointments we have. Often those who meet with heavy grief and painful loss are those who in God's own plans, come out of the refining fire shining the brightest and can be trusted with the noblest of calling in the future. The solution to the bitter waters, the antidote that is needed, is not something from far away that is hard to obtain. There was a "tree" there. When that tree was cut down and put into the water, the water became sweet to drink.

The "Balm in Gilead;" the "healing" needed; the solution to the problem is at hand. But even as God had to show Moses that particular tree, we too need to understand and be reminded of the great blessings that come to us from Him who "bare our sins in His own body on the tree." The cross has great on-going value because of the One who there satisfied every claim of God against us. The bitter things become sweet when we again think of "The Lord that healeth thee." It was in that place of bitter water; the Lord reveals Himself in this new way. There in that same place the promise of freedom from disease for those who obeyed the "voice of the Lord thy God," was given.

The resting place of Elim, "the strong ones," where they experienced the abundance of the Lord's supply, followed the bitterness of Marah. Life is not, nor will be it ever be, easy for those who commit themselves to following the Lord. We don't spend our lives for the Lord under the palm trees of Elim. A brief resting place on the journey of faith is always welcome but is not the place where victories are won and where the promises of God are claimed. It is not at Elim where souls are dug from the pit and hewn from the rock. Thank God for bitter waters made sweet; for strong resting places - now get on with the journey.

*Deliverance gives us joy; salvation gives us a song.  
What blessings we experience, when the journey seems so long  
And we find a place of water where the bitter is made sweet,  
And under these "Elim, palm trees," we can rest our weary feet.  
But this is not the goal, the prize is a long way yet ahead.  
Looking back from time to time we can see where God has led  
Us out from the bondage of sin into the freedom of new life.  
Now in this life of faith we live, faith is much stronger than our sight.*

*The "first day" we began this walk; our enthusiasm was high.  
There did not seem any obstacles to hinder us as we passed by.  
Words of a song would break loose from spirits recently redeemed.  
Obstacles we had perceived were only some of life's bad dreams.  
So when that "first day" ended we were feeling such liberty,  
That we were hardly ready for what on the "second day" we would see.  
The glow of "first love" faded a bit as our water skins ran low.  
And we began to feel some aches when that "second day" lost its glow.*

By the "third day" our water was gone, where could we get a fresh supply.  
And the waters of Marah were so bitter, we didn't see the tree near by.  
When I open the book where waters lie ready to quench my on-going thirst,  
It is important I remember what happened at that cross-tree first.  
The bitter waters are made sweet as truths from that living spring -  
And the bitter water is made sweet as truths from God they bring.  
And the "Lord that healeth thee," gives promises to me -  
As the bitterness fades away and new glories of Christ I see.

I know I will have my "Marahs" that will often test my faith.  
I also know by Marah's water a tree stands right there in that place  
Where I can find soul-refreshment revealed to me through God's Word.  
Whether it is Marah or Elim, I know these places will not last.  
They are only temporary stopping places until this life is passed.  
By God's grace I will seek to learn lessons taught in this wilderness.  
And maybe He will be able in some way through me, other people to bless.

**"Father, in times when my faith is weak, I have confidence Thou hast places of restoration for Thy servant. When I get to Marah, show me the tree. When I get to Elim, keep me from staying there too long and forgetting why I am here in the world. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."**

**EXODUS 15:26.** "And said, 'If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee.'"

#### **NONE OF THESE DISEASES.**

At first it seemed there was no fear  
Of serious consequences -  
For after all - the magicians there  
Made similar evidences.  
But as days followed each other rapidly by,  
Things quickly got much worse -  
The warnings God had told Moses to say,  
Affected Egypt's families with disease.

Death claimed the firstborn across the land,  
And Israel was quickly set free.  
They were liberated by God's almighty hand -  
By His power they crossed the Sea.  
And then God promised health to them -  
They all could live without disease.  
Obey His commandments - listen to Him -  
He promised - "I am He that healeth thee."

We learn today from this promise of old -  
God protects those who walk His ways.  
The pathway of life when the truth we hold -  
Gives life meaning and length of days.  
The Lord knows each pain disease will cause -  
His power controls all that happens to me.  
There are occasional times when I foolishly fail -  
Still I praise Him and will seek to obey.

**"God my Father, I know my good health has come from Thee by grace alone, not because I have done anything that would warrant such favor. Yet, I appreciate so much that Thou hast been pleased to allow me so many years of blessed health - and I thank Thee, In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."**

## EXODUS 16:1-10

### THE GLORY OF THE LORD APPEARED

It often seems like tests come from God in ways we least expect. One month and one day after the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt, they found themselves without food to eat. In the life of those who live by faith there will be tests of faith all the way from the day we first trusted Christ as personal Lord and Savior, to the day God takes us home to heaven. These tests will not always be the same. The testing the Lord sends to His own people builds character and strengthens faith. They had found Elim to be a good resting place, but it was not intended to be their dwelling place. Those restful stopping places in life are certainly welcomed as oasis in the wilderness but these times are reminders of a future time when the journey is over.

After leaving Elim they stopped by the Red Sea, according to the book of Numbers, where they got a last look at Egypt across the water that now separated them when "they were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." A new life had begun for God's people. God in great patience heard their grumbling for food but did not reprove them for their murmuring. Their life of faith had just begun and they were just beginning to learn who God is. We will encounter danger, inconveniences and shortages of those things we have come to expect as our right. God in His grace, and in a distinct act beyond the ability of man to accomplish, reveals Himself as the One of inexhaustible resources who "can supply all your need." When pressure comes on us, we often want a quick escape to make our life easier.

The cause of their problem was they were focusing on their immediate need rather than on God who meets our needs. This is not uncommon to all of us. Our attention is turned on events around us and our perceived needs that make us uncomfortable. The lesson of constant faith has to be learned over and over again it seems. At first God is very patient and longsuffering with those beginning the life of faith. As we experience God in our lives, then He expects us to trust Him and obey Him in spite of any discomfort it may cause us. We need to learn to be content with such things as we have.

Tests of faith and obedience often go together. God had given the Israelis careful and detailed instructions and now He was giving them the opportunity to respond in obedience in the big things of life by taking small steps of obedience in the simple things of life. The promise of food to supply their need was given. The instructions as to how, when and where to gather that food was given before it came. The bread was promised, not just as a provision to meet their need, but as a test to prove them as to their sincerity and commitment to God.

The miracle of manna enough for over two million people to be fed on a daily basis for forty years was certainly an act of God, not just a normal act of nature. Whether it was the bread from heaven or the gift of the quails in the evening, nature was under the controlling power of the Creator-God who could add or diminish the supply as He chose. It was also a great act of God's grace to provide without reproof, what those untested people needed. The simple test of obedience associated with the provision is a lesson to us to remember, "to whom much is given, much is required."

As Aaron was passing on the instructions as he received them from Moses, they all saw the glory of God in the cloud. When God teaches His people lessons from Himself or tests their faith and obedience, He is nearby. Those people would have quickly silenced their complaints and murmuring as the evidence of God was right there before their eyes in the cloud. When God reveals Himself to us as to who He is, what He does, what He can do and what His will is - it should stop every foolish word and thought we might have entertained, and bring us down in humility and contrition before Him. Every word, every action, every thought I have is exposed in His presence. There is nothing of attitude or action that I might have that is not known in its entirety to Him. Any evidence of divine revelation is a time of awakening by the Lord Himself. He is training His self-centered people to trust Him in the walk of faith.

*What do I expect to be evidence of God's glory revealed to me?  
Should I be looking for a bright cloud or something unusual I can see?  
Or is it enough through words written down that I respond in faith to Him?  
Evidence of a revelation of God begins in my spirit within.*

*A sense of importance in each incident in life opens faith-eyes to see the Lord.  
There are ways of instruction given to me that to ignore I can ill afford.  
In the small things that seem so simple God speaks that I from Him might learn.  
And in careful consideration of the way things are, I from self to Him will turn.*

God gives grace so I can see beyond what to most people seems mundane.  
To the awakened soul we can recognize these happen that He might train  
Each of us to be who He intends and then He can use us as He wills.  
That changes life from being an ordinary thing to a path His great grace fills.

God reveals His glory in ways that at first seem so plain,  
We don't really grasp their value until the same things happen again.  
Finally, we come to realize God reveals Himself even in a child's smile.  
That in turn leads me to consider He has been right here with us all the while.

It may be at the breaking of a day; the dawn awakes my soul to His will.  
It may be watching saints leave their body, I realize God is right here still.  
There doesn't have to be a storm or some beautiful pastoral scene to view,  
In order for me to recognize God is near me to see His plans go through.

May I never ignore what seems trivial, because it may be important to God.  
And even simple verses I know well help me to truly obey my Lord.  
I do not want to consider anything a valueless experience in life.  
O Lord God, please help Thy servant to daily walk by faith, not by sight.

**"Father, this new day has already been a revelation of Thyself to me and I thank Thee. May this day be one in which I can not only know Thee better, but grow in grace myself and express that grace to others. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."**

**EXODUS 16:4.** "Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no."

#### **BREAD FROM HEAVEN.**

It really seemed such a simple thing – just get up at the same time each day,  
Gather right from the ground, good food for your needs, there really is nothing to pay.  
This heavenly bread will come down each night and will be there all the way,  
It was given by God to meet their needs and see if they meant what they say.

It came from heaven, so we can safely assume there was full and sufficient supply.  
During the night when people lay in their beds, God sent them food from the sky.  
The only qualifications they had to meet was to gather before the sun was high,  
And gather just enough for themselves and their own, there was nothing for them to buy.

The bread from God now is not on the ground, but He came down from heaven above.  
The Lord Jesus Christ is our manna from God; He was given as proof of God's love.  
Whether we eat daily this bread from heaven, is one of God's ways to prove;  
If our desire is really to walk in His ways or complacently keep what we have.

The problem is now, the same as back then; bread from heaven has to be daily obtained –  
By getting up early, and gathering this food that by it my soul be sustained.  
If I try to go back and get yesterday's bread and find it spoiled – God cannot be blamed.  
Heaven's storehouse is full with such bread as I need; God freely gives all I can contain.

In the course of each day this bread will give strength to overcome any challenge I meet.  
The need of my soul will be fully met by this, and give right words to each person I greet.  
May I never presume I'll get enough today that I won't need tomorrow to eat –  
So, I schedule my morning, this time will I gather, and tomorrow this practice repeat.

**"Father God, I have tasted of the good things of God and I am satisfied this is good food that has the taste of honey. I could ask for no better source to meet the continuing needs of my soul than the bread from heaven. The whole world is in turmoil right now because they have gathered so much in the money baskets that it has spoiled. My food is as tasty today as has ever been. I thank Thee for bread from heaven. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."**

## EXODUS 16:11-36

### THIS IS THE BREAD

There is a hunger in every man, woman and child that cannot be ignored. Physical hunger makes itself known in a number of ways. It begins with a feeling of emptiness within. Then comes a tiredness that soon turns into weakness. There are twinges of physical feelings that occasionally become sharp pangs of pain. The body sends out its signals that something is lacking and before long that hunger consumes every thought and every action is directed to take that hunger away. It is the same way with spiritual hunger. In the soul of every person there has been implanted a desire for God. We have been made by God for God, and consequently there is a hunger for God. But in this deceitful world there are found those things that are offered to take the place of bread, the staff of life. In Egypt, the children of Israel had leeks, melons and garlic that attracted their taste but did not meet their basic need. Much that the world system offers as "spiritual food," is only to satisfy the desire for pleasure and is attractive to the fleshly tastes we have but does not satisfy the fundamental need we have for God Himself.

The "bread which came down from heaven" has the ability to give life to the world. There is such abundance of supply in God that everyone can eat and be filled. It has been provided for all and is available to all. Emotional attractions, intellectual pursuits do not make us spiritually satisfied. Those things either come from other people or from our own minds. Spiritual needs can only be satisfied by gathering what God has provided. Truth is an important part of what we need to function effectively for God in the world, but what we need most is God Himself who is the Truth. When one hungers and thirsts after righteousness they are filled. To gather the manna, the bread from heaven, one needed to rise from where they were, leave what they were doing, and go to where the bread was found.

In the camp of Israel, there would be movement among the people in the dark moments just before the dawn. From each tent the people would emerge to go outside the door to gather the life-giving bread. There weren't great clumps of manna, but small, round provisions to be gathered one small piece at a time until put together there would be full and plenty for all the household. "This is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat." Each one had a certain need. The children would eat one amount, each other member of the household would have different needs, and yet from the same source there was easily digested food that had an attractive flavor and could fully satisfy. How like "the bread of God" we are able to gather for ourselves this manna is. Each new day brings new needs. God knows what is needed for the individual person and has made provision to meet that need. It is there for each of us to take.

There is a time to gather what God has provided. There is a time to prepare it to make its truths understandable and applicable. There is a time for eating and there is a time for meditating upon what we have taken in for ourselves. The bread of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, doesn't come to us to satisfy the spiritual hunger in our souls with a great rush of wind or fire or storm or earthquake that breaks the rocks around us. He comes and feeds our souls when all other voices are silent and the life-giving sustenance is there for us to reach out for in faith and take it for ourselves. We feed on Him, His purity, His completeness, His perfections, His sweetness, His holiness, His very life until He is formed in us. We do not have to find some high mountain to climb to find that bread. There is no secret valley floor or particularly green pasture we have to search for to find that which is needed for our soul. "But what saith it, the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is the word of faith that we preach." When we come to Him who is the Bread of God, we will not hunger or thirst, for He supplies all the spiritual nutrients we need for effective life and light in the Christian walk here on earth.

*What is it that covers the ground all around?  
It came here during the night watch without a sound.  
It lies there for the taking, small, white, sweet and round -  
It is the life-giving bread from God.*

*I don't have to pray for it, it is daily there.  
There is all I need and even more to spare.  
As far as I know there is nothing can compare -  
With the life-giving bread from God.*

*It is easy to gather, all I have to do is bow and take it.  
I can prepare it in a pan, or boil or bake it.  
There is no way to store it up or make something to fake it -  
It is uniquely the life-giving bread from God.*

*To try and keep it over so I won't have to go for more,  
Is wasted effort to try and save it up in store.  
It can always be found just outside the door -  
Where God places the life-giving bread from God.*

*It comes from the storehouse of God's abundant supply.  
The value is far more than all my money could buy.  
Its effect is always good when I take time to try  
To claim for myself the life-giving bread from God.*

*That bread for me can be found in God's Word when I read.  
Christ becomes real in special ways when His truth I heed  
The truths revealed of Him on whom my soul and spirit feed -  
Give me life-giving bread from God.*

*"Gracious Father, the blessings I get from the Bread of God, the Living Bread, who has come down from heaven to feed us, are more than I can number. I thank Thee that when the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed more fully to me through Thy Word by the Holy Spirit, I can personally experience spiritual strength for this day. I praise thee for this in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 17:1-7**

### **WHY DID THIS HAPPEN?**

The Israelites moved into the mountains of Sinai where the Egyptians had copper mines. The slave labor to work these mines may have been experienced in the past by some of those people. As they moved further into those valleys the supply of water was left behind. Rephidim means "resting places" and they may have hoped this would be a good place to stop. But now as then, hope and reality are quite different. We have had some very special times of blessing and God had abundantly met our needs. With happy expectation we move ahead thinking the bad times have passed only to find a difficulty greater than those we have already passed through. Lack of food affects our stomachs and gradually affects us in other ways. Lack of water brings us quickly to exhaustion and we stop everything until our thirst is quenched. Thirst overcomes every thought and action.

Why did God allow these people to thirst? Why does God allow suffering, war, pollution, and evil today people ask? And the inference is that there is no God at all. When our expectations are not met, we have either a tendency to doubt God's leading us in this way or God's awareness of what is happening to us. Does God really care? Is there any point to prayer? When faith starts to relax, and instead of faith being in God Himself, we place our faith in what we think or our own way, then God does whatever is necessary to get us to turn to Him again. Life will hold many times of difficulty and pressure that seems to be unbearable unless our faith is strong and placed on God alone. Then we stop to think of what God has been to us in the past. We may find ourselves when under the pressure of difficulty, reviewing the way God led us right from the beginning of our life of faith.

Did God make Himself real to me as He unfolded the way of salvation? Was He not there when I had to make life-changing decisions? Remember how faithful He was when we did not know what to do next? He was with me then - why should I not think He is with me now in this present time of distress? God was with me in the good times. Why should I not think He is with me in the bad times? He was with me when I was full. Surely, He is with me when I am empty. If I can trust Him when I am full, how much more should I trust Him when I am empty.

God allows His people to go through difficulty and suffering so we can learn what we are really like. Through this means He can then teach us the value of self-discipline by intentionally disciplining us to where our only recourse is to Him in prayer and faith in Him. When God instructed Moses to take the elders with him to the rock in Horeb, He was going to reveal more than a place to get water. He was going to show to the people of God through their leadership, evidence of the power and authority they were under. The elders hadn't stepped out to stop the murmuring and complaining before. But when the gush of water came out of that rock, they would have learned the responsibility they had to speak to the people and guide them in the ways of the Lord. More than water was needed that day. They had to be made conscious of the omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence of God.

How important it is for us to take seriously the difficulties of life as a teaching and training time given by God to bring us to maturity. Untested faith may be only just right words until it has been tried in the fires of temptation and stress over which we have no control. "When I am afraid, I will trust Him." When I don't know what to do next, then I must pray in faith and wait in the assurance of hope in God alone. When the complaints and criticisms of others come and I am tempted to listen and maybe even pay heed to them, I will call upon Him who answered nine times and trust Him to answer according to His divine will and purpose the tenth time.

*The waters have failed and the well has gone dry.  
The seeking soul searches and then wonders why -  
Where before there had been full and plenty for all,  
Now there was nothing, and in weakness they're about to fall.*

*"Where is God? Why hasn't He stepped in  
To deal with this problem and all those people's sins?"  
And then I must stop my complaints, for I can see -  
The one who is doubting and sinning is none other than me.*

*If I want to, I can probably see failure wherever I turn.  
Also, if I choose, this is a good time for me to learn  
That God has a plan that He unfolds in His good time.  
And I know that His plans are much better than mine.*

*Yes, I am thirsty but He knows where the water is.  
Not just the Bread of Life, but the water also is His.  
When He unleashes that flow, the water then will spring  
Up like a fountain of life and through it, faith-life will bring.*

*If this seems like a dry day to you, stop and take time to pray.  
And if you don't know what is coming next, just wait and watch and stay  
Where you are until God guides you to act in unrestrained faith.  
And water will flow from that previously unexpected place.*

*Then you will get the blessing, and God will get the praise.  
The unfolding of events will open to you new ways  
To live a life that is pleasing to God now and in the future.  
Through experiences of faith, others who follow you can nurture.*

*Without hunger we would never know the blessings of being filled.  
Without thirst being quenched, we would have very little to tell  
Others of God's grace and provision He gives to meet our need.  
We can encourage others in the Lord when to His lessons we pay heed.*

**"Father in heaven, I thank Thee this morning for the thirsting times that have led me to the flowing waters of blessing the Holy Spirit provides. Please guide Thy servant today across this wilderness. And thanks so much for the water. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."**

**EXODUS 17:8.** "Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim."

#### **AMALEK.**

*Not big at the start, so small in fact, unseen by eyes of man -  
But it is there, passed on from generations -  
And now it's here, in mother's arms -  
Beautiful, precious, loved -  
Real flesh.*

*It flourishes, growing rapidly, taking shape and form from those before  
Yet its identity becomes unique in developing individually -*

*A personality unlike any other demand attention –  
Self awareness insists on “me first” –  
Demanding flesh.*

*Not satisfied with experienced “others” who have been there before –  
Wanting to learn without discipline and control imposed –  
Claiming independence apart from man and God –  
Insisting personal rights are superior –  
Obnoxious flesh.*

*Subtle changes come with years and talk becomes smooth and nice –  
Manipulative actions push and pull demanding supremacy –  
Argumentative talk won't stop until it wins –  
Eyes looking down long noses stare –  
Educated flesh.*

*Pious words backed by softly playing music supposedly spiritual –  
Loud songs with “God-words” and unusual lyrics –  
Great swelling words hard to understand –  
Rituals and traditions are priorities –  
Religious flesh.*

*Careless living, suggestive words that defile the mind and soul –  
Common-place use of God's name as if it's unholy –  
Darkness comes over the heart and hard eyes –  
Temptations have found a home –  
Sinful flesh.*

*“O God, my Lord: the world is bad and difficult to cope with and so I find it great relief to cast those kinds of cares on Thee. And the devil does attack like a lion and an angel of light and by the power of Christ and His name, I resist him. But this other enemy – this flesh, this terrible “Amalek”; he never lets up and uses so many different tactics. O my God, I cry for help and power over myself. Let not my own flesh devour me! In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”*

## **EXODUS 17:8-16**

### **THEN CAME AMALEK**

There are lessons to learn that often come right after great blessings have been received. What a relief it was to have an abundant supply of "spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." There were also others following them who were cutting off the stragglers at the back of the great host of Israel [De.25:17-18]. Over the previous centuries the Amalekites had come south as the Assyrians became a stronger nation. Those people killed for pleasure and raided other settlements for plunder. They were a fierce nomadic tribe and in the Israelite culture the greatest insult was to call someone "a friend of Amalek." The normal course to Canaan would not have taken the Israelites through the area where the Amalekites lived, but the Lord had His plans to carry out.

The flesh doesn't always make an all-out assault on a child of God. Amalek is a type of the flesh and began to assault the people of God a little bit at a time. One or two things would not have seemed as offensive as an assault on the whole company. The deceitfulness of our flesh may not seem all that serious when we are first tempted. We are inclined to yield one or two small things to the pressures of society. It is easier to be like other people "so we can win them." God's intention is that they be like His people rather than the other way around.

In the divine providence of God, He had allowed the Israelites to thirst and then supplied them with water from the Rock that they would learn where their strength would come from when Amalek attacked. God Himself would be their strength. The bread from heaven and water from the Rock would give them assurance, courage and confidence when faced with their first foe outside of Egypt. The world is one enemy. The flesh is another that begins to "smite the hindmost" when they were faint and weary. Now refreshed with "spiritual drink," the quiet, confident composure of Moses who prepared their resistance against this new enemy, affects all of those around him. This first mention of Joshua (Savior) introduces us to a man in whom Moses had full confidence. The courage of the untried and undisciplined soldiers would have been

unexplainable except for the fact they had just experienced the power of God bringing water from the Rock. We are able to overcome the flesh when we have taken spiritual food in to strengthen us, and spiritual drink to refresh us. God's power is evident when a person has been experiencing God's presence and God's provision.

With calm assurance, Moses instructs Joshua to pick out the best men for the fight. We must never underestimate the evil and power of sin that seeks to control us and manipulate our lives. Moses knew his role was to be on the nearby hill where all the warriors could see him holding up the rod of God in supplication and faith. Fellowship with others, Aaron and Hur, in times of fleshly struggles, is a very important part of bringing victory. We are unable to deal with sinful flesh alone. The combined strength of united fellowship has power with God. By now the people had confidence in Moses' leadership and they respected his authority. They had followed him out of Egypt and through the Red Sea. They had eaten the bread from heaven. They had seen him cut the tree and put it in the bitter water of Marah that became sweet. They had water following them that flowed from the Rock Moses had struck with the rod of God.

Now instead of complaining about the conflict, those chosen warriors in great courage, followed Joshua against those who had ruled the desert for years. The Amalekites didn't realize who they were up against. God used His people to accomplish the goal He had. The uplifted rod of faith was the key to victory that day. Untested warriors were used as tools in the hand of the Great Captain to overcome the enemy. The altar raised up after the victory would remind the people of God they were marching and fighting under the banner of the highest possible Authority. Uplifted arms and clean hands are still the key to victory over the flesh today. Unshakable faith in God, His plans and purposes, prevail over the deceitful enemy of our flesh. Faith is an affirmation and an act that makes truth a fact.

The altar Moses built would testify to all the Israelites they were under the authority of Jehovah-Nissi. Joshua also in his first test of leadership, would have looked beyond his guidance of the warriors to the rod of God in the hand of Moses and realized it was God who had given the victory. When we look beyond human strength and human will to God, we will find where our strength and joy really is. We joy in God Himself.

*Israel, the church in the wilderness reminds us of who we are.  
In ourselves we are weak - in the Lord God is our strength and power.  
He had guided us here, and will give us victory over our foes.  
The enemies: the world, flesh and the devil - always will God's people oppose.*

*But we eat of the bread from heaven to give us strength from day to day.  
We drink spiritual drink that follows us to quench thirst along the way.  
The Rock that was smitten is our Lord Jesus when He died upon the cross.  
The life that flows to us from Him today assures us we won't be lost.*

*So, victory is assured when we lay claim to God's full provision.  
There is nothing more we need to be conquerors than what is already given.  
The Father is for us to answer our prayers, the Lord Jesus brought victory.  
The Holy Spirit and the Word provides the power to maintain our liberty.*

***"Father, I thank Thee for the assurance that all I need to maintain happy fellowship with Thee has been provided. Even when the enemies attack I am grateful there is victory in Jesus. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

## **EXODUS 18**

### **DELEGATION**

There were others beside the Israelites in Old Testament times who were worshippers of the One true God. "In every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him." Melchizedek and Jethro were two such people. Jethro would have seen God working in Moses for forty years, and recognized the changes God can bring in a man that "feareth Him and worketh righteousness." The work of God we can see in those around us, affects us. We can learn ourselves by what God teaches through His training of others. We can greatly benefit each other as we share the dealings of God with us. Jethro would have learned much about God through Moses, and Moses got his wife and learned wisdom as how to lead and feed sheep, through Jethro. By introducing others to the Lord, we know personally, we are increasingly aware of God ourselves. We are blessed in several ways in our relationship with others. The gifts they give

to us blesses them in their giving and us in the receiving of the gift. What we give of ourselves and our knowledge of God, enhances our knowledge of Him and produces Christ-likeness in us.

When Jethro and Moses met, there was obvious respect on the part of each for the other. Respect for others is not something that can be faked very easily. There may be a certain cultural protocol we follow but the words and expressions of face and body really are what defines the reality of respect. Moses would have been glad to privately greet his wife and sons as that was personal to them all. When Moses recounted the many ways God had dealt with the Egyptians and God's goodness on the journey by providing miraculously for their safety needs, physical needs and victory over the Amalekites, Jethro would have not only been delighted, but more convinced than ever of the reality and authority of God. It is a good thing to recount to others our experiences with God. This is not just for our sake but to show others how God does great things today even as He did in the past. God has not ceased being for His people and with His people. "God's name is great among the Gentiles."

There is a tendency at times to think we are the only people in the world God recognizes. That was a Hebrew characteristic in the past and we can fall into the same mindset regarding our gathering and those who gather in a way similar to what we do. It is well for us to remember God is not limited in the way He chooses to deal with men. We have our obligation to fulfill what God has called us to do and where He has placed us. It is not our prerogative to pass our judgment on those God is using in His own way in other places.

God had used Moses in a singular way and the tasks of leadership he was handling by himself. It is not always easy to delegate responsibility to others. To guide, to teach and to judge a host of more than two million people was a daunting task to say the least, and in a sense impossible to do alone. God is able to give needed strength and wisdom for the work He gives us. However, there does come a time when able men who fear God, love the truth and hate covetousness can do for the whole congregation what is beyond one man's ability to do, or that he can do because of the constraints of time. The celebration Jethro provided and the sacrificial meal, provided the opening for his suggestion to Moses that he delegate the judicial side of leadership to others.

The advantages would have been easy to see. Moses would devote himself to those things that were directly related to God passing on His will through His servant Moses. He would be able to teach the laws and the statutes that would soon be given. There would be developed men who could be trusted to lead in areas of social difficulty in the quickest possible time and with the least negative effect. This same pattern was followed in the early church when men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom were set apart to do the work of ministering to the people of God. Men who honored and feared God, who were committed to the truth of God and were not corrupted by greed, were able to lead God's people with unbiased impartiality. Men like this are of great value to God's people today. They in turn free others to give heed to their teaching, preaching and to prayer.

The gift of administration is needful among God's people. It takes time to "commit to faithful men" the things we have learned from others. But the on-going training of leaders is not something that can be learned just by going to a school. Wise leaders will pass on personally their knowledge of Christ, of God's Word and the principles of leadership - and then give to those to whom the work has been delegated, the privilege of doing their work as to the Lord and for the Lord alone. They will not be identical to us nor do things the way we did - which doubtless is a good thing for the most part.

*To pass on to others a work that is obviously greater than us -  
Requires understanding of others and of those in whom we place our trust.  
To insist they be rubber-stamps of which we perceive ourselves to be -  
Is really unrealistic, and characteristic of those who lead arrogantly.*

*Rather we should be able to discern the kind of people we live among.  
We watch them and listen to their words, and see what they have previously done.  
If there is a pattern of consistency and a real interest in the things of God -  
Then it is time to consider that this person is one who is called by the Lord.*

*They will not be stuck in indecision, but are able men who can draw conclusions.  
There is a real fear and reverence for God, they are not men of collusion.  
Truth and righteous dealings with others are genuine character traits.  
They can be trusted to make wise decisions even when in perilous straits.*

*To delegate a work is important, but is not to be done in a casual way.  
One who passes on work to others is one who will take time to pray.  
When a decision is made and another one steps in to share the load -  
Let them quickly be made aware of the serious office they hold.*

*Then move on to your own work with diligence and leave them to do theirs.  
Don't go back and criticize or start to meddle in other people's affairs.  
Trust the Spirit of God to do what is needed, and make sure you do your work right.  
The principle of service doesn't change when we are walking by faith, not by sight.*

*"O God of all grace, my heavenly Father, with trust and confidence in Thee, I leave these young workers in the vineyard to do the work Thou hast equipped them to do. I will pray for them and seek to help them when I can. But I know they are Thy servants, not mine. Give me wisdom in those times when we interact, that I may be a help, not a hindrance to them. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

**EXODUS 18:8-9.** *"... and how the Lord delivered them. And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the Lord had done to Israel, whom He had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians."*

#### **THE LORD DELIVERED THEM.**

*The burdens were heavy, the temptations were strong,  
And the gods of the Amorites were right there in hard stony form.  
They got used to the darkness over the passing of years,  
But still deep within there remained all their fears -  
And the Lord delivered them.*

*The Red Sea was in front of them, they were closed in on each side,  
The Egyptians behind them did purposefully ride  
To bring back to slavery those the Lord had set free.  
Then with east wind His power drove back the sea -  
The Lord delivered them.*

*The taste formed in Egypt by worldly food,  
Was gone now from them who were being led by the Lord.  
Heaven opened its storehouse and angels' bread  
Was there for the taking - God's people were fed -  
The Lord delivered them.*

*The desire for water made the people complain,  
Looking to Moses as someone to blame.  
The Rock there in Horeb seemed an unlikely place -  
The water was there for that Rock was Christ -  
The Lord delivered them.*

*Amalek came, fighting the people of the Lord;  
The flesh still challenges, seeking to defeat the power of the Word.  
The Lord delivered them overcoming the downward pull of flesh;  
Fellowship of saints is one way we can overcome this test -  
When the Lord delivers us.*

*"Father God, the flesh does have a strong attraction to the things going on around me as well as focusing attention on myself. "Self" is a serious problem and I pray Thee to give me the wisdom to recognize the fleshly tendencies that never go away, and constantly demand my attention. I am aware of my need of the Spirit of God to lead me away from myself to Thee. Give me grace and help to look only to Thee, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

#### **EXODUS 19**

#### **OBEY MY VOICE...KEEP MY COVENANT**

Into a plain with mountains on either side and the Mountain of God in front of them like a gigantic pulpit, the cloud of God's presence led the children of Israel. Alone, Moses ascended the mountain where God spoke to him before from the bush that burned but was not consumed. Now he comes before God as the representative of the chosen people, a nation out of the nations of the world to be the representatives of all humanity. With great compassion and loving words, God tells Moses of the uniqueness, the preciousness and the relationship He had and wanted to maintain with Israel. From that great pulpit, Moses came down and told them what God thought of them and now was going to confirm that with a covenant.

God had entered into a covenant with Noah and a second one with Abraham long before. The rainbow was the affirmation that an understanding, an agreement, a working relationship had been formed that assured Noah and the world there would never be another world-wide flood. The covenant with Abraham formed the basis of the promise that all nations of the world would be blessed through His seed. That blessing would come in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, and Abraham rejoiced to see His day. Through our Lord and Savior, people all over the world have been, and will be, blessed. God had pledged four hundred and thirty years earlier that Israel would be a chosen nation governed by Him. It was not to be a democracy governed by the people, nor was it to be an aristocracy governed by a few. It was to be a theocracy governed by the rule of God and to be a unique kingdom of priests, a holy nation, a special treasure to the world because of their obedience to God.

Israel has failed in this calling, but all over the world today there is a kingdom of priests who have been saved by God's grace. They are continual intercessors on behalf of the nations, praying daily "for kings and those in authority." They are visible evidence of God - a godly people. We are called to "be ye holy, for I am holy," showing forth the praises of God who has "called them out of darkness into His marvelous light." God's covenant to Israel assured them of their unique relationship to Him. It made plain His desire to enter into covenant with them that through them, His "Salvation" would come to bless the world. He also made covenant with Israel that there would be laid down in written words, the laws that are in the hearts of every person. The law is written on the hearts of all and the conscience bears witness to that fact. Hence the whole world is guilty before God.

Through Israel that law would be precisely stated as well as the consequences that would come when it is broken. The whole purpose was stated that as a "schoolmaster" the law would bring us to the knowledge of sin. The Jews were also singled out as those who were to communicate those truths to all humanity. In that way they were a "peculiar treasure unto Me." They failed in their covenant responsibilities, so this has been passed on to a heavenly people who are a "kingdom of priests" - the church. In the future reign of Christ, Israel will be able to fulfill their chosen, covenantal role when the Lord Jesus Christ sits on David's throne.

Moses went back up the mountain to give God the reply of the people to God's side of the covenant. As they watched him go, it was obvious they had to be made aware of the great contrast between the Holy God and sinful people. Words sometimes do not convey the greatness of that distinction. When Moses came down from that cloud-covered mountain the second time, the people had to learn there were barriers of respect, honor and holiness that separated a casual seeker for God from the One who is "glorious in holiness." The holiness of God had to be made real to those people, even as it does to us today. Bowed heads, hushed voices, reverence, obedience and a broken heart are characteristics of one who recognizes who God is.

The third time Moses went up that mountain, the people had prepared themselves to focus on God alone. They were washed, clothed in their best and their minds were on God. This was no casual religious holiday. Lightning, thunder, fire, earthquake and the sound of the trumpet getting louder and louder would have put a righteous, reverential fear in the heart of every person. Even the animals did not come near that holy ground when God laid out the terms of the covenant He made with those people. We need to remember the terms of the new covenant God has made with us are not merely the tip of a hat in recognition of God, but terms of living on this earth as a representative of the Holy, Righteous and Almighty God. It is true we are on the resurrection-side of the cross, but that doesn't make our position of responsibility any less holy, meaningful to men or important to God. We are to obey His voice and keep His covenant that has been made with us through the blood of the Cross of Christ.

*I may not hear the sound of thunder or see the rocks around break -  
But I know there is a holy agreement in this new covenant with God we make.  
I am not at liberty to do things my way, it is with God this covenant is formed.  
Holiness is expected of me all the time because holiness is God's norm.*

*To casually look at the written word and to interpret them in my own way -  
Is an insult to God who inspired them that I might never say,*

*"Don't worry too much about the Bible. It's your attitude and motivation that count."  
It might be wise if I read again those words God wrote on that mount.*

*Covenants are not a casual comment that can be easily taken or left.  
There is an agreement that is made by each party from which we should never be bereft.  
The understanding is made that between each one a basis for living and working is made.  
To ignore the terms of a covenant that is formed, is to the other party of the covenant degrade.*

*It was never right since God made man, that men could lie, deceive and kill.  
Those things humans live by were placed in each heart and they abide there still.  
But when they were written as laws governing a nation, a visible standard was set.  
We don't keep the commands, they reveal our sin, but the consequences remain there yet.*

*We should never once think it makes no difference if what I practice and what God teaches is different.  
The rules men make and the laws they change doesn't negate in any way God's sentence.  
"The soul that sinneth, it shall die" - never forget that statement is true.  
That covenant agreement still remains as the standard to guide what I say and do.*

*Now by God's grace I live and breathe and by faith in Him I take my stand.  
The impact of the new covenant I have experienced with many others across the land.  
A kingdom of priests we have been made, as Israel was once intended to be.  
The kingdom we are part of is a heavenly one that lasts for eternity.*

***"Holy God, my Father, I am conscious of the holiness Thou dost expect of those with whom Thou hast made a covenant. As one of those who have been brought into this gracious relationship with Thee, I am aware that there are expectations that I will obey Thy voice and keep the terms of this covenant. This I gladly do, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 19:4-6.** *"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. Now 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: and 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."*

#### **A KINGDOM OF PRIESTS.**

*Who are these people in this marching band?  
Why are they crossing this hot desert sand?  
Where are they from, going on to what land;  
Cloud and fire guiding direct from God's hand?*

*They're walking in order, five in a row.  
The families together, yet a discipline shows  
That where they are going and Who they must know;  
Keeps them all in their place as onward they go.*

*To watch from afar, you would see way in the past;  
Along the sea shore on the sand, there is cast  
The bodies of enemies, four hundred years there did last  
A slavery; now gone as to a new home they will pass.*

*The burdens they carry and the songs that they sing,  
Indicates to observers, that all that they bring;  
They owe to the God, Who bears them on wings  
As an eagle her young: He wants them for Him.*

*They are a treasure indeed that He wants for Himself.  
They are a kingdom of priests, but each one of them felt  
The sting of the lash, and the pressure that fell  
Until freedom did give each a story to tell.*

*For all the great start, the truth really is,  
They failed so often to remember they were His.  
The One Who delivered and bare on His wings;  
Has set them aside for a new band of priests.*

*These are all over; you can't see them as one.  
They're in all cultures and nations, redeemed by God's Son.  
Their marching and offering is not fully done;  
But with eyes on the skies, they're moving towards home.*

*They are offering their praises and sacrifices too.  
As priests, all can offer to God what is true.  
Our hymns and thanksgivings and gifts all can show,  
We appreciate home, while living below.*

*We offer together, and sometimes alone  
As a kingdom of priests; not for sins to atone:  
But for blessing abundant, we all want to own,  
He alone is the Worthy One, Jesus, God's Son.*

*And to Him we offer our sacrifices of praise,  
As together around Him our songs we all raise.  
We praise Him for mercy, His love and His grace;  
As priests we can do this all of our days.*

*This invisible group for 2000 years,  
His peculiar treasure, His name each one bears.  
This nation of people, yet for each one He cares;  
Will never forget that it is His life we share.*

***"Holy God: it is as one of the priests in Thy kingdom that I offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. I offer deep gratitude for Thy mercy. I offer the things that I use in this body. I don't want to keep anything back. Sometimes I am not sure if there are some things I am holding on to inappropriately. Here is my offering to Thee this morning. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 19:5-6.** "Now 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: and 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."

#### **ABOVE ALL NATIONS.**

*God looks upon His own and sees  
What to lesser men would be disdained.  
To heavenly eyes, these people mean  
God's promises can be maintained –  
And through this treasure, strange to man –  
Comes hope to those who look afar.  
From those delivered by God's mighty hand –  
Through this peculiar treasure, comes the Morning Star.*

*This priestly kingdom has a work –  
Which to the world has been ignored;  
As intercessor-priests, they start,  
The process by which the Lord  
Can justify lost wandering souls,  
Allowing them to live who long have sinned –  
To be accepted, cleansed, made whole –  
And by Christ's blood can be redeemed.*

*A holy nation in this world*

*Is very strange where countries fight  
For supremacy, power and even gold –  
Not knowing truth, but loving night.  
Shining across all scattered lands –  
The light of this holy nation glows –  
Giving guidance morally to man –  
As grace and truth in this nation shows.*

*Even though this ancient peculiar treasure –  
Is scattered far and wide today –  
There is a people by which men measure  
Grace, truth and morals by what they say.  
They know their God – can call Him Father,  
And He calls them a kingdom of priests.  
They once were lost, but now Christ is their Savior,  
And by their presence, the world is blessed.*

*“Gracious Father: this morning I come to Thee as one who has come from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God. I am soon going to speak to a large number of young people who hardly know who they are or their high calling from Thee. Please, Gracious Father: give me suitable words to explain to them who they are and who they serve. Help me to connect to them and relate to them in a meaningful way. Give to Thy weak servant divine power to channel Thy Word and will to them that they will respond in faith, love and enthusiasm to their Lord and Savior. May God be glorified in every thing about this day we spend together in Thy Word. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”*

## **EXODUS 20:1**

### **GOD SPOKE**

When God spoke from Mount Sinai and wrote the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone, this was something new to mankind. The moral law with standards of right and wrong goes all the way back to the beginning. God's laws are written on the heart of every person. They go back even before angels were created. "Judgment and righteousness" are in God Himself. These stated and written laws, put before us God's standards that we might know what God intends us to be and how He intends for us to live. Rules that enact order in a person or society, are necessary to avoid chaos. Our lives are bound by laws of many different kinds and each one benefits us when we obey them, and has consequences we must suffer when they are disobeyed.

The law of fire can be very beneficial to warm us and cook our food for us but we can seriously suffer or die when that law is ignored or misused. Gravity is a law that enables us to maintain our balance and keeps us from living in a condition of confusion and danger of flying objects. It can also be the cause of death if we do not obey the law of gravity or think we can misuse it. Electricity has laws that governs its use. There is even the law of health that when obeyed, enables me to live well and comfortably, but when ignored I will die in pain without it showing any compassion. Laws are not arbitrary or peevish, but are necessary for maintaining order. Moral laws are placed within every person and conscience is also within us to guide us in obedience to those laws.

Laws demands obedience for human life to be lived right. The law of the Lord is perfect and right. Our notions of right and wrong are affected by our environment and our fallen nature. Some people today think nothing of stealing by guile what belongs to another person, but get very incensed when a murderer is condemned to die. Others think nothing is seriously wrong with adultery and won't accept that fact that God says it is wrong. The consequences of that action cause serious difficulties and emotional and maybe physical pain to all involved. The law establishes the basis of human conduct. It is like a mirror on the wall that reveals our need of being washed. It does not wash away the guilt of wrong choices and wrong living. It does reveal the fact of guilt and need of cleansing. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." The law is not faulty in any way but it does reveal the fault in us.

The Israelites had just come from Egypt where they had a lot of idols and many false gods they had served. Now "the Lord thy God" makes plain there is no other god for them. Practical holiness in God's people begins with a real understanding of who God is. It wouldn't have been difficult for the Jews to add God to the many other gods they worshipped. But if they didn't learn who the One True God was, they could not be His people. He was the One who delivered them after the plagues had opened the way out of Egypt. He was the One who parted the Red Sea, who gave them bread and meat, who turned bitter water into sweet water and

gave them water from the Rock. He was the One who gave them victory over the Amalekites. He was the One who dwelt in the cloud and fire - now He was the One speaking through the smoke and earthquake. God's people in every age need to remember who it is we serve and how holy and mighty He is that we might serve Him with reverence and godly fear. If we don't realize who our God is, no matter how we try to keep the other laws, there is no real value to it.

The law never made man a sinner. It revealed very plainly the fact that man is a sinner. The words that God spoke were to make people understand who He was and who they were. It is our schoolmaster that takes us by the hand and leads us to the cross and tells us we are sinners and need a Savior because our sin has consequences that far exceed any ability we have to deal with. To be out of harmony with God leaves us with a wrong understanding of Him. To have a wrong understanding of God gives us the impression that to do what He says is not all that serious. People say, "After all, God is love." Even those words we often hear from people lets us know how erroneous the thoughts of people about God are. There is even a wrong understanding as to what love is. The very fact that God is willing to speak to us and give us clear guidelines for living, for serving and for dying - is a great testimony to His love for us.

*Whose voice is that from Sinai's heights that bring trembling fear to men?  
None other than the voice of God giving instructions of His will to them.  
Until that time, they had seen evidence that God was on their side.  
But now there is an awesome fear that awakened them deep inside.*

*I think its true that even now there is not a real fear of God.  
Oh, people know and speak of Him, but I wonder is He really their Lord.  
It is well for me to stop and consider what I am about to say.  
Do I myself truly own Him as Lord and submit to Him each day?*

*God speaks to us in different ways, sometimes it's in the silence of written words.  
At other times, events in life or pain on the bed is where God's voice is heard.  
The ear of my mind must always be open that I might from Him learn  
What His will is for me to do, and from what other things I must turn.*

*First God reached me by His grace, through hearing His Gospel I was saved.  
Since that time, I have often heard His voice guiding this life I live.  
In love for me He speaks again and again so His purposes I won't mistake.  
Through means He chooses He expresses Himself to guide the way I take.*

*Through the scriptures of truth, He has put into words truths that I must know.  
And in that way, His will is revealed as to the way that I should go.  
There are things to do and things to refrain from, He knows the end from the beginning.  
Words He speaks are for my good and obeying Him keeps me from sinning.*

*It is not enough to know what is right, those same things I must do.  
He has a course laid out in life that by His words He leads me through.  
It would be foolish for me to take my own way; His way is always best.  
By me submitting to His gracious will, I find my life is greatly blessed.*

***"Father, I thank Thee for not being silent to Thy servant but for faithfully speaking to me through Thy Word. May I always have a reverential fear of Thee and be careful in my awareness of others seeing through me, my attitude towards Thee. Thou art holy - may Thy servant also be holy in all manner of life, walk and talk, In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 20:1.** "And God spake all these words, saying,"

#### **ALL THESE WORDS.**

*There is no other God, yet men with mind presumptuous –  
And others too with minds and eyes so superstitious –  
And still others with haughty thoughts, supercilious –  
Ignore, forget, blaspheme, despise God's words as spurious.*

*And with fingers stained with sins done and planned, begin to carve  
Out of stone or wood or precious metals, forms of things they think have  
Some virtue or some power to keep so they will be rich or may not starve –  
Rejecting words from God commanding no image should they grave.*

*God plainly did affirm none ever should in conversation speak in vain  
Nor carelessly take upon their lips in casual talk, or court – His name.  
Neither could they treat as their own, one weekly day that came  
As a reminder of a faithful God who rescued His own from sin and shame.*

*Honoring parents is today as strong a call from God to me,  
As when first given, when God assured “long life to thee” –  
Those who gave respect to them who honored appropriately  
The ones who nurtured, provided for and loved me unconditionally.*

*Laws we live by, day by day: “Do not kill...commit adultery...or lie”  
Still remain as foundation rules men across the world must live by.  
Do not steal that which is another’s, nor covet aught which catches the eye;  
No, all these words from God are right – obey them or you will die.*

*This standard is so lofty – reaching far above my ability to attain,  
That I wonder how is it possible to even partially maintain  
Such a code of conduct that to the most astute among us contains  
Rules, that even though are kept sometimes, are impossible to sustain.*

*Thankfully, One has come who did in every way, each and every jot – fulfill.  
His perfect nature, life and character, His wholesome work was in God’s will,  
For in His life on earth as Man among men – and death on Calvary’s hill –  
He met God’s legal claims for me – my Lord did it then and does it still.*

*“O Righteous God, Thy words are in my heart and I do desire to have them burned into my soul in such a way as to never be able to forget them. I recall them often in situations that arise and thankfully, they remind me that I am not my own person – I am Thine. My concern is that as I am getting older, I fear the deterioration of mind and will that may open my mouth at the wrong time and in the wrong way. Preserve me O God, for in Thee do I put my trust. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”*

## **EXODUS 20:2-23**

### **LOVE THE LORD...AND THY NEIGHBOR**

The Ten Commandments given by God are clearly divided into two parts. Love for God is the foundation to everything in the life of a child of God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Other things that claim the interests and occupy the time of people become objects of worship. Some very educated people will say, "There is no God," or "No God for me." These people worship themselves and their intellect. Others in ancient times had many gods they considered to have enough power over men that they should be worshipped. Some worshipped the sun because of its inability to be controlled by men. Others worshipped bulls, alligators, serpents - anything that seemed to have power. There were people who worshipped anything that had a "life-source" in it like plants, trees - even immoral practices of people. At the beginning of the Decalogue, God established the fact that there was to be no other god people would look to. "The gods which your fathers served...or the gods of the Amorites" were to be completely forsaken. They were not to make any form of anything that would be an object of worship. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." To change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man or animals, is not only an insulting attempt to degrade God, but will result in God giving them up to their own uncleanness according to Romans 1.

Objects of worship today may not only be carved or formed pieces of wood, metal or other forms of art, but people make them as objects of veneration. Many focus their attention on other ungodly visual images that take one's attention and claim their focused interest. There are many things depicted on television screens or are available for viewing on a computer that defile the mind and control the soul of those who allow those images an entrance into their being. Not only do they cause people to fantasize about ungodly things, but

they are often made in such a way as to disrespect God and sometimes make God into an object of derision in their minds and the minds of those they influence.

God's name carries His personal identity and to use His name frivolously and blasphemously as curse words, indicates one who does not take the Person of God seriously. To dishonor the Name of God is to dishonor the Person of God. Very few people use other names as curse words or words of disrespect. God's name is to be praised. His name is to be held in high esteem as we speak it in reverence when we worship God. The way we use any person's name reveals how we think of that person.

The Sabbath day became a covenant, a token between God and the children of Israel as we read in Exodus 31:17. The fact of the need of a day of rest for all of mankind is part of our nature. The reason for a day to rest is that incessant labor soon leaves a person unable to labor. During the French revolution they changed it to ten days of labor and one of rest, but it was soon changed back to one day in seven. Humans have been created by God with that seven-day cycle as part of our being. The body and soul of a man have to be allowed to synchronize with the spirit of man. The seventh-day rest was given for physical reasons, not to build a religion on. In the New Testament church, the first day of the week was the day God's people were to give their proportionate offerings. It was the day they assembled to break bread together in remembrance of Christ and to publicly show His death until He comes again. It was the day John received the revelation of Jesus Christ in the present and future and was the day of His resurrection. As a day of Resurrection, Remembrance, Responsibility, and Revelation it became a day of Rest and Refreshing of the spirit, soul and body. It also demonstrates the degree of importance we attach to God in our lives.

The law given does not only direct us in ways to express our love to the Lord our God, but as to whether we love our neighbor as ourselves. When I honor my parents, I will speak well of them, I will speak politely to them, I will show them courtesy and respect. I will not do what I know is wrong and I will do what they taught me is right. Parents who put God first in life have a special place in God's sight. It is my responsibility to honor them before God and men.

The command to not kill was not given to a nation but was given, as the other commands, to individuals. One man should not kill another. Nations are given authority to protect human life by taking human life, but this right is not given to individuals. The Lord Jesus clarified this when He equated anger and murder together. An individual's anger does not permit them to take another person's life.

Even though society has taken a different view of sex outside of wedlock, this does not change the law of God. Men may change laws by their governmental decrees to suit a changing society, but God's standards remain the same. The Lord Jesus clearly stated that lust leads one to commit adultery already in the heart. Changing social mores may lead to changing laws. And changing laws may lead to changing social consequences, but God remains the same, and so does the standard of righteousness He established. If adultery is permitted, so then is stealing, and if stealing so is lying. To take what belongs to another is still stealing no matter if it is the poor stealing from the rich or leaders stealing from the rank and file of the population. To lie in a court of law or in one's own home is still bearing false witness. To leave something out that should be said or to insert something into a conversation that is not entirely true is deception. To want to possess what belongs to another person goes beyond admiring what one has, to where it becomes envying and resentment over the fact that others have what I do not have. God knows what I have and He knows what I need. "A man's life does not consist of the abundance of things that he possesses."

Because sin is in the world, God has given the law to awaken us to its consequences. There is no excuse for us to claim we don't know what sin is. It is written in our hearts and it is written in the pages of scripture. My obligation is to love the Lord supremely and to love and value those around me in the same way I love myself.

*The laws are not complicated but they are very real.  
When the temptation is there to dishonor God, or lie and steal  
From those around me, then I need to stop and remember  
That God doesn't always settle His accounts in September.*

*There is pay-day coming for the laws that I break,  
There are consequences to accept for each decision I make.  
I will be wise if I stop to take time the law to read -  
And be wiser still if its teaching and warnings I heed.*

*I don't really need to read the words to know what is right and wrong.  
And I don't have to make snap-judgments as I travel along  
This road of life because in my very being God has placed within  
A consciousness of Himself and holiness, and what really is sin.*

*The law plainly articulates what I know is true.  
It tells the consequences of sin after it is through.  
As an austere teacher it warns me of what I will face  
If I don't obey those laws and give them the right place.*

*But the laws don't make me right, they just teach me the way,  
To live to please God in the things I do and what I say.  
Those laws expose my guilt and make me stop to consider  
That I need a righteousness imparted before I go any farther.*

*By the law I am made aware of my need of the Savior.  
It condemns me when it reveals my thoughts and my behavior.  
When it awakens me to face up to my sin now -  
The Spirit of God reveals Christ, what He did for my sins, and how.*

*Those commandments condemn me, leaving me hopelessly lost.  
The death of Christ for my sins reveals what broken laws cost.  
In his perfections He could fulfill the claims of the law for me -  
And by virtue of His sacrifice, I am set eternally free.*

*"I praise Thee, Father, for exposing the awfulness of sin and then revealing the only way sin can be paid for. It is always a cause for worship from me to consider the Lord Jesus Christ and the legal claims against me He settled once for all when He died on the cross. Please accept my heart-felt thanks. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 20:24-26**

### **ALL PLACES WHERE I RECORD MY NAME**

As God spoke at Mount Sinai, the Israelites had to be made aware of a number of important things they did not know. We need to be reminded ourselves of these same things. Our God is a Living God. He is not some mute god who reveals itself through things made by human hands. In that mountain where He placed His name unmistakably on His law, the very ground shook and the air was filled with smoke and lightning - the crashing of thunder - all impressed those people of the fact of a real Living God of immense power and authority. We have been made, we have been called into existence to live and move and have our being in God. We have been made for God and by God. It is His intention to communicate with us and we should gladly speak to Him.

By God's grace we have come further than Mount Sinai. We are come to Mount Zion, the city of the Living God. When the Holy Spirit gave us new life, we were awakened to God. The world, the flesh and the devil that blinded us and made us fear, have been replaced by a new nature and we are made a new creation in Christ. There is a consciousness of sin that awakened in our souls our need of God, and instead of trying to find a "Moses" or a priest to take our place so we might flee from God, we were drawn to Him by the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit. Now it is our delight to be where God is and He has recorded His name on the table of our hearts - and written our name on the palm of His hand.

We draw near with true hearts and in full assurance of faith to Him in the place where He records His name. God moved close to those people who had been worshipping "the creature rather than the Creator." It was entirely appropriate to speak loudly to them in the display of power and might. They had experienced the blessing of God every morning when they rose from sleep, for all around them lay the pure, sweet food from heaven as God spoke quietly to them in the bread from heaven. But they had to be awakened to the might, the authority, the power of God as He engraved on their hearts the reality of His Person and presence. His purpose wasn't to scare them but to impress them with their responsibility to obey Him. When God is obeyed, His power is available to us. When we are willing to obey Him, we follow Him because we love Him. When we love Him, "our fear is gone, we shun God's presence now no more."

The worship of God and the approach to Him is not left to the conclusions people make at the end of some conference or conclave they have arranged. God began with Israel by giving them some basic principles. Don't put your mark or handiwork on anything that belongs to God. The darkness of heathendom did that. Huge building and statues were made. Beautiful altars were designed and made by sin-polluted hands. Shapes were made by man's imagination to depict what cannot in any way describe God. We are not permitted, any more than the Israelites, to create our own religion.

The altar made for the burnt offerings and peace offerings were to be made of that which was to record the name of God alone. The sin offerings and the trespass offerings were given later and men were to identify themselves with that and the altar made to burn them on. This altar was not to have a tool laid on it. The moment the tool left its mark on that which is wholly for God, it is polluted.

Flowery words and preplanned phrases to make them attractive have no value in the worship of God. Soft music to sooth or loud music to excite, dim lights to calm people or flashing lights to arouse people, do not have a place where God records His name. Anything that takes away from the Lord Jesus Christ who died on the cross or that obscures in any way the message of the cross, is offensive. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Our theme, our message is "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." The magnificent buildings and visible trappings made by men to impress themselves and others with their religious inclinations, is not from God.

The tools of men, steps made to climb to the altar, were to have no place at all in the places where the Lord recorded His name. When a preacher's oratory, his skillful interpretation of God's truth is what appeals to people, his flesh is exposed and people are attracted to the wrong thing entirely. The attention of those who attend a gathering of God's people is to be on the burnt offering and the peace offering - on the Lord Jesus Christ as the Object of our gathering and our worship.

*What is this heap of stones gathered from all around?  
It looks like they have a purpose, but I don't hear a hammer's sound  
Making one stone fit better with another, they're stacked just the way they came.  
There is not a whole lot to attract, every stone is just so plain.*

*And that ramp of earth leading upward, why it's just made of earth.  
Why didn't someone make nice steps, that ramp is of little worth.  
Isn't religion supposed to be attractive so people will come and see?  
Hopefully if they like it, they will become part of the company.*

*No, the point of the altar is this, a burnt offering is offered to God.  
Nothing should display man's work; focus is to be on the Lord.  
The offering is what's important, not the place the offering is on.  
The stones will be just a pile, when the burnt and peace offerings are gone.*

*God's people are on a journey, we have not reached home as yet.  
Our tent pegs need to be easily pulled as the closer to the goal we get.  
The offerings for worship are important, it keeps our attention on Him  
Who has called us to follow His steps, not to be attracted to the religions of men.*

*The places where God records His name are not just the buildings erected.  
Sometimes where the offerings are made by people the world has neglected  
The poor people are sitting on the ground with heads and hearts bowed low -  
God has placed His name there where nothing of man's glory shows.*

*It is always the offering that counts, the trappings really mean nothing.  
Those who come to worship, each one is prepared to give something  
That will honor the Lord and cause worship and praise from true hearts.  
The stones, not the offering remains, when the last of the worshippers departs.*

*May my imprint never be on that which is to be for God alone.  
May any words or impressions be such, they can be acceptable at God's holy throne.  
May God's name be recorded indelibly on the heart of each one there.*

*May the impact of the burnt and peace offerings be such that we God's imprint bear.*

*"Father in heaven, for the privilege of worshipping Thee and bringing the offerings of our blessed Lord and His perfections to Thee, I give Thee praise and thanks. For any fresh and meaningful thoughts that in any way honor Thee, I give Thee thanks. Please accept this fruit of my lips and this song in my heart. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 21**

### **RESPONSIBILITY AND INTENT**

There are consequences in everything we do in life. The day by day living of any person will usually affect others in one way or another. It is important for us to take time to think a thing through as to what will be the outcome of a matter, before we act. Someone has said, "Act in haste, repent at leisure." The law of relationships has guidelines that are common sense but also have legal ramifications. There is nowhere in scripture that indicates God approves of slavery. In ancient times it was accepted and even in comparatively recent times in North America, Europe, Africa and Asia. In most of those places people made their own rules to guide them. The Israelites could never make one of their own nation a permanent slave. If a debt was owed and a Hebrew became a servant, there was a six-year period of service allowed to pay the debt. If the Hebrew was married when he became an indentured servant, after six years of labor was finished, he and his family were free to go. If during the time of his service he was married to another servant, at the end of the six years he was free to go but his wife who legally belonged to the master, had to stay along with any children they may have had.

But there was another option open to the one who could go out free and independent. He could choose to remain a servant and stay with his wife, children and master. The law of the Hebrew servant is a very wonderful type of Jehovah's Perfect Servant, our Lord Jesus Christ. He was a Hebrew Servant - "The Lion of the tribe of Judah." He came in by Himself - "He took upon Him the form of a servant." He was given a bride, the Church - "All that the Father giveth Me, shall come to Me." He made a public declaration of His love of his Master, wife and children - "The Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me." He had to be marked as a testimony at the door - "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son cleanseth us from all sin." He had to be bored through with an awl - "They pierced My hands and My feet." He would be a servant forever - "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish."

If it was the intent of the Hebrew servant to remain a servant, this would be obvious and known to everyone. His responsibility then would be to his master, wife and children for his lifetime because of his love for them. The Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled this law completely for God, for His bride and for sinners who He could redeem through His sacrifice.

The laws concerning injuries were given as guidelines so that extreme measures wouldn't be taken to rectify small matters, nor serious matters be taken lightly and the consequences overlooked. Punishment for personal injuries can be too harsh or too lenient. The nation was to put to death the one who deliberately murdered another. Provision was made for one to get a fair hearing and trial. Self-defense would not demand execution. There was provision for the home to be protected from a willful son who attacked his parents, by considering that attack a capital crime. The same was held true for one who kidnapped another. Even though slavery was a huge system to the extent that one nation could be slaves to another, God dealt with that issue.

Injuries that happened, either deliberately caused or accidental, were defined by God so that proper and fair reimbursement might be made for time lost or the effects caused. Serious injuries were dealt with seriously. If no serious injuries occurred in an event, fines were imposed. All of these laws were reasonable so the punishment would fit the crime. These guides were given so the judges had rules that were known by all the people, and the offenders could expect righteous retribution. In order for discipline to be effective on the offender and/or the observers, it must be consistent to the offense. Too harsh a sentence is unfair, and too lenient a sentence doesn't teach correct behavior to anyone. Laws have to be enforced if there is to be order in a society and protection for the lives and property of the people.

God's grace has been extended to us reminding us that we have been delivered from the eternal consequences of our sin by the sacrifice of Christ. The liberty we have is not because God ignored or overlooked sin, but because He provided the Perfect Substitute for us.

*Laws are not trivial rules we make to impose control by our self-will.  
They provided a standard in the past that maintains proper order still.  
Those laws were not easy nor were they unfair, they suited the stated need.*

*Even today when those laws are enforced, they work when to them we heed.*

*But we have a problem, as a nation we have changed our laws to suit ourselves.  
Harsh penalties are imposed on trivial things, while important things are being shelved.  
People may go to jail for killing an animal, but for killing an unborn child they're free.  
For small things one may lose all they have, and serious things may have no penalty.*

*We all need to remember, God is not dead, and everything is known to Him.  
His judgments are fair, His definitions are the same, He hasn't changed the meaning of sin.  
Some may think they have avoided the penalty because they have never been caught.  
Take into your consideration if you will, the One who these laws to us taught.*

*God first wrote them on the hearts of all men so no one has an excuse -  
To say they didn't know what is right or wrong, or with truth to play fast and loose.  
By the time Israel was a recognizable nation, those laws were well understood.  
They were not given to take or leave, or pay attention to only if we would.*

*There are penalties to laws, even if you break one, God says you're guilty of all.  
Because they are linked together as one, to break one link the whole chain will fall.  
By carefully reading the law and giving it heed, we realize its purpose is clear.  
It gives everyone the guilty verdict so we will give God reverence and holy fear.*

*God knows we have broken those very righteous standards; we all have been born in sin.  
So, God sent His Son to fulfill that law and make possible righteousness in Him.  
We know we are guilty and must take our place as a sinner condemned before God.  
Then the way of redemption from the curse of the law has been made understandable in His Word.*

*Whether it's property rights or personal injuries, the law defines the claim.  
The way of retribution is defined in words, the law fits each person the same.  
When I make daily decisions, I must wisely consider the outcome of each action I make.  
So that when the force of the law is applied, I'll not ever want to make a mistake.*

***"Father, please help me to keep my lips shut and my mind open to every challenge of this day. When I must speak, guide these words by the Spirit of Truth. May every thought be kept in captivity to the obedience of Christ. May every action reflect well on my Lord and Master. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 21:5.** *"And if the servant shall plainly say, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free:'"*

#### **GO OUT FREE.**

*The years passed slowly at first -  
Boredom of unrequited labor seems futile-  
And then - a change, a wife, a gift, a love.  
The sunrises are more beautiful - sunsets more serene.  
Love has come - given by a benevolent Master  
And servitude has a meaning.*

*Joy comes - not with a paycheck -  
But with new life and then - lives -  
Given by the miracle of life from God.  
He who holds the keys that start and stop -  
Has graciously given - little living proofs of love -  
And life has a meaning.*

*The calendar says, the day has come - it's here -  
No escaping the beckoning hand of independence -  
Self-freedom, shackles, pride of ownership again -  
Calls loud and clear to me saying, "Come."  
And love watches from an increasing distance -*

*And liberty has a meaning.*

*Watching eyes from doors and windows – and the gate –  
And two turn, looking over new-freed shoulders –  
The door is there; freedom just beyond waits.  
Paused at the door – feet stop - moves sideways –  
The words – the awl – the blood drops - the forever-hole –  
And love has a meaning.*

*“The news is good Father, You have saved another young man we overlooked for years. How good and gracious of You to reach David. He will be watched by his parents and others to see if he too belongs to the fraternity of the “bored ear.” May I truly make manifest that is who I am. “I love my Master, I love my wife, I love my children. I will not go out free. Amen.”*

## **EXODUS 22**

### **PROPERTY LAWS...SOCIAL LAWS**

There are laws to guide people as it relates to ourselves as individuals. Therefore, we have the Ten Commandments. When obeyed there is a "quiet and peaceable life" possible in us as individuals. There were also laws given concerning personal relationships and personal injuries that come when people live in a normal society. When those laws were considered and the effects of choices known, people would stop to think before they acted and one could live in peace with his neighbor. There were laws given concerning property rights that would keep a whole society from disintegrating into chaos and hatred.

The standards of the law imposed on a nation of people will be valuable as long as the standards are maintained. What is happening now is standards are being abandoned as a measure of law and justice. God's principles work when applied to protect the nation from themselves, to organize people in a way that they would know what to expect from the actions they take, and to keep the attention of people living there focused on God, not on what is convenient to willful men.

Examples of handling property rights are given so people would know what to expect when they crossed the barriers of social laws. A trained ox would be worth more than a sheep when it came to restitution of stolen property. The fine for the ox was five times its normal value because of the time spent training it and the work it could do. The value of a sheep was in its wool and meat only. The fine was four times its value. Self-defense in the dark of night had different consequences than killing an intruder in broad daylight. When property was destroyed by carelessness and indifference or laziness on the part of one who didn't tend to his fire or his animals, the restitution he had to pay doubled from the "best" he had.

All of these principles have a common sense approach to the property rights of people and what those who chose to steal or be careless about could expect to happen to them. Restitution was not based on a person's ability to pay, but on the value of the problem they caused. Hard labor done to repay what has been done to another would be a great deterrent to breaking the law. It would also motivate the offender, the one offended and those around who knew about the matter, to not do the same thing. The loss of animals, property, produce and things borrowed, were all addressed as illustrations of the value and need of obedience to the laws of God.

There are times when we create a problem and we must take stock of ourselves to see what can be done to make wrong things right. It may be our responsibility to go beyond what is expected to alleviate any problem and pain we might have caused. If we go beyond what is normal restitution it could help the other person to forgive us and it will certainly make me think more clearly and carefully before I do such a thing again.

There were easily understood laws given by God to govern actions regarding people. To entice a young woman to yield to a man's advances was a legal matter and either marriage or a dowry price was the price of restitution. A person's intention must be made clear and social actions are to follow the path of respect and righteousness that enables one's dignity and integrity to remain intact.

Satanic practices appeal to the dark side of many people. It seems to be gaining in interest in video games, board games and even in religious practices. People today are fascinated with movies and television programs that deal with witchcraft and things practiced in the occult. This was a capital crime according to God's laws because it has as its objective, death and people joining up with Satan against God. Sorcery,

witchcraft and any form of dark satanic influence uses evil powers of darkness to destroy human beings and keep them from the blessings of God's salvation.

It is wrong for us to ignore the needs of others we do not know. To mistreat aliens who come into a new environment where they feel out of place and alone, is wrong. Strangers need someone to show God's love and kindness to them. A sensitivity to the needs of strangers is needed because we may be strangers ourselves somewhere, or maybe have experienced the aloneness of being the new person on a job, in the classroom or in a family gathering.

Widows and orphans need interest and care shown to them. We need to remember there are other needs beside financial needs, that follow a death and the great separation it brings to a family. To mistreat them, the poor people among us, the less fortunate, is taken very seriously by God who has given us laws to conduct ourselves by in these matters with these people.

Fairness and righteousness go together. Overcharging for goods and services, exorbitant interest costs, lack of compassion all have negative consequences imposed by God when there are crimes committed against humanity and normal human living. We owe those who lead us in the nation, respect for the office they hold even if they are unfit people in themselves. The commandments maintain order even when tyrants rule.

It is our privilege to give God the first of everything He has given to us. We would have nothing without His gracious giving to us day by day of all the things we need from His great storehouse of provision. The whole purpose of these laws is that we would be set apart as holy people, for God and to be like Him.

*When it comes to other people I dare not ever say,  
"It doesn't matter what happens to them as long as I get my way."  
I am my brother's keeper; I don't live on an island alone.  
There are reasonable responses to others God expects from me to be done.*

*It goes without saying it is wrong for me to take what is not mine.  
But what should I do if someday great treasure I do find?  
Can I claim for myself what I have not earned and think there is no consequence?  
What about those things I have gathered under what was false pretence?*

*No, all these laws help me understand all life is lived before God.  
There are divinely given privileges that are carried out according to God's Word.  
Sometimes wrongs have to be "righted" by making more than restitution.  
Doors of bitterness can often be closed by a more than fair contribution.*

*To offend another person in some way that affects their life -  
May mean that I have to go another way to avoid some stress and strife.  
If I have broken or mislaid some personal thing entrusted to me -  
It is up to me to make full restitution and then add more than the normal fee.*

*There will always be needy people: widows, orphans and the poor.  
It is never right for me to not consider them and their needs ignore.  
With wisdom and compassion, I am to do for them what I can.  
Never is it acceptable for me to walk away from the needs of my fellow man.*

*The law and common sense usually go well together.  
Not often do you see one at work without the consideration of the other.  
The demands of the law are not unfair, nor do they extend beyond my reach.  
When common sense is applied to them, those legal practices I can teach.*

*The law doesn't make me a Christian but it establishes my citizenship.  
When I conduct my life by its guidance, it enhances my fellowship  
With those around me where I live and those I will someday know.  
Life lived by faith under sensible laws, the grace of God will show.*

*"There are a lot of ways, Father, that I can show my faith in Thee and commitment to living by faith. Probably one that shows publicly the most what I believe, is how I act in society. I do not want to appear to be a burdened down person because I follow Thee and Thy truth. May I always be cheerful in obedience, happy in living by faith, and of a cheerful countenance that is real and attractive to those I meet. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

**EXODUS 22:12.** *"And if it be stolen from him, he shall make restitution unto the owner thereof."*

#### **RESTITUTION.**

*It wasn't man, but God who planned a way to keep things right.  
God made a difference when the crime was done – by day or by night.  
It is clear to me, whatever was done – in secret or in plain sight –  
The person who was clearly wrong – was commanded to make restitution.*

*Now things have changed, and men step in to take the place of God.  
Many thieves and criminals are freed – even those who've shed men's blood.  
The result is crimes often go unpaid and most don't fear the Lord –  
And think if they sin even against God – there is no restitution.*

*I may never have done what others have and think I'm not so bad –  
My privileges and upbringing – rules taught by Mom and Dad,  
Have kept me back from doing things – maybe even some I wish I had –  
Because I knew when I was caught – there would be restitution.*

*Many people seem to have got the idea – God doesn't know what is going on.  
That we can do what we want just now, and when we're dead, we're just gone  
To the grave and that is the end – when life is over, we are done.  
They do not realize God is still the same – they must make restitution.*

*A gracious God knew my limitations – what I could or could not do.  
He knows the deeds done and undone impossibilities – what I am – and so –  
He loved me, and in great grace sent down the Lord Jesus to go –  
To Calvary's cross, and on my behalf – make full restitution.*

*"Lord God, the Supreme Authority over all mankind: I know that all is known to Thee. If there is anything I need to go back to and correct; anything that must be made right between me and others; if any loss has occurred because I have not made restitution – bring it to my mind that I may take steps to rectify that problem that can easily make a barrier between me and Thy divine will. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

**EXODUS 23:1-9**

#### **JUSTICE AND MERCY**

A lot of difficulty and heart-break can be the result of hearing and passing on to others false reports and gossip. For some malicious reason, some people initiate lies hoping to undermine the credibility of another person. Envy on the part of the Jewish leadership was the reason the words of Jesus were distorted and misrepresented. He did not say He was going to destroy the Temple. He had said to them, "Destroy (other people) this temple (His own body)" and He would raise it up in three days. This is what actually happened. Slander, false witnessing and gossip can affect families by setting one member against another. To misrepresent a person's words, to use them out of the context in which they were given, can create problems with neighbors and friends. False testimony and lies in court cause the justice system great problems because so much time has to be spent seeking out the truth before a fair decision can be made. To agree to deception puts both parties on an equal basis of condemnation. It is our responsibility to stop a false rumor or a lie rather than to pass it along to others.

Justice is often perverted when a rich person is being judged. At the same time a sympathetic disposition to the poor man's cause is wrong also. The whole point of judging a matter is that impartial justice be carried out without being pressured by those around. Fairness means we treat rich and poor alike when determining a just conclusion to a matter. Twisting justice only creates more problems that will complicate the lives of all involved.

A startling new instruction was given in the law. Be kind to your enemies. This was very unusual in that day because revenge was considered the way to deal with those who came against you in any way. Even though a person may be hostile towards you, the laws of fairness and kindness apply. If property such as an animal of an enemy was lost and you found it, you were to return it to the owner. If you see a problem and you are in a position to give aid, you must give it. It is important that we all learn not to return evil for evil. Even if evil is spoken against you, to respond with gracious words will show the reality of your Christian testimony and faith in God. There are some things we stay away from knowing that God knows all that is behind a matter and will deal in justice or mercy as He sees fit. Our responsibility is to stay away from anything that is evil.

The problem associated with receiving a gift from another person is you may be expected to change your opinion or form your words differently to bring condemnation on another person. Bribes given to those in authority pervert justice and undermine the whole purpose of laws. To maintain one's integrity, any leverage imposed by the gift or bribe of another person, must be rejected. Judgment and justice should be carried out without respecting any person or accepting any favors. Justice is depicted in a statue as a blindfolded woman with a sword in one hand and a scale in the other. This shows visibly the need of wisdom and discernment in making decisions and the willingness to carry out justice in a fair way to prevent further transgressions of the law.

Prejudice is another issue among God's people that has to be faced. It can lead to oppression and unfairness towards deserving people and increasing trouble for them to live in peace and quietness. We are to be sympathetic towards those who live among us who are far from home. It is important that we do not discriminate against the strangers and aliens because we were once strangers and aliens ourselves. Compassion for the strangers is to be our response to their need. Enduring affliction from the circumstances they are in is enough. The strangers should not have to endure it from us. Our role is to comfort and aid those in need and seek to enter into their situation that we may make it easier for them and be able to help them.

*I know there are problems in life to be faced,  
And some of them cannot be solved.  
But when I remember how God showed me grace.  
Then I cannot help but be involved.  
The ones caused by words that misrepresent,  
Are ones I must always avoid.  
Those generally come from someone who sent,  
False testimony and with the truth have toyed.*

*There may be those who I do not know,  
And they hope I will make mistakes and fail.  
My responsibility is that God's grace will show  
In my life no matter what that entails.  
I may need to give my enemy a hand,  
To overcome some special problem he has.  
It doesn't have to be something so grand,  
I may be seen only by God's eyes.*

*When I see needs it is my obligation,  
To seek ways those needs can be met.  
To fulfill them will require my concentration,  
So, a bitter spirit or debt I will forget.  
The objective of justice is to do what is right,  
That all involved may be able to live in peace.  
Most good that is done will be done out of sight,  
When no one but the eyes of God really see.*

*There will be those who come into my life,  
Whose situations I cannot ignore.  
Instead of looking at it as someone else's plight,  
I can see that as an opened door,*

*Through efforts put forth to make life easier,  
For someone who is having a hard time.  
Strangers, orphans - the widows need one to feed her,  
And the privilege of meeting that need is mine.*

*"Father, may I never overlook some needy person or avoid some situation where I can honor Thee by showing mercy and doing justly. If it please Thee and be according to Thy purposes, use this vessel of clay to hold some glory and honor for Thee. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 23:11-33**

### **REST... REMEMBER... RELATIONSHIPS**

There are reasons beyond physical tiredness God made rest a requirement by law. Working productively began in the Garden of Eden and has always been a way by which a person can realize their personal significance. Since the fall of man in sin, it has been a necessity for survival. We earn bread by the "sweat of thy brow." There was this one exception as the children of Israel journeyed to the Promised Land. Bread from heaven was supplied in the morning and meat in the evening. But even then, the principle of provision because of labor applied. The Hebrews had to rise early and each one had to "gather according to their eating." The day before the Sabbath they had to gather twice as much to supply their needs while they rested. The day of rest gave the Israelites uninterrupted time to consider all the blessings of the Lord. They would think about His goodness, His provisions, His will, His promises and the blessings that lay before them if they followed Him and obeyed Him. Probably they would think about the past and their deliverance. Rest rejuvenates the spirit and soul as well as the body.

But rest is also important for animals and the land itself. There is a restoration of nutrients when land is left untouched for a year. Different plants bring different things to rejuvenate the soil. Trees gather carbon from the air. Legumes bring one kind of material through their broad leaves, and other plants bring other things to replenish the earth. When left untouched for those twelve months there is restored to the earth what is needed to produce fruitful seasons again. The produce that grew voluntarily also provided for the needs of those who were poor and destitute. In our present day the land is constantly being depleted by repeatedly planting and harvesting. The use of fertilizer releases from the ground what is needed to produce a harvest. Each year the earth is depleted without any rejuvenation. Inevitably the land will get to the place where it won't produce anything. The whole purpose of legally enforced rest was to make sure men and women remembered who God is and what He has done for them and to provide replenishment of strength for man, beast and the very earth itself. The foreshadowing of Israel's future is also one of the lessons to be learned while thinking of the fact that "there is a rest for the people of God."

The giving of the law was also to make sure God's people didn't go after the false gods of Egypt or the land where they were going to live. They were not to speak about them or consider them in any way. They were not to try and satisfy their curiosity about them or even try to understand why other people found those gods so attractive. We will not be edified in any way, nor will we be better equipped to further the Gospel, knowing what false cults and false religions practice and teach. It is much more profitable for us to know what the scriptures teach so we can present what is positive and true, rather than refute what is false and even win an argument successfully. It is possible to win an argument and lose any hope of winning the humiliated person.

The feasts they were to keep on the journey had good reasons behind them. They were to be kept so the Lord's people would remember the past. We learn from our history and the history of others when we take to heart the lessons they learned before us. We learn what God did for them and remember He can do the same for us. The feasts would focus the attention of all the people on the redemption they had experienced, and the fact they were where they were because of God's redemptive grace and mercy. They would gather at those feasts and share in common the life they had with people from all over the nation, and renew acquaintances with old friends. They would also make new friends and form new and safe relationships for them and their children. The Lord Himself was with them as the "Angel" guide who led them. They would remember it was no accident where they were the people of God, and God's plans were yet being unfolded ahead of them. The gathering together of God's people is a great benefit and encouragement in many ways. We should not neglect God's call to come together and "exhort one another." It is a safeguard for us and promotes fellowship, growth and accountability.

By obeying the law in relation to rest and remembrance, they were forming safeguards regarding relationships. The world around us has all kinds of attractions that appeal to our nature and can quickly lead us to adapt to the world instead of people in the world wanting to be like us. God Himself guides us, goes

before us in difficult times and opens the path of faith for us to walk in confidence in spite of the pressures around us to conform to the world. It is incumbent on me to guard my mind, my actions before my family and God's people, and before those around who want us to be like them. It is wrong for me to open the way for my children to assimilate easily into the ways of those who serve other gods. It would be a great disservice to my family and friends if I did not retain a separate lifestyle that is consistent with biblical teaching and practice. It would mislead other people if I tried to do things as much as possible like those who serve other gods. The True God and the god of this world, Satan, do not mix. Righteousness and unrighteousness are opposites. A child of God and a child of wrath do not have the same goals. I must take the time to rest and remember and form right relationships in order to maintain fellowship with God and be a blessing to others.

*Some people seem so busy that they haven't time to stop and rest.  
For some reason they can't accept the fact it is because of God's goodness they are blest.  
I can't do much about them, but when I take a day of godly rest they may see,  
The things that are important to God, are the same things important to me.*

*So I do stop to consider on the first day of the week the Person who came in grace,  
Into this world of lost sinful men and on Calvary's cross took my place,  
That we could be free from sin and its bondage when we trusted completely in Him.  
Our rest and remembrance focus on our Lord Jesus and when our life of faith did begin.*

*To settle quietly in a chosen place and recall with grateful hearts, all the way  
The Lord has led and guided our lives makes us rejoice, and worship and pray.  
How gracious our God has been to us, what gratitude to Him we owe.  
By stopping to rest and remember the Lord is one way my thankfulness shows.*

*When I do this in the way God intended, I find I am not there alone.  
There are others who appreciate all Christ has done and willingly His Lordship own.  
We find we have a lot in common when we meet in fellowship and remember -  
It was the Lord himself who guided us here that our offerings to Him we might tender.*

*The relationships formed by doing what God said has opened to us world-wide,  
A fellowship that exceeds all others and is maintained when in our Lord we abide.  
We have a lot in common even though our words may hardly be understood.  
What joins us tightly in these holy gatherings is the name and Person of our Lord.*

*These relationships that bind us are actually ways God has set us free -  
To walk in holy fellowship with others and the Lord Jesus in liberty.  
The pressures of those around that seek to mold and conform us to their way -  
Have no appeal when our minds are renewed and the transformed life has its sway.*

***"Father and God of all grace, I find myself this morning in a blessed state of mind to rest in Thee and remember Thy gracious ways with me for all these years. I am also remembering names and faces of beloved brothers and sisters in Christ we have associated with all over the world in times of holy convocation. How blessed is my remembrance of the relationships formed with them! How blessed is what we all have together with Thee! In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 23:20.** "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared."

"No false report ... do not follow the evil crowd ... do not yield to the poor man's cause ... never refuse to help your enemy ... take no bribes ... do not oppress the stranger ... take proper care of your land ... keep the feasts of the Lord."

**AN ANGEL ... TO KEEP THEE ... TO BRING THEE.**

*What is that buzzing sound I hear?  
It seems I can hear it everywhere -  
The sound of people fleeing in fear -  
Reminds me that the Angel of God is near  
To make God's promise mine.*

*Other sounds come from barely opened lips.*

*A person leans close to tell how another slips.  
I remember then how a false report will tip  
My judgment – I must quickly this falsehood nip  
In the bud – or the sin is mine.*

*Loud cheering sounds of ecstasy –  
Comes soaring over the air to me –  
And I am sorely tempted to go and see  
What the outcome of such evil will be –  
But it is wrong – I must close these ears of mine.*

*The poor man whines – he thinks life is unfair.  
He rallies discontent – he wants me to be there  
To support his cause – though it is still unclear  
What he hopes to gain when he is not willing to share  
Any work – he wants that to be mine.*

*A call for help comes out of the dark,  
I respond by running to give some help –  
But it is my enemy – I am about to remark,  
“You deserve...” , but the Spirit gives me an awful start –  
The problem that is his could be mine.*

*The voice of the tempter says, “Just take the cash...  
If you’ll just do this, no one will ever ask  
Or even know – I’ll give you some – there’ll be no tax.”  
Then I’m reminded – looking over my back  
Is my Lord – He knows what is really mine.*

*A strange sounding voice – words I don’t understand  
Come to me from another – that immigrant man.  
I can tell by his tone and stretched out hand –  
He wants my friendship – he will do what he can  
To earn this respect of mine.*

*God gave this to me – it is not really my own.  
The silent calls from possessions – and what I call “my home”  
Remind me again of Him from whom all blessings come.  
I must not abuse, nor forget what God in grace has done –  
That lets me call these things mine.*

*The call comes to worship, this is a special day.  
God wants to see me give from my heart the words I say.  
I dare not approach or worship in a casual way.  
I will come to His house and my vows I will pay –  
For this Savior and Lord is mine.*

*“I thank Thee today, O Gracious Father, that Thou hast sent this Angel before me, to keep me from all these calls, voices and strange sounds that entice. I am on my way to ‘the place’ Thou hast prepared and I do not want to be side tracked by anything – not even the new leadership of the country. Help me to keep my eyes on the high ground ahead and stay walking in Beulah Land on my way to those heights. Give me the grace to avoid all the challenges that are thrown in this narrow path that conspire to trip me up. I pray earnestly in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”*

## **EXODUS 24**

### **COVENANT CONFIRMATION**

When covenants are formed there is agreement between those who come into this pact to the terms stated. When the elders of Israel, Aaron and two of his sons, Joshua and Moses came to that mountain, Israel had twice affirmed they wanted God's law and His commandments. Moses wrote everything down so there could be no misunderstanding or changing of the words of the book of the covenant. There could not be some watered-down version when this book of the law was read to later generations. Even though they would not have been at Mount Sinai, they would be obligated to live by the terms of that covenant. In this ratification ceremony a number of things took place that would make sure everyone knew what was happening between the nation of Israel, and the Holy, Sovereign Lord and Supreme Judge of the universe.

An altar of uncut stones or earth was erected at the base of the mountain and twelve pillars of stacked up stones were made there also. The twelve stone pillars would be a reminder that all the tribes of Israel were in agreement with this covenant. The altar on which the oxen were sacrificed, represented the fact that this covenant was formed with God. This was no casual religious ceremony. A nation was agreeing to form a covenant to obey and serve the Sovereign God. The animal on the altar was accepted by God as a substitute for the sinner so that approach to God could be made because of the sinless substitute. The shed blood symbolized death for sin and a life that was spared because of it. The burnt offerings were made that the people would be accepted by God, and the peace offerings were for thanksgiving to God and communion they could have with Him. Half of the blood was on the altar for approach to God. The other half was sprinkled on the people as a testimony that sin had been paid for. When a person would look at that blood spot on their body, they would realize a serious covenant with God had been formed. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." We must never forget the value and terms of the new covenant that has been formed with God on our behalf. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." This affirmation of God's satisfaction assures us of our salvation and acceptance in Christ.

When those men went up that mountain and saw that clear blue sapphire glowing in the place where God was, they would have understood how holy God was and how privileged they were. If the bottom of God's feet made a sky-blue sapphire pavement, how fearful it was to be in His presence. Even though God is a Spirit and cannot be seen by natural eyes, the reality of His presence can be seen in how it affects all that are around Him. They would be reminded, even as we are, that "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in Spirit and in truth."

For our understanding, we see God when we see the Lord Jesus Christ. We haven't seen Him physically, but we will. When we see Him, we will see God. Jesus said, "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father." "In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." It is in Him and through Him we are brought to God. He is the "One Mediator between God and men."

When Moses and Joshua went further up that mountain, the law had already been given and the covenant between God and Israel confirmed. God intended the children of Israel to have those tablets of stone as visible evidence of the law they had agreed to. The covenant principle they had agreed to on their part was the six day wait and then on the seventh day God called Moses in such a way that when he went into that cloud of God's presence, everyone - Joshua, the elders, Aaron and his sons and all of Israel would be impressed with the importance of the covenant they had entered into.

The forty days of being alone with God in that time of communion getting the plans and purposes of the Tabernacle, would have been another reminder of fellowship with God. Joshua was on the lower part of the mountain and the people on the plain below. The people were already failing the test of the forty days. Forty is the number of testing in this scripture as well as in other places in the scriptures. Israel failed in the first test of forty days when they insisted on making the golden-calf, a symbol they still had in their minds from the years spent in Egypt. The world makes lasting impressions on our minds if we do not "Keep our minds stayed" on the Lord. It is very important that we never treat the things of God lightly or consider there are no consequences if we compromise or ignore the truth of God.

*We should never think we are always free to do what we choose.  
If we go our way, not God's, there is everything to lose.  
Fellowship with God is because a covenant with Him has been made.  
That covenant is based on the work of Christ, and the price of blood He paid.*

*The basis of the new covenant is not something to be taken lightly.  
Some people want drama and beauty, they think blood is too unsightly.  
But our redemption has been paid by blood, which to us who believe is precious.  
Any other things that men want to add, is at very best only specious.*

God has Himself established the terms by which we can be accepted.  
He willingly and freely forgives us by blood, nothing else from us is expected.  
Our part in this covenant with grace and love as its motive is believe by faith.  
Faith in Him motivates us to obey and serve Him in this place.

To add any more to a covenant based on Christ's life given for me,  
Would not only be insulting to what God gave, but would make valueless what was free.  
Free grace defies any amount we might add, divine love can't be measured by man.  
There is not one thing to add to a complete work, not done by any man's hand.

That mountain shook and burned, making the hearts of onlookers to fear.  
They had to understand the presence and Person of God was near.  
It is not something light or insignificant to God when we come to Him in faith.  
There is plenty of evidence around that testifies God is here, without me seeing His face.

When the covenant was made and the terms of it, I gladly received -  
Then God became real to me, even more real today than when I first believed.  
In Him I live and move, He knows the way and directs my path.  
And the fellowship and joy in Him are greater, the more of knowing His grace I grasp.

**"Father, a new day is opening before me that will take me far away from here. And yet I find great comfort in knowing that Thou art with me and hast guided me to take this journey. Prosper it I pray and may I meet the terms of Thy covenant with me as I seek to honor and serve Thee in the days ahead. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."**

**EXODUS 24:12.** "And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to Me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mightest teach them."

#### **COME UP TO ME.**

Word after word – just like God said them.  
Page after page clearly stating God's will.  
Stone after stone gathered and carefully placed there –  
Until an altar to God stood under the hill.

One by one the animals were led there.  
Sacrifice after sacrifice – burnt offerings and peace.  
Basin after basin of blood by the altar –  
Then the book was opened explaining the covenant made.

Step after step climbing high on the mountain –  
Stone after stone paved like blue sapphire and clear.  
One by one with bowed heads when they saw them –  
The fear of the Lord was obvious there.

Clearly – so clearly God spoke there to Moses,  
"Leave them – yes leave them, come up here to Me."  
Smaller and smaller he seemed, as to God he approaches –  
Fading from men's eyes God's glory he sees.

Day after day as I read of my Savior –  
Thought after thought comes bringing light to my soul.  
Word after word God speaks peace to me there –  
Bringing joy to my heart as God's truth He unfolds.

Subject after subject that affects my life daily –  
One after another they are there to meet needs.  
Grace given for grace needed – satisfied fully –

*Coming as God lets me see as He sees.*

*Faith for faith there as new questions arise.  
Strength added to strength comes when God is near.  
Blessing upon blessing falls from heaven's supplies.  
Joy upon joy when my Lord I can hear.*

*"O Heavenly Father, when I come up to Thee a lot of things that are unimportant fade away. In their place come those things of eternal value and my view of life and its events seems more like Thy own. Thanks for the invitation to draw near with a true heart and in full assurance of faith. Thanks for not striking me dead for my approaching with uplifted eyes and heart. I am not trying to be assertive or casual. I am just confident of Thy love and grace that will not send me away empty. I love Thee, Father. I am so grateful to belong to Thee. Amen."*

## **EXODUS 25:1-2**

### **FAITH AND SIGHT JOIN**

For forty days Moses was out of sight of the Israelites while God gave him the design, the plan, the materials list and the purpose of the Tabernacle. It was obviously not something to be taken carelessly or even something to be added to or anything taken from. God was giving a visible representation of Himself that would link the faith of the people of God to their everyday life with - and for God. This was not a graven image made in some form so people could see God looking in some way like themselves. The pattern, the model, the representation of God was an unusual structure similar to a building, only uniquely different. This building was to denote and illustrate in ways people could see, what the God in whom they had put their faith was like. God wasn't getting any input at all from Moses. God gave the size, the form and the material from the pins to hold the fence in place, to those things that wouldn't be seen like a rod going from end to end in the walls, to the undergarments of the priests, to Moses and all was to be made exactly as He instructed.

Divine instructions are not something to be tampered with. If the type is to be so carefully made, how much more that which is the reality. We dare not haphazardly make images of God. We dare not adapt the ideas of men about the Lord Jesus Christ into some frame of human design so He is more acceptable to the wishes of sinful men. We dare not make the teaching and practice of the Church, the Body of Christ or the local church composed of obedient believers into something of our own design. The Gospel is "the Gospel of God." The assembly I am a part of is "the house of God." The work I am involved in is "the work of God." None of these are open to being changed by the opinions or preferences of mine or anyone else. It took forty days of constant communication with God for Moses to get everything clear in his mind and be able to transfer those instructions into a visible reality to be a type of God among His people.

There are around 50 chapters of the Bible devoted in various ways to teaching regarding the Tabernacle. It certainly is important to God, and it should be to us. The things written about it are for our learning - particularly teaching concerning the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Before God led Israel out of Egypt, He connected with people like Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as individuals. Now this nation of ex-slaves was a bona fide nation - not with a king as their leader, but with God Himself their Leader dwelling in the midst of His people. Right in the middle of them - not in front or above them, but in the middle with them placed in orderly fashion around Him. God was moving in with them. In time to come people would sing, "How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!" God was with them.

The same is true for us today. He dwells in the middle of His people today. We don't have to go to a building a few times a week to connect with God. We gather unto Him 24/7. He has left a pattern for us to follow. Those who ultimately made the physical Tabernacle with great skill, were given that ability by the Holy Spirit who guided them to properly make what God intended the way He wanted it. He does the same with us today. The Holy Spirit leads, guides, empowers God's people and the Spirit indwells us constantly because we are "body of Christ, and members in particular."

This large company of people, the children of Israel, were going to have visible evidence of the unifying presence of God. They would be unified around the Sanctuary. Equal groups of people on the four sides of the Tabernacle were set in orderly rows by their tribes and they all would be able to see evidence of the presence of God during the day by the cloud over the Tabernacle, and during the night by the pillar of fire. There would be a sense of awe on the part of those who loved the Lord. For those who only saw the Tabernacle and didn't have faith in God, the sense of awe would eventually dissipate. This holy, set-apart place where nothing that defiled could enter, was not really understood or believed by all. This was the "Tabernacle of the Lord" and it was the "Tabernacle of the congregation" as well as the "Tabernacle of

Testimony." Unfortunately, the holiness associated with the presence of God is not appreciated nor accepted by all who claim to be believers in this day and age too.

The precise careful details of the construction and form of the Tabernacle teach us of the greatness of God and how much higher and holier He is than we are. Yet He has made provision for us to come to Him because of the altar where offerings can be made, the laver where cleansing for service can take place, and the holy place where testimony is made. Inside the "Holiest of all" that was veiled off so no one but the high priest could enter, and that only once a year with blood, God dwelt between the cherubim on the mercy seat. Now because of the sacrificial work of Christ, offering has been made once for all and we can approach to God ourselves with "reverence and godly fear." The moral perfection of God kept Him separated from the intimacy that is hindered by what is common or unclean. The Tabernacle was made so it could be moved when God led His people toward the promised land. God does not remain distant from His own but desires to be with them even today as we journey toward our heavenly home.

The typology of the Tabernacle gives visible evidence of the meaning and character of our Lord Jesus Christ. The furnishings of the Tabernacle, the materials used to construct the Tabernacle, all have special meaning as they give verbal understanding of what we normally could never grasp. We can visualize the materials used in the construction, but now we see the application of the materials and the uses are very different than the way we use them or perceive their use. God is not wanting to display Himself before people who have no faith in Him. What the people saw would have been only a faint glimpse of what they could not see. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." What God's people could actually see would confirm the reality of what they could not see. How carefully God is that we put our faith in Him, not just in all the evidence of Him we can see all around us! That is the difference between a believer and an unbeliever!

*I haven't seen with my eyes the Savior  
But by faith in Him I truly believe.  
He knows each motive behind my behavior  
And the purpose behind each day I live.  
I see evidence of Him around me  
That testify there is a Living God.  
What counts most is the proof of reality  
I find inside when I apply His Word.*

*It is possible to believe there is a God  
But never come to know Him by faith.  
One only needs to look around the world  
And see evidence in every place.  
Even demons believe He exists  
And tremble at the sound of His name.  
But controlling powers of darkness persist  
And try to find ways to avoid their own blame.*

*For God to dwell with mortal men  
Seems in every way too good to be true.  
Yet because of the divine love in Him  
He wants to share life with me and you.  
We don't see Him with natural eyes  
We couldn't do that in the flesh and live.  
But by faith's eyes it is no surprise  
That by His grace new life to us He gives.*

*I don't look around to see badger's skins grey  
Nor do I need to see boards covered with gold.  
Those types to me do have a lot to say  
About the Savior and the truths to be told.  
All those Tabernacle things help my vision  
To link faith and the Savior together.  
Each part of the Tabernacle has a reason  
That my faith in Christ will go even farther.*

*"Gracious Father, I know it has been awhile since I put on paper some of my thoughts like this. Thou dost know the reason better than I do. This morning though, I felt it best to go beyond just learning of Thee and writing of Thy Gospel, to enjoying what must have given Thee a lot of joy. I know You loved Thy people in the past and wanted to be with them. May You find joy in Thy people today and may our faith be strong to bring glory to Thee. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

**EXODUS 25:2.** *"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."*

#### **WILLINGLY.**

"Not this! Not now! Not just after we got it!" says the newly rich –

"After all – we just are getting what we deserve after so many hundred years working for nothing!" says the newly released slaves –

"You don't have to. Only give if you want to – willingly," and the heart is spoken to.

"Bring Me an offering," says the Lord, "of every man that giveth willingly..."

The time had come to bring to the Lord that which willing hearts had to give. And they started to come laden with gifts from the heart for God. The bounty was there for all to add to – piles of it – given by willing hearts, until so much was there, they had to be told to stop giving. Appreciation for God's deliverance and for who God is – moved them to give willingly.

Another generation – another time – another place, and God in flesh stands watching those of that time and place come to give. Some come in rich garments and out of their great wealth present with a flourish that guarantees many will see, large gifts. Whether from duty, habit or conscience – they give so their largesse will give them an inner self-made warmth. But there comes another, a woman with a clenched hand not looking up or around, but at the place where she knows willing hearts for the Lord give. Without fanfare or large "to do", she places privately all she has in the receptacle that God alone can count - the "receptacle of willing hearts" – and God watches – and recompenses.

Another generation – another time – another place, and God still watches. Now it is my turn to give. What will I give out of my bounty? How much can I keep? There would be no problem, I think, if I only had a little. But God has filled my storehouse with enough to get a home and more. What will I give Thee, my Lord? I have been blessed. I am full. I am abundantly supplied. What will I give this day in the "receptacle of willing hearts?"

*"I am convicted today, O my Lord, by the treachery of my own covetous heart wanting to keep what I have against a rainy day." I can give more because no one will know what I give but Thee. I resolve in my heart to give Thee more but my habit of smug self-satisfaction as a thousand excuses why I should hold back, Bury this terrible "self" beneath thoughts of Thy love, Thy mercy and Thy grace to me. I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

#### **EXODUS 25:3-8**

#### **MATERIALS AND MEANINGS**

When the Israelite slaves were freed from Egyptian bondage, they didn't go out empty-handed but laden down with wealth. The wealth of Egypt went with them in great amounts of gold, silver and brass. There were richly dyed skeins of threads and cloth, and the notable fine white Egyptian linen cloth. The precious stones and perhaps even some of the spices came from the Egyptians who were anxious for the Israelites to leave fearing for their own survival. As the Lord gave instructions for the building of the Tabernacle to Moses, He gave a list of the treasures that people had that would be used to represent the value of the One they were gathered to and who lived among them. Those materials had a meaning to them and the way each was used, was to be significant to them. That significance shouldn't be lost on us either.

The three metals used were not just randomly chosen out of all other metals found then and now. The word "gold" means "shimmering; yellow." The shimmering yellow of the sun has always been a source of awe to mankind. The worship of the sun was quite common in the Middle East in ancient times. Men can be blinded by the sun with its light, heat and glory. Without the sun all life would die. It is a representation of all that is divine. "The judgments (ordinances) of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. Most to be desired are they than gold, yea, then fine gold" [Ps 19:10]. "Who being the brightness of His glory..." [Heb 3:1]. "The city was pure gold, like clear glass..." [Rev 21:18]. The deity of Christ and the glory that is always His, was temporarily veiled when He was here on earth. But that never changed the eternal character of His nature. He was, is and always will be the Eternal God.

Silver was, and to a degree, still is the metal used for coins. Before coins were made there was the use of silver pieces even then in transactions made when there was no way to exchange goods. To make and exchange labor for goods a piece of silver was used. In some cases, one piece of silver represented a day's labor. The silver used in specially designated places in the Tabernacle represented God's divine grace that was made manifest in redemption. The Israelite who worshipped had to give a half shekel (a weight measure) of silver when making an offering to the Lord [Ex.30:12-16]. The silver speaks to us of our Redeemer who made atonement for us. "We are not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold ... but with the precious blood of Christ..." [1Pet 1:18-19].

The precious metals of gold and silver melt under heat and flame, so brass was used in the making of the altar where there was perpetual fire. It was also used as pins to keep the fence up and for clasps to keep the goats' hair curtain together. The laver for cleansing was made of brass. Perhaps the mirror-like shining brass allowed the priests to make sure their cleansing was complete after they washed. We could not come to God if our judgment was not past nor can we have fellowship with Him if the cleansing by confession of sin has not been dealt with. The brass represents divine righteous and holy judgment. The Lord Jesus "endured the cross" [Heb 12:2]; "Christ also hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God" [1Pet 2:24]. In His enduring strength, He sustained all of God's righteous judgment against us.

The colorful threads to make cloth were used also representing various characteristics of the unseen God. Blue is the heavenly color directing our attention to the heavenly nature of our Lord Jesus Christ and the fact that He is the Lord from heaven. The Hebrew word for "blue" means "perfectness." The sapphire (blue) color beneath the feet of the "God of Israel" was like the "body of heaven in his clearness" [Ex 24:10]. The Lord Jesus was the One who "came down from heaven" [Jn 3:13], and "is the Lord from heaven" [1Cor 15:47]. The blue speaks of God's love to man. Royal families in most countries wear purple as a sign of their high position among the people [Es 8:15]. The Lord Jesus Christ is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. That will be seen publicly in a day to come but presently that is veiled from the eyes of unregenerate people. When put together, blue and scarlet make purple, a symbol of heavenly and earthly glory together. Scarlet immediately brings to mind the color of blood. Blood in turn indicates in the Tabernacle ceremonies, the fact of sacrifice that claims a sinless life. The Hebrew word for "scarlet" means "the splendor of a worm" referring to a creature the scarlet came from. Even though the Lord Jesus was "found in fashion as a man," there was a dignity and glory in "the man, Christ Jesus."

I have read Egyptian linen was noted for being of the finest quality. When a person was clothed in white linen, there was a special connotation of righteousness seen in that person. White is almost universally accepted as symbolizing purity. The perfect, righteous Mediator between God and men is "the man, Christ Jesus" who is "the propitiation for our sins" [1Jn.2:2]. He is "the righteousness of One" who gives to His own people "imputed" righteousness - His own righteousness. Purity and righteousness characterize "Jesus Christ, the Righteous."

Other materials were used to cover the Tabernacle - goat's hair, ram skins dyed red and badgers' skins. Prophets often used goats' hair as a garment that set them apart from the people they prophesied to. It would indicate that because of the death of an innocent substitute, we are separated to God. Sin has been put away. Christ the undefiled One accomplished that work. Those skins were attached to each other by brass clasps. The teaching by type is judgment has provided the basis of unity for God's people. That fact is visible only to God's eyes. The rams' skins that were dyed red teaches us that the One who was "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," was devoted to do the Father's will. Because of that, we have been consecrated unto God. Only God can see the reality of that consecration. The grey colored badgers' skins would be the only outward sight that people could see of the Tabernacle. They could see the fence that separated them from intruding into the presence of God, and would be able to see the badgers' skins above the top of the fence. The only way they could see the Tabernacle was if they entered by the one gate - the only way in. The world's view of Christ and His people are that we are colorless and unattractive. "There is no form nor comeliness..." was written of Him. The pilgrim character of God's people is all that can be seen by the eyes of those without faith in God. Most only want to see an outward glory, so great edifices have been made with spires pointing to heaven to attract the flesh.

A special wood grows in the harsh climate of the desert. Acacia (shittim) wood is hard and very long lasting because it comes from a "root out of a dry ground." Even though it was all going to be covered with gold, it was necessary that the nature of the wood would be incorruptible by the effects of passing time or any insects that would seek to claim it. The holy humanity of the Lord was seen externally in His life on earth, but there was also the great truth that there was nothing inwardly in His nature that was corruptible. "He did no

sin," "He knew no sin;" "In Him was no sin." By the blessing of the divine nature given to us, the saints of God are given an incorruptible new nature.

The oil for the lampstand produced light that would never go out. There is power in testimony that is produced by the Holy Spirit and that is not hit and miss, but is constant and unceasing. The spices the people brought testify to the many graces of the Holy Spirit and the beauties of the character of the Lord Jesus. Those spices would lend fragrance to the burning oil. For us that produces light externally and joy internally as we learn more of our Lord Jesus Christ day after day. The many precious stones, the onyx for engraving and the colorful ones for identification would remind us of the perfections and moral glories of Christ that are so significant to us. "We are accepted in the Beloved." Those representations of God's people were always on the body of the high priest when he was about God's work or in the presence of God. How close and personal is our association with our Lord as He intercedes for us before God!

*Everywhere we look, there are meaningful lessons to learn.  
The things we possess, even the things that we burn  
Produce thoughts that affect us because they are types  
Of things we believe based on faith, not on sight.*

*This is not new, it happened in days of old  
When God gave directions and men did what they were told  
A design from God's mind was to reveal to men His nature  
That is better understood by inner sight rather than some visible creature.*

*So a building with materials applied in significant ways  
Gives a better understanding as we hear what God says  
About the variety of metals used for our sake to depict  
The unique design of holiness and how each piece fits.*

*The gold teaches us of deity, the silver - redemption  
The brass tells of judgment; rams' skins of consecration.  
Whether animals' skins or cloth threads, there is a reason  
God chose things to teach us, that we might honor and please Him.*

*What a great divergence of things the all-wise God uses  
To give understanding of Himself to those people He chooses  
To be the children of God and He will dwell with them  
All those Tabernacle materials He chose reveals more of Him.*

*"Father in heaven, the impression that has impacted me when reading of these materials used in the Tabernacle, is that of Thy great holiness. Rather than giving visible impressions of what people have of Thee, these moral characteristics stand out in revealing the Person of God dwelling among men. I praise Thee for this unfolding of Thyself, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 25:8-9**

### **THE PATTERN**

God had a gracious purpose in mind when He gave the design and the list of materials to Moses. He wanted a place to dwell with His people and enjoy the fellowship of kindred spirits. For His glory to be evident in a physical way in every place would be impossible because of the nature of His holiness. In our natural state we could not live in the presence of His absolute holiness. The pattern was given to Moses and had to be followed from the most visible part, the hanging curtains that formed the fence, to the smallest instruments used in the service of the Tabernacle. No independent decisions were to be made in regard to this place where God was going to dwell with His people. We are facing conflicting situations today as "evangelical" churches have turned away from the pattern of God's dwelling place today, the Church, and have substituted what is pleasing to people. For some reason people want to keep their "Christian commitment" casual so those who come God will feel "comfortable" like they would be in the company of a benevolent grandfather.

We need to be reminded that the holiness of God has not deteriorated in any way. He is still "of holier eyes than to look upon sin." Our access to God is still through our Great High Priest. There is still only "One

Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." As the Tabernacle was to be made "after the pattern of the Tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it," v 9, what we are to do in the dwelling place of God today is to be according to the pattern of scripture as it relates to the assembly. The reason the pattern is so important has to do with what it is a type of. Even as the Tabernacle was more than a house to live in but was a type of the Living God Himself in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, so is the Church and the house of God today. God dwells in the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. "In Him dwelleth the fullness of the Godhead bodily." In the Church, He is the Head and we are members in His body. "Now ye are body of Christ, and members in particular." In a similar fashion, the "house of God," the local church, displays in a visible form that which is true in spiritual form. The Tabernacle wasn't God, it was a type of Him who is unseen. The same is true in the assembly of God's people. We are a type in the visible fashion of what is true in the church composed of all believers in this age of grace.

Hebrews 8:5 refers to Tabernacle and priesthood as examples and shadows of heavenly things, so Moses was "to make all things according to the pattern." Hebrews 9:24 tells us that the Tabernacle was "the pattern of things in the heavens." Hebrews 10:1 says the system of law, including the Tabernacle, was a "shadow of good things to come." In the Tabernacle we have examples of God's salvation, His plan for the way we live and act, the way we worship and the way we grow in Christ and in our understanding of Him. The seeker for God could find Him in those days as they sought to approach Him "according to God's pattern."

One who earnestly desired to know God could approach the Tabernacle and would only be able to see a little bit of the badgers' skins covering, over the top of the seven and a half-foot fence of hanging curtains set on posts with brass plates (sockets). The curtains were held together with silver hooks and bands and the tops of the posts were covered with a cap of silver. The posts were held upright by ropes connected to brass pegs. One coming may have come from the west looking east toward the sunrise and would have found no gate there. He would find only one gate and that was unmistakable as it was a linen curtain made of blue, purple and scarlet colors. The posts that held the curtain were separated from the earth by the brass sockets speaking of judgment that had taken place in the heat of the fire of suffering. The posts capped with silver, and curtains held together with silver clasps, speaks to us of Divine grace in redeeming us and unifies those individuals into one complete whole. Outside the fence one was lost; inside he was saved and there was only one gate to enter through. There would be no questions as to where the gate was. The colors made it obvious. There was no question as to whether one was in or out. The blue identifies the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord from heaven. Purple showed Him to be the kingly Person, the One with authority on earth. Scarlet tells us of Him as the Christ who has "redeemed us with the precious blood of Christ" - the Son of Man. No symbolic figures were woven into the gate. The God of grace invites all to enter. To lift up that gate or to pull aside the curtain to enter would give a glimpse of the Tabernacle that a person could admire. A glimpse of Christ today may make us admire Him and even tell others of Him. But unless one enters, he will not be saved [Jn.10:9; Acts 4:12]. The gate was wide enough for "whosoever" to enter. Those outside, are there because they choose to stay outside.

A person coming to God for salvation must come in God's way through the One gate, the Lord Jesus Christ. He cannot prescribe his own way to God. A sinful man cannot approach a sinless God. He must come according to God's pattern that cannot be altered in any way to suit mans' wishes. God's way of salvation is unalterable. Once a person entered that gate, things would open up to him and he would see what he had never seen nor understood before. The first action a person could make to approach God was to move that curtain by faith alone and enter on his own volition. He would enter because he wanted to, and in faith trusted in the Living God. The shadow and type is now past and gone. The reality is, Christ is the Door. When we enter in we are saved. The Tabernacle was movable. The ark never stopped moving until it was placed in Solomon's temple. The opportunity to enter the door of salvation will soon be past.

*I was going to change it to a way I thought was better  
And make it more appealing as I thought to men's eyes  
When it was almost done, I saw it didn't quite fit together  
The thickness of material I chose was of a different size.*

*So before I could begin again I had to take it all apart  
And do it over again by the pattern given in the beginning  
If I had not inserted my will into the project from the start  
Time would not have been wasted and I lost what I thought I was winning.*

*When we do things God's way and pay no attention to what others say  
The work He gives us to do is able to go ahead as He has planned*

*Time and material won't be wasted when we follow in His way  
And the outcome will be lasting benefit to God and our fellow man.*

*When we approach God with dignity there is evidence others see  
That can impress onlookers and angels with what we are to do  
And they may be assured that this is what God intended to be  
In that way His presence among us can be shown to be what is true.*

*Moses had a pattern to follow to build the Tabernacle when  
The Israelites made that place that God with His own would dwell  
In similar fashion we too must carefully do things by His plan  
So when asked what we are doing, "Thus saith the Lord" is what we tell.*

*To alter what God intended just to please the will of men we'll find  
God had His own good reasons for how and why His work is done  
He gave the pattern so we must never suit things according to our minds  
The smallest thing we choose to do and bring is a reflection on His Son.*

***"Father in heaven, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I pray that this day I will in every act of labor or service, not turn away from Thy will and insert my own plans in its place. Amen."***

## **EXODUS 25:10-22**

### **GOD MADE THE FIRST MOVE**

In the order of God's revelation of Himself to Israel through Moses, God made the first move. The building of the Tabernacle began with the description of the ark of God. The fact of it being first indicates God moved out toward men rather than waiting for men to move in toward Him. The presence of God would be the last place reached by a man who approached God. The ark represented the One who is the First and the Last, the Alpha and Omega. That ark is called the ark of testimony, of God, of the covenant of the Lord, of the Lord - the Lord of all the earth, of the Lord God, the holy ark, of Thy strength, of the God of Israel. In other words, every aspect of the life of God's people was important to God. He was involved in everything that happened to them. The gold covering the wood inside and out teaches that the One who it represents is God. The acacia wood that gave form to the ark but was hidden under the gold, typifies the humanity of Christ. He was not from God, but was God - "God was manifest in the flesh." He who created man, became man that He might save man.

The gold covered box summarized the whole covenant God had with Israel. This testified to the holiness and value of fellowship with God. It was placed in the Holy of Holies, unapproachable except by the high priest with the blood of atonement in His hand to sprinkle before the ark for himself and then the second approach to sprinkle blood on the mercy-seat for the people. The priest also had incense burning, and the fragrance and the blood, both testified to the character and work of Christ, the God-Man. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." This is what we have today. Not just Israel, but "whosoever believeth in Him" has everlasting life.

Inside that gold covered box were the two tablets on which the 10 commandments were written. Also, at least for a time, a pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded were placed in the ark. Even though men could not see it, they would know God does not take His Word lightly and neither should we. The provision of God (the manna) and the dealings of God (the rod) is not forgotten by God and should not be by us.

On top of that gold covered ark was the solid gold mercy-seat with a crown of gold around it. A crown was around the gold altar that testified to the perfect work of God's Perfect Servant. There was a crown around the table of shewbread teaching us of the Perfect Manhood of the Lord Jesus. This crown around the mercy-seat tells us of His Perfect Deity. At the table He is the Prophet. At the golden altar He is the Priest and at the ark He is the King. The grate of the brazen altar, the table of shewbread and the mercy seat were all the same height. The heart of God provided the sacrifice that was needed at the altar. It sustains the believer in the light and fellowship of the dwelling place of God - the sanctuary (the table) and the heart of God brings the believer from the distance as a sinner, into the place of nearness and communion as a saint in fellowship and communion with Him.

Over that lid called the "mercy-seat" and made from the same piece of gold skillfully hammered out, were two cherubim with wings that covered or formed a screen over the lid sprinkled with the blood of atonement.

The mercy seat teaches us that propitiation has been made for sin. The publican prayed, "God be merciful (propitious) to me, the sinner." Judgment for sin has been carried out. Blood has been shed and applied in the right way. Mercy can be shown and the righteous government of the Holy God has been satisfied. Two witnesses to the righteousness of God being legally satisfied, now makes the presence of God with His people possible. The substitutionary work of Christ was effective then and is effective now. Sin has not been overlooked; it has to be righteously dealt with.

There were four gold rings and two staves covered with gold, to carry the ark of testimony. The ark never came to rest until it was placed in the temple and the staves were at last removed. Christ was a pilgrim when He was here on earth. He had a borrowed manger, a borrowed coin, a borrowed donkey and a borrowed tomb. He was on a journey and His people traveled with Him. We are strangers and pilgrims, and as the priests carried the ark with staves, so we are identified with our Lord in testimony as we journey to heaven. The four round rings teach us that from the four corners of earth, God has His people whom He loves and who identify themselves with Him as pilgrims. Whenever people saw that ark covered with blue moving in the middle of the traveling millions, they would know God was with them even as they journeyed. On the occasions when curious, self-centered men wanted to handle the ark in their own way, death was the result. To demean God in any way today and back then, has consequences that cannot be avoided. A Holy God, dwelling among holy people, must be approached in "the beauty of holiness" and worshipped "in Spirit and in truth."

*Not a statue made like men or animals - not even a likeness of trees  
A box made of wood covered with gold - faith its significance sees.  
That ark had within it hidden from prying eyes - what is important to God.  
A pot of heavenly bread, a miracle rod and stones bearing God's own Word.*

*On top of the lid called the mercy-seat there was sprinkled seven drops of blood.  
Covering over that like a screen of safety were wings - the government of God.  
Two cherubim of gold made from the same piece, so mercy and divine government unite.  
It was all there just as God intended, yet hidden from man's natural sight.*

*When innocent blood of a chosen animal on a special day was shed, everyone would know  
As they watched and waited for the high priest to return whether God had accepted them or no.  
They might hear the sound of bells tinkling if they listened - the priest is still alive.  
When he returned perhaps with face aglow - they would know God is satisfied.*

*To enter into the presence of the Holy God is not some casual stroll we make.  
God knows our standing, that is secure, what is important now is our state.  
For us to approach God defiled in some way by sin we have allowed us to beset,  
Means our coming is not right, confession must be made, cleansing needs to take place yet.*

*To come into God's presence with reverence and godly fear, takes evaluation.  
Not just forgiveness by the blood Christ shed, but there needs to be holy consecration.  
We have the fellowship of life that is ours forever, but a daily salvation we need  
To maintain real communion and give joy in our soul, and willingness to our God give heed.*

*We have His Word, He has shown us His heart, it is towards us in love and grace.  
The life in Christ we live by faith, and large and small miracles we trace.  
Now in respect and reverence, with cleansed hands and soul we move to meet Him.  
And are welcomed at the mercy-seat and where God dwells, we are able to enter in.*

***"Holy God, my Father, I know those items inside the ark gave evidence to those people of Thy gracious heart. To me today that grace is still revealed - not only the perfections of the Lord Jesus but the love and grace within. I praise and thank Thee for this revelation to me in Thy Word, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

## **EXODUS 25:23-30**

### **THE FIRST TABLE**

A table is made to support and keep above the earth, and contamination, whatever is placed on it. This first mention of a table in the Bible was a table made to hold the "bread of exhibition" that speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ in His perfection of character - pure, holy, balanced with a sense of evenness. There was a

fragrance also at that table because of the frankincense that was put on the bread. The twelve loaves were a pound each, so they must have been rounded up in their shape to fit on the table. Each testified as to one of the tribes of Israel and the orderliness God expects from His association and unity with them. This is also a shadow of how believers today are connected in holy fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ.

In these verses the table is what is to be considered because it is a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are separated from the world by Him. We "are in the world, but not of the world." The wood and the gold speak of the humanity and deity of our Lord. The table itself speaks of the need and blessing of fellowship with Him in order to find the spiritual nourishment from God we need. The crown around the edge of the table would keep everything on the table from falling off onto the ground. The "border of a hand-breath" would keep every loaf on the table in place and orderly. Each Israelite tribe was represented individually and each touched other loaves beside it. Each was different and yet similar. Their testimony was in what they had in common not their differences. The table teaches us that the One who has saved us and separated us from the world, has imparted to us His divine nature. His life is our life. We have been given eternal life. The crown around the table reminds us that we are secure and don't need to think "any man will pluck us out" of His hand and the Father's hand. He is holding us safe until we reach home.

The "border of a hand breadth" must have kept each loaf in place, and in touch with the ones next to it. The blessing of the table could only be experienced inside the Holy Place. The bread is called "cakes" (pierced cakes), probably a practical way to hasten the baking process. Our Lord Jesus was pierced when He suffered and there was a fragrance on Him and in Him that could not be mistaken. The bread is called the "shewbread", or "bread of presence" indicating a unique beauty in the order as well as the sustaining spiritual nourishment that came from the bread. The table on the right side of the Holy Place, raised that bread to where it could be easily observed and then partaken of by worshipping and serving priests once a week. In other places its is called "continual bread." It was always there even when traveling, though then it was covered with blue, then the dishes and other things placed on the table and that was covered with scarlet and the scarlet was covered with a badger's skin. The table was not available nor open to any who was not a true priest, or any priest who chose to do things his own way.

When David ate the bread from that table of shewbread, the ark wasn't there. Ahimelech could give that to ones who were not priests because the presence of God was removed from that place. A form can be followed, and is followed today in many places, that looks similar to what God intended but is not of any value because God is not there. In some places, the ordinance that is supposed to be the Lord's Supper is open to any and all who want to partake of that which speaks of Christ, but He is not there. Some take the bread thinking their sins will be forgiven. Other people have other reasons which are not biblical.

For seven days the twelve loaves rested on that table where God could look upon it and be satisfied with the testimony it gave. After that which satisfied God's heart had been there seven days and was removed and replaced with twelve new loaves, then it was given to the priests to eat in that place and satisfy their needs. The bread made of fine flour was the very best there was. The priests could take the same food that satisfied God in relation to the perfections of Christ, and make it their own. The risen and glorified Christ is typified in the table. We are risen and glorified "together with Him." He satisfies God and supports His people. We are in fellowship, nourished and sustained in the sanctuary of God by the Bread of God. Fellowship and communion must be a careful concern of ours because divine development and growth follows the divine new birth we have experienced. These loaves of bread were eaten in that special, chosen place. In order for us to enjoy Christ, we must be in fellowship with Him. In our communion with Him, our souls are fed by His Word and thoughts that feed my soul from the scriptures nourishes and strengths me to live for Him and witness about Him. His perfection has brought us to God and it is His perfection that maintains our communion with God.

The table of shewbread lifts us up from the world's dissatisfaction to where we have communion and fellowship with God because of our position in and on Christ. Then also we feed on Him and are given the sustenance to maintain an on-going testimony week by week. As the bread was changed weekly, so we are strengthened and built up in our faith week by week as our communion and fellowship together with the saints of God is continued.

*What's so important about a table?  
It has only four legs and a top.  
A table in the wilderness spread with good things  
Is a wonderful place to stop  
And find what is needed to refresh the soul  
As well as the body with what on the table is placed.*

*By eating there, spirit and body become full  
And we are blessed as we experience God's grace.*

*The table lifts food up from all that defiles,  
From the world and its ways, we are separated.  
As we are seated at the table, we are greeted with smiles  
Of others who also to God are consecrated.  
A unique fellowship is shared by all who attend -  
In communion together with God, we are fed.  
The thoughts and words expressed, and the time we spend  
Assures us the Holy Spirit at the table has led.*

*A table with four legs may seem a simple thing to many,  
But to those world-wide in the sanctuary there is deep meaning.  
Sitting at that table with the Bread of God, more than any  
Of earth's forms, is in no way a slight or demeaning -  
Because the Type is there, our Lord Jesus Christ;  
In the table, in the bread, in His people,  
Brings to our hearts and minds way more than twice,  
The fact that in Christ we all are equal.*

*By sitting at a table, I hope I am reminded  
This simple act of fellowship lets me  
Experience by faith the enjoyment of what God has provided  
And the Object of my faith I can see.  
I look across and see others looking too  
At the provision that on the table is spread.  
And each expressed thought that is caused to arise anew  
The blessings, by which God each one of us has fed.*

***"I am so thankful, Father, that the Lord Jesus Christ has provided a way by which Thy people are lifted above the contaminated provisions of the world to feed upon the Living Bread from heaven. What satisfaction there is in the Bread and what great fellowship there is at His table. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

## **EXODUS 25:31-49**

### **LIGHT OF REVELATION**

The chief builder, Bezaleel, would have looked at the 75 pounds of gold, and with the eyes of an artisan empowered by the Holy Spirit, envisioned the final result of the lampstand before he tapped that gold the first time. Thousands of tapping sounds would have emanated from the place where he labored day after day as from that one piece of metal grew a remarkable lampstand of unique beauty. Sitting on its base and gradually formed, came a center shaft made from the same piece as the six branches that were hammered out. There was no place when anything was joined that would be a potential weak spot that would break off. This lampstand speaks to us of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Light of God. The first words heard on earth came from Him, "Let there be light." Over the camp of Israel during the darkest night was the Light of God's presence. After the Tabernacle was completed the Light of God's presence illuminated the Holy of holies. All of these were types of our Lord Jesus Christ who declared when He came in the flesh, "I Am the Light of the world."

There was no wood in this lampstand. It was made of pure gold inside and out. When the last blow of the hammer was laid on the piece, there was a completed type of Christ in His singular glory having suffered the blows of suffering, and yet in the glory of His deity, giving light to the Word of God (the table of shewbread) to nourish His people, and light to the worship of God (golden altar) as His people are able to see with spiritual understanding how to "worship the Father in Spirit and in truth." The center shaft had a almond shaped bowl holding oil and the six other branches formed off of that shaft had the same kind of bowl on the top of them. There were also buds and flowers on each branch and the center shaft reminding us of the resurrection and knowledge of Christ we get in the sanctuary. The Holy Spirit is the oil in the bowls from which comes the light that is held by the Person of the Lord. The Holy Spirit is the light from the center shaft. The spirit of wisdom and the spirit of understanding are the second pair of branches. Next is the spirit of counsel and the spirit of might. Finally, the last two branches represent the spirit of knowledge and the spirit

of the fear of the Lord [Isa 11:1-2]. The Lord Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to guide us into "all truth" when He ascended into heaven. The Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ cannot be separated entirely any more than the Father and Son who "are one."

Meanings associated with the lampstand are first the beaten gold symbolizing the suffering of Christ who is now risen and glorified. He gave His life to give us life and light. The lampstand was inside the Holy Place hidden from the world. He is revealed to a priest who is in the family of God. "That I might know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death" - is knowledge that can come only through the light of the Holy Spirit who reveals Christ to us. The oil in the seven bowls teach us of the Holy Spirit, given by Christ to meet our needs. There is also the teaching of the fact there is light for the believer who may not know what to do and where to go in this dark world. God the Spirit guides us, instructs us and teaches us "in the way which thou shalt go." The seven branches holding perpetually lighted lamps teaches us the Holy Spirit enables to see and enjoy more of Christ when we are in walking in the light. The light from the lampstand on the south side of the Holy Place also illuminated the table of shewbread on the north side. The Spirit reveals the truths of the Word of God to us. Without the light there would be disorder and confusion. The light also made it possible for the priest at the golden altar of incense to properly carry out what was needed for appropriate worship. We can worship God in the way of His choosing when the light of the Person of Christ is revealed to us.

The light from the lampstand would reveal the beauty of the covering overhead and the beauty of the veil and the cherubim woven into that veil that separated the Holy of holies from the Holy Place. The reflection of light on the gold walls and golden furniture would clearly speak of what is revealed of Christ. The Holy Spirit gives us the light of His Person wherever we look.

The seven branches of the lampstand impress me, of the necessity of the Holy Spirit in my life as a believer. He reveals Christ, guides us into all truth and shows us things to come. Because of that we can see the "spirit of wisdom" gives us the proper use of knowledge. The "spirit of understanding" comes from truth given to conduct our life by. The "spirit of counsel" gives direction as to which course to follow in order to obey and please God. The "spirit of might" strengthens us by the power of Christ to accomplish God's purposes given to us in His Word. The "spirit of knowledge" gives us the information concerning our Lord Jesus Christ so we know Him better and can see things as He sees them. The "spirit of fear" of the Lord, deals with our attitude towards Him. A reverential fear is a respectful interest and commitment to the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is inappropriate to have a casual attitude toward such a holy Person. Intimacy with Christ is not casualness but is closeness as two spirits share the same interests.

The total unity of the lampstand implies the fact that every aspect of the Lord Jesus Christ has one purpose as far as we are concerned - to give light that we might recognize where we are and who we are when we come into the presence of God to learn of Him, have fellowship with Him and worship Him.

*It is easier to describe what light does rather than what it is  
I know what Christ does, better than I can describe the nature that is His.  
Yet by the light of the Holy Spirit and the truth God's Word reveals -  
There is much more unfolded to seeking eyes what was before concealed.*

*I look up and glory is there, He is Prophet, Priest and King  
The colors on the ceiling and the veil, thoughts of His Person and work do bring.  
Carefully woven and intertwined are the cherubim looking on  
And in reverential fear, I realize the presence of the Holy One.*

*Walls and furniture glistening with gold casting its reflection in my eyes  
Has a tendency to bring holy fear and whittles me down to size.  
When I realize how deity has allowed me to enter this place  
I begin to experience in a far greater measure the extent of amazing grace.*

*Furniture unique is placed strategically in places God did choose  
I need to carefully look at those positions lest some teaching I will lose  
In order to learn truth and be nourished and to worship in the right way  
I have to be able to see clearly and understand what His words say.*

*Stepping in as a child of God, a priest with service and worship to give*

*Light has to shine in the sanctuary where God with His people lives  
Self-made ideas would fail and I would stumble around in the dark,  
If the light of the Person of Christ didn't show how each piece plays a part.*

*"Father, there is no question the whole world lies in darkness. How thankful I am for the Light of the world who is Jesus, and He give hope to the hopeless. But the light of God in the sanctuary for God's people is so helpful for those who love Thee and want to enjoy fellowship with Thee in service and worship. The glow of the presence of the Lord Jesus gives light to my soul and spirit as I read and meditate on Thy Word and Person. Thanks so much for such glorious light and the holy sights revealed. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

**EXODUS 26:1** "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."

#### **MAKE THE TABERNACLE.**

*God could have made it with a single word, after all He made the world.  
But "No", He chose to let men share in a work directed by the Lord.  
When it comes to miracles like crossing the Sea, He acted on His own.  
But there in the wilderness where testimony counts, He didn't act alone.*

*The pattern was clear, God gave it Himself right down to the small details.  
Then in fellowship with Him, Spirit-filled men were given special skills –  
To make what God wanted, so that He could dwell with His own redeemed ones  
Brought from slavery, now being formed as a nation that He would call His sons.*

*The labor went on day after day, as the pattern and material took shape.  
Each one had a work, a job to fulfill, each one a contribution to make.  
Looking ahead to the day when the house of the Lord would finally be complete –  
Was motivation enough that they would do well, the glory of the Lord to seek,*

*It is like that today, though the house we build is not made of silver, gold and cloth.  
We too have a pattern, are building a house, where we can dwell in it with our Lord.  
The truths of His word are used to build walls reflecting the Person of Christ.  
Other truths too and service we give, remind us we're redeemed with a price.*

*Our motivation is strong, Christ has died for our sins – but higher than that is love;  
Love for Christ, love for His word, love for each other is the least we can give –  
When we consider that the Spirit of God enables us to accomplish this task –  
Of building a church that will never come down, eternally this house will last.*

*We must labor with vigor, give ourselves to the work our Lord has placed in our hands.  
Each one has a job, the material is piled high, the work is going on in different lands –  
But the day is soon here when the last stone is cut; the last shingle is laid on God's house  
And we all stand together, the building complete, and all of the workers rejoice.*

*"Eternal God, who has been pleased to dwell with men: may I never take for granted the value – the worth of Thy house. May I never denigrate any part of what Thou art doing through the varying skills and gifts Thou hast given to Thy Church world-wide. May I always rejoice as each article is added to the Body not matter how small or insignificant it may appear and may I never cease to give Thee all the glory for what Thou art doing through Thy people, In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

#### **EXODUS 26:1-14**

#### **THE BUILDING**

Looking at the Tabernacle as a building, we would see it as wide as it is high; 15 feet wide, 15 feet high and 45 feet long. Inside, the Tabernacle was divided into two parts. The Holy Place was where the table of shewbread was on the south side, the lampstand on the north side and the golden altar of incense on the west in front of the beautifully woven veil with cherubim woven into the cloth. That room was 30 feet by 15 feet. The Holy of holies or "Most Holy" where the ark and mercy seat were, was a cube shaped room 15 feet

high, wide and long. Covering the whole building were two curtains made by the hands of skillful people and two coverings of animal skins. Looking at the ceiling from inside one would see a curtain made of linen with blue, purple and scarlet woven into it. The white linen here is mentioned first, different from the gate, door and veil where the colors were dominate and given in a different order. In a practical way, it would reflect more light than the darker colors. In a spiritual way it teaches us of the necessity of righteousness that is essential in the worship of God. Respect, reverence and holiness are to characterize every priest who enters to eat of the Living Bread and approach God to worship in Spirit and in truth. Only the priests would see that beautiful ceiling which was made of 10 curtains joined together with 50 gold clasps. These curtains would not touch the ground at each end reminding us of Him who was not defiled in any way by the world when He was here. We worship One who is "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners."

Placed above that beautiful ceiling made of 10 curtains of color, was 11 curtains made by the labor of skilled hands who wove the long dark hair of goats into a set of two curtains two cubits longer than the linen curtain. One part was made of five and the other of six joined by brass clasps. This curtain was large enough to cover the top of the walls of the Tabernacle in front and covered the linen curtain on each side. This particular covering would teach us of Christ as the sin-bearer as the two goats on the day of atonement. In this way He was the true type of the sin-offering. Prophets and Nazarites also wore garments of goats' hair. The Lord Jesus was the True Prophet whose character was smooth and fine as would the curtain made of goats' hair be made distinguishing them from goats' skins. This curtain was not seen by the eyes of men either on the inside or outside. God alone knows the true worth of the Lord Jesus Christ and the perfections of His character.

Little is said of the two coverings in this passage so the teaching relates to God coming out to man rather than man going in to God. The glories of Christ are presented first as to Him being the One from heaven (blue - the Gospel of John), the King of kings (purple - the Gospel of Matthew), the Perfect Servant (scarlet - the Gospel of Mark), and the Perfect Man (white linen - the Gospel of Luke) depicted in the visible inner curtain. Then as God comes further out to us, we learn of the evenness and fineness of the character of our Lord as the One observed and trusted by God. "I do always those things that please the Father." Then as God comes closer to where we were "in our want and shame," we see the rams' skins dyed red. The shedding of blood to provide these skins would remind us of the One who voluntarily laid down His life in an act of unsurpassed consecration to the will of God. He was devoted to God completely in death even as He was in His life. There is no mention made as to how these skins were joined together. This covering would be considered one complete whole that shelters everything under it. The sacrifice Christ made was for God's legal satisfaction primarily. God was satisfied with what He accomplished in His work of redemption. The need of a suitable sacrifice was found in Christ alone which was typified in the rams' skins as they pointed to the One who God accepted on our behalf.

The darker leather of the badgers' skin covering was not something of beauty. It probably was similar in color to all the tents around the Tabernacle. What stood out was the size and shape of the building under it. The beauty of Christ's moral glory was not just His uniqueness as a man that could not be mistaken by those who looked on Him from the outside, but by "the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth. The things He did that brought blessings to many, the miracles proving His deity even though "there is no beauty that we should desire Him, would have the earnest seeker raising his eyes above the fence surrounding the Tabernacle and see "there is more here than meets the eyes."

The foundation of the building was solid silver - probably about five tons in total. Silver sockets with two mortises in each to place the tenons of the upright boards in, separated the Tabernacle boards from the ground. The sockets were able to bear the weight of large gold covered boards, plus the weight of the curtains and coverings. The silver all around the bottom of the Tabernacle speaks to us of redemption that has "delivered us from this present evil world." The floor of the Tabernacle was the earth. There was nothing on the floor that would be allowed to speak of Christ, because to walk on anything that would reflect on His Person or dignity, is totally and in every way, forbidden. His redemptive work has separated us from the world. "He has redeemed us."

The wide boards had to be separated from their original roots and natural form as a large tree, and shaped to reveal the divine pattern God intended. Each one was cut, shaped and covered with gold and looked identical to the ones placed side by side to make the wall. The character traits of the Lord Jesus are many and are all linked to form the one dwelling place of glory and beauty. The boards can speak to us of each aspect of the Lord Jesus Christ in His Person. It can also speak to us of the saints of God who have been made partakers of the divine nature and are linked together by the hidden bar that goes the whole 45 feet in length. The unseen Holy Spirit makes is all one in Christ, "one Body in the Lord." The other four bars also remind us of the doctrines of truth as they relate to the Person of Christ uniting the whole structure into one

whole that gives strength to every part of the building. In this particular portion of scripture unfolding Tabernacle teaching, God is coming out to man with each board, each bar and each socket revealing characteristics of God that provide a whole composite picture of Divine Persons.

*To look at that Tabernacle only externally  
Would be to overlook lessons learned spiritually.  
The shape of the building was unusual it is true  
Eliciting interest that makes us want to see through  
Those coverings and curtains to learn what God teaches  
As from His dwelling place out to His people reaches  
To give instructions and help us understand  
What is normally hidden to the eyes of man.*

*Each covering and each curtain have something to tell  
Of the Lord Jesus Christ who pleased the Father well.  
So out to us in spiritual lessons God comes  
To teach us more of the nature and worth of His Son.  
The boards covered with gold standing upright on sockets of silver  
Instruct us regarding His deity and the redemption that's forever.  
Whether looking up at the curtain of beautiful color  
Or learning from hidden things; He is One of a kind, there is no other.*

*The Person of Christ to the world view is not attractive.  
They want something that to them seems more active.  
Red rams' skins don't mean much to them because they can't see  
The on-going value of Christ's blood that was shed on the tree.  
Even the smoothness and balanced character of Christ from human eyes is hidden  
And the glory of His Person is valued only by worshippers within.  
To all who believe, our Lord Jesus is truly "The Preciousness,"  
And we glory in Him alone who is our Life and our Righteousness.*

***"O God of all glory, my Father: in this meditation upon the form of the Tabernacle, I have been impressed with how much is revealed to those who come into Thy presence in priestly worship. I am also made aware of my limitations when it comes to understanding Your fullness seen in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am glad for the types and what they open to the understanding of my dim eyesight. May heavenly eye-salve give me a greater understanding of my Lord and Savior. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

## **EXODUS 26:31-37**

### **ENTRANCES**

When a person came to the Tabernacle with his offering, he would first come to the gate, seven and a half feet high and thirty feet wide. This is a type of Christ as the One Way to all to get atonement for sin. When a priest went into the Holy Place he would enter through a door, fifteen feet wide and high. It was made of blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen hanging on five pillars set on brass sockets and hooked by gold hooks to hold it in place. This is a type of Christ teaching us He is the One Way for us to live in fellowship with God. Then there was the veil that was made of fine, white linen and blue, purple and scarlet embroidery on it. The veil and the ceiling were the same with the white linen being the dominate color. On the veil and on the ceiling were cherubim woven into them portraying the holiness of God being guarded in our worship. This is a type of Christ as the One Way into heaven.

Sin has kept us from approaching God. We cannot be in the presence of God in our sins and survive His righteous, legal wrath. The perfect life of Christ, as wonderful as it was to observe by those who lived when He was on earth and by us who consider it now, does not open the way to God. He had to endure the agony of the suffering on the cross and die, before the way to God could be opened. When the veil was torn from the top to the bottom at the time of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, when He dismissed His spirit, those in the temple would have seen the Holy of Holies was empty. There was no ark there and no mercy seat. They were not brought back from Babylon. The Jewish system would have been exposed as an empty system built on tradition, not on truth. We enter into the presence of God today through a "new and living way."

We are now able to "come boldly to the throne of grace." This does in no way mean we can come in a casual or arrogant way. God has not changed in any way. He is still God Most Holy. Our approach to Him is that we are able to come to God with confidence. We are "accepted in the Beloved," free to come to the Holy God with assurance because that right has been purchased by "His own blood." The perfections of Christ can never be added to or taken away from Him. He was always impeccable in His nature as the Son of Man. The way to God was "peace through the blood of His cross" and had to be accomplished by His death.

The four pillars that held the veil inside the Tabernacle up, were set on sockets of silver. The humanity and deity of Christ held the veil in place in the same way it was shown in the boards of the walls. When it comes to redemption (silver sockets), everything depends on the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. God wants "all men to be saved." He wants fellowship with us. We are able now to enter because the One who is our High Priest forever, is "Jesus," the Perfect Man. We have access today to the throne of grace by faith. There will come a time when we will follow our Lord Jesus right to that throne where His glory will be seen and enjoyed forever. The sacrifice of Christ has met every claim the Holy God demands. His sacrifice has made it possible for us to approach God with a pure conscience knowing our sins have been put away. The sacrifice of Christ has legally opened the way to God on the righteous base of sin being dealt with righteously.

Those four pillars are like the four Gospels as they introduce us to our Lord Jesus Christ. In Matthew we, "Behold your King." In Mark we, "Behold My Servant." in Luke we, "Behold the Man." In John we, "Behold your God." The four great truths of our Lord and our Christian faith are like four pillars: The Deity of Christ, the Incarnation of Christ, the Atoning Death of Christ, the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ.

The positioning of the furniture in the Holy Place was not left to any man to decide. As God came out to men there was an order He intended to be followed. The table was on the north side, the lampstand on the south side, the golden altar of incense on the west in front of the veil. The door at the front of the Tabernacle had the three colors predominate, before the fine twined linen. There were no cherubim worked into the material of the gate or the door that separated the Holy Place from the courtyard. That did not mean the worshipper who entered there could do what he wanted. The closer one comes to the presence of God, the more conscious they are of the holiness of God. As one came into the Holy Place there would be a different attitude and demeanor than when they entered the courtyard through the gate. The same would be true when once a year the high priest would move the veil aside to enter the Holy of Holies. A door is both an invitation and a prohibition. The door to the Holy Place was to allow worshippers in as priests, to approach God. Those who were not able to worship "in spirit and in truth," the door kept out. Holy people who are a holy priesthood come to God realizing we are on holy ground.

Five pillars held up this hanging exterior door. We are assured our Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled all God demanded in the law and all the demands of obedience and holiness in an acceptable man. All that had to be done, the Lord Jesus accomplished perfectly. From the judgment typified in the brass sockets; the gold covered pillars and the silver tops that were hidden under the eave of coverings that came over the top of the door and were folded back, was prophetic testimony to the perfections of the Lord. We are redeemed. Judgment has taken place. True worshippers are able to approach God and God has come out to us. We have been reconciled.

*There is an "in" and an "out" when we speak of the Holy God.  
To casually claim acceptance by Him means holiness is not understood.  
Whether gate or door, or the beautiful veil within, one can never claim  
Access to God because they say so, we can only come in Jesus' name.*

*Christ is the One Way to where atonement is made, His blood puts away sin.  
The only acceptable sacrifice is the one that was made by Him.  
A person approaching that brazen altar sees the flame devour what he gave -  
And then knows sins forgiven by the only One with power to save.*

*To enter in to the place of worship, one must pass through another Door.  
This one is made of the same material but is different from the one entered before.  
This one is twice as high but only one half in dimension wide.  
Only priestly worshippers enter here, the Holy Place is just inside.*

*Overhead and around on the walls is that which speaks of the Holy One.  
The veil separating the building is further testimony of God's Son.*

*This is no place of casual gathering; worship of God is done here.  
When we come into worship in this place, the presence of God is near.*

*There are woven into the fabric, cherubim to remind us of this:  
We don't do things our way here, God expects reverence and holiness.  
True worship is not a carefree stroll thinking that anything goes.  
"Spirit and truth" worship from the heart is reality God Himself knows.*

*That fifteen by fifteen-foot veil that kept private the Holiest of All -  
Separated all men from God's visible glory; God hears every earnest call  
Sin separated us from God, and only the Savior could change that fact.  
He opened a "new and living way" by one obedient act.*

*By faith we draw near today through the veil that is His flesh.  
We are accepted at God's throne through Christ our righteousness.  
In faith we come with confidence to God at the throne of grace.  
And now not outside the veil, "in Christ" is our accepted place.*

***"Holy Father, in confidence and in reverence I speak to Thee with thanks for Thy grace in moving to me in reconciliation through Christ. There is an awareness, at least to a degree that I am in a very holy place when I am at this "throne of grace." Please keep Thy servant from any kind of lightheartedness in my association with Thee. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 27:1.** *"And 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."*

#### **THOU SHALT.**

*It was never a question of "Yes" or "No,"  
Or if it was convenient for them  
To make what God said in their own time,  
Or how they would do it, or when.  
It clearly was understood that God  
Expected them to obey right now,  
Not wondering if they could do it right,  
Or say they didn't know how.*

*"Thou shalt" was never to be questioned then,  
Any more than it should be today.  
If the Lord asks me to do something,  
He is not waiting for what I say.  
He has the right to expect that I  
Will not question His clear commands.  
Nor put things off until the bye and bye  
When He places a work in my hands.*

*He has not asked me to build an altar of brass,  
But to go into the world to preach.  
It is not my right to ignore what He asks,  
Or my own philosophy teach;  
The command He gave can't be misunderstood,  
"Go, and make disciples of men.  
Teach them to know and obey God's word,  
And I'll be with you right to the end."*

*So, if I try to make some excuse,  
"I am tired today, tomorrow  
I'll see if I can go to some quiet place,"  
Or some other complaint I will borrow.*

*I am taking the place that belongs to God,  
And setting my own agenda.  
And a life of obedience goes up in smoke,  
And the Lord who owns me is offended.*

*It is always right to act in faith,  
Even though we not know how things will end.  
If my Lord tells me to do some work this day,  
Or to some part of the world I'm sent;  
God help me to never say, "I can't  
Just now because I am very busy."  
When I am told to follow His careful plan,  
I must do what, or go where He sends me.*

*"Father God, I believe I am in the right place at the right time today. My desire is to experience this all the time. Give me the wisdom to discern Thy will each day, and the willingness to act on what is made clear to me. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 27:1-8**

### **WE HAVE AN ALTAR**

When God came out to men, any who entered the one gate would be confronted by a seven and a half-foot square by four and a half feet high, brazen altar. This where God first meets with us. It wasn't made as a barrier as such, but there was no way it could be ignored. A lot of activity went on at that altar. Altar means "elevated" or "lifted up" reminding us of the Lord Jesus Christ who said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." There was a perpetual fire burning sacrifices on the brazen altar. An early morning sacrifice and an evening sacrifice were made for all the people every day. A constant flow of people seeking relief from the guilt and condemnation of sin, or coming with offerings of thanksgiving for the blessings received from God, would be lined up waiting for the opportunity to approach the brazen altar with their own sacrifices. The scent of burning flesh, smoke ascending constantly, and blood poured out would be in the air by that altar all the time. This went on for hundreds of years until the offering of God's Perfect Lamb was made "once for all" and the need of the types was over.

The altar made of acacia (shittim) wood overlaid with brass was twice as high as the furniture inside the Holy Place and the ark and mercy seat inside the Most Holy. The grate inside the altar was the same height as the ark, mercy seat, the table, and the altar of incense, indicating the sacrifice was placed where it would reach the throne of God adequately. There was no bottom to the altar so all the ashes could be removed reminding us, "Their sins and iniquities I will remember no more forever." Being perfectly square with upward and outward pointing horns at the four corners teaches us the blessings from the altar and sacrifices made there reaches in all directions to bring blessings to all mankind. The sacrifice of Christ was first and foremost for God. The blessings that come from His sacrifice are the blessings of the Gospel that go out to all directions of earth. Those horns were also a place one could cling to and find mercy.

When the first sacrifice was placed on the altar, fire came out from God to consume that burnt offering and the fat. The people who gathered there saw it happen and in fear shouted and fell on their faces. God takes very seriously the sacrifice of Christ. Any way men belittle that sacrifice, will lead them to face the righteous wrath of God. Only by Jesus Christ is the penalty of sin paid. Anything that is added to what He accomplished by that cross work, is condemned. There can be no mixture of works with grace. Any person who tries to add to this salvation by works of any kind, remains condemned in their sins.

The fire that consumed the sacrifices burned for generations and would be carried in appropriate containers when the Tabernacle was moved. The altar was the only piece during the move of the Tabernacle with a purple covering with the badgers' skin over it. Others were covered with blue. The sufferings of Christ and the glory that will follow are very plainly linked together. The day is coming when "they shall look on Him who they pierced." The cross work of the Lord Jesus Christ (type: the sacrifices burned on the grate of the altar) and the fullness of God's mercy (type: the mercy seat at the same height) will be revealed in a future day when everyone will see the value of the finished work of Christ.

In that position before the door of the Tabernacle, the brazen altar reminds us of condemnation of sin that is dealt with by the sacrifice of Christ. Just beyond it by the door was the laver made from the looking glasses

the women brought, teaching us of the need of original and continual sanctification that separates us from the contaminating effects of sin. And then the Tabernacle instructs as to the glorification that is in Christ and by association, we will share with Him.

There were no chairs furnished for priests to rest on. His work was never done. There was no finished work of redemption until Christ said, "It is finished." Sacrifices were continual, but the Lord Jesus finished that redemptive work and is "sat down" forever in the condition of rest after the great accomplishment of Calvary. Ashes from the altar were taken to a clean place and our Lord's body was placed in "a new tomb hewn out of a rock" where no other body had been laid.

Now we who have come to Christ are in a position of "no condemnation." There is a rest and peace we can experience and enjoy continually. The sacrifice has been made and accepted once for all. So, there is "No blood, no altar now. The sacrifice is o'er. No flame no smoke ascends on high, the Lamb is slain no more."

*What to faith's eye today gives peace, was once seen by smoke and flame.  
These sacrifices were made again and again, consciousness of sin left blame.  
Today we rest in the peace of Christ, He gave His own peace before He died.  
The redemption He provided was complete when on Calvary He was crucified.*

*The altar of old was "lifted up," the elevation was there for a reason.  
The residue of ashes that daily were made, testified substitution was just for a season.  
Left over ashes from ancient sacrifices tells of redemption that was not complete.  
But the sacrifice consumed was equal in position to where God dwelt on the mercy seat.*

*When Christ came atonement was made once and for all, His sacrifice fulfilled  
All the demands of God's legal claims, and the satisfaction of God was revealed.  
Like ashes of old were placed in a clean place that contamination wouldn't be shown;  
The Lord Jesus' body after His sacrifice was made, was laid in Joseph's new tomb.*

*For years and years smoke ascended on high as people sought to be right with God.  
All that symbolism and typology is past with the resurrection of our blessed Lord.  
We don't need another altar, the sacrifices on altars have value no more.  
The altar, the sacrifice and the Tabernacle itself has no reason as it did before.*

*We don't live now under vague glimpses of shadows and types.  
The purposes of those has passed, but even now they shine some light  
On the attitude and actions of people who lived then and now by faith -  
So that we don't take casually or carelessly the blessings of grace.*

*There is a holy reverence that characterizes those who in spirit approach God.  
When in sincerity and love we come to Him according to the truth of His Word.  
It is not a light thing to be in the pure light of biblical fellowship,  
When we walk in the light with the Lord who we serve and worship.*

*"Father, sometimes I can't really say what I mean. But how thankful I am that Thou knowest my thoughts after off. I don't know want to obscure in any way what I am thinking and want to say to Thee, but it happens. Please forgive Thy servant if there is some sin unbeknownst to me that I haven't confessed. If not, please take these jumbled thoughts as words of appreciation. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 27:9-21**

### **RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HOLINESS**

Any person approaching the Tabernacle would notice from quite a distance there was a pure white barrier surrounding the building. The fence was 150 feet long, 75 feet wide and had one entrance, a colored gate as the only way of entrance. The cords holding the fence to brass pins driven into the ground, could be seen on the outside. Perhaps the silver rods joining the posts into one strong stable unit, could be seen as well as the silver hooks holding the hangings up and keeping them from sagging. Whenever we approach God, we need to remember the value and great worth of the righteousness of Christ. He is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens." The testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ is the

same outside from the world view as it is inside from the heavenly view. He is holy before men and is holy before God.

The fence was set up in such a way on the pillars and fillets that the hanging linen curtains would be even all around the court. There were no places lower than other places. Even the colorful gate was the same height. There was only one way of approach to God. The Lord Jesus Christ is perfect and even in every way. The "righteousness of Christ" stands out in contrast to our righteousness. "Our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." The very best we could ever produce is unclean. The perfect righteousness of Christ shut us out from God completely. But "Christ our righteousness is sacrificed for us." We can make our way around that holy separating barrier to where the gate is before us. Thank God there is a gate.

The four colors of the gate point us to the Gospel presented in four ways by four different writers. Matthew presents Christ as the King of Israel in his Gospel written to the Jews. The purple, a royal color, speaks to us that in Matthew, the Gospel is mainly a reference to the Gospel of the kingdom. Matthew was one of the writers who had seen and heard the Lord Jesus when He was here and testified as to what He knew personally.

Mark's presentation of the Gospel is that of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Perfect Servant. He was One who served God in perfect obedience to God's will and served men as a lowly Man. He would have written what he heard from others, probably Peter mostly. The Holy Spirit presents Christ as the Suffering Servant typified by the scarlet in the gate hanging. The Gospel as Mark presents is the Gospel to the Romans who were aggressively controlling the nation of Israel. This speaks to me of the Gospel of the grace of God. How gracious of God to allow those who persecuted His people to be partakers of the blessings of God's great grace.

Luke also was not an eyewitness of the life and work of Christ when He was on earth. With a thorough evaluation of events he got from others who were there, he gives a number of important events that are not in other accounts. Luke's Gospel presents Christ as the Perfect Man who pleased God in every way. As a Man among men, He is represented as a shining example of human perfection. The Lord Jesus is typified in the fine twined linen, white and pure in His nature that was never defiled by His life here. He knew no sin, in Him is no sin, He did no sin. He is eternally pure. Luke's Gospel to the Greeks would remind us that the Gospel is an everlasting Gospel, unchangeable in its message and the blessings that come from it.

The Gospel according to John presents the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God sent from heaven, typified in the blue, when "the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world." John was an eyewitness of all the Lord Jesus did and taught right from the day he heard, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Beside the Jews, Romans and Greeks, there was another group of people to whom the Gospel was especially precious. They were the true believers who came to be known as "Christians." John's personal approach to the Gospel message portrays Christ in seven ways, seven examples, seven miracles, seven titles as "the Son of God." This too was typified in the color blue in the gate.

All of the six pillars holding up the hanging curtains kept them stable with the brass pins and sockets holding them. The Lord Jesus is the One who provides stability to what is seen from the outside. He is unchanging and His righteousness is consistent in spite of what people try to say about Him today. "We change, He changes not." "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever."

The oil beaten out of the olives reminds us that more than being pressed, the Lord Jesus Christ was beaten and the light-giving oil of the Holy Spirit came after that oil was extracted. The finest oil was beaten the most so impurities were all gone that it might give the brightest light. There was enough oil produced to give light constantly in the place where God dwelt with His people. "He giveth not the Spirit by measure." The Righteousness of Christ is obvious from without to the world and all who seek to approach God. The Holiness of Christ is before us as we think of the light that has come to us through His suffering.

*Righteousness seems out of vogue in these days in which we live.  
People want laws changed to suit whatever slant they want to give  
To pleasures they seek or work they do so an awakened conscience they can save.  
If that can be done then there can be made a blur between what is good and bad.*

*The standard of righteousness has never changed as far as God is concerned.  
There are no changes in standards He made, no righteousness from which He turned.  
Our Lord Jesus Christ in whatever place or event we see Him, remains evermore the same.*

*His character and words of truth stay consistent to the authority of His name.*

*Sin and righteousness can never blend; it will always be one or the other.  
Holiness and worldliness can't be mixed in any way together.  
Amidst all the changes being made, righteousness and holiness are consistent.  
There can be no compromise between light and dark, even though the world is so persistent.*

*The fence is there hanging pure and white, visible in the day and night.  
Righteousness seen in Christ by all is never really lost to sight.  
People have searched for ways to discredit Him to make excuses for sin.  
But purity and holiness seen in His character never will grow dim.*

*As we draw near to praise and worship, and give thank-offerings to Him -  
There is that multicolored gate to lift so that in faith we enter in.  
Through that gate alone is the way we have access unto God.  
The first thing that we are reminded of is redemption through Christ's blood.*

*The world stays outside the fence thinking that place is close enough.  
People want to get in close proximity but want all their "own stuff."  
The songs they sing, the order of things is done to please the worldly man.  
Religious feelings and practices they want, but avoid God Himself not wanting the demands.*

*"Father, the practice and principle of separation I can understand and appreciate. There is no question that those who want religion without submission to the holiness and righteousness of Christ are lost. Many are around us here who have the forms but not the substance because they will not come Thy way. I thank Thee that the Spirit of God has led me to the gate and to the altar. May Thy servant be clean and able to offer Thee priestly sacrifices today. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 28**

### **DISPLAY OF CHARACTER**

The Tabernacle was not complete without a priesthood to bring life to the building. God was going to dwell with people but there were representatives of the people who were to draw near to God. The word "priest" means "one who draws near." The first mention of a priest is Melchizedek, "the priest of the most-high God." Abel, Noah, Job, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were acting as priests when they came to bring offerings to God. Amram and Jochabed, the parents of Miriam, Aaron and Moses were of the tribe of Levi. They had a concern for the people of God even when they were slaves in Egypt. It was from this family the priesthood was chosen even before the rebellion in which the tribe of Levi stood against the rest.

Aaron was the first High Priest of Israel. Josephus says in his book there were 83 high priests altogether - all of them have died. Christ our High priest in the heavenly Tabernacle, "ever liveth to make intercession for us." Aaron's garments are a type of the priestly work of our Lord Jesus Christ. There was first placed on Aaron a linen (white) garment next to his person that reached to his feet with sleeves covering his arms. This is what he wore on the "day of atonement" when he represented Israel before God. Aaron represented in this way the purity, spotlessness and holiness of the Lord Jesus. He is holy in His Person, in His Priesthood and in His intercession for us. We are "accepted" in Him. When Aaron went in to the Holiest of All, it was this representation of Christ for us who carried the blood to be sprinkled before the mercy seat for himself and then the second time he entered, the blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat for those he represented.

Over this white linen garment there was worn a robe of blue material made without seams that had opening made for the arms and head to pass through when it was placed on the body of the priest. The purity of the Person of Christ is first seen by the first garment of white was covered by the blue except for the arms. The holiness of Christ is first for God but it is also seen by those who saw the priest going about his acts of service. This blue garment had bells and pomegranates fastened to the hem on the bottom. The heavenly character of Christ's priesthood for us makes us understand the value of the One who came out from God for us. After the cross death of our Lord Jesus Christ, a priesthood was not needed nor were there any further sacrifices that meant anything. They were ended as was "the religion of the Jews." Our Lord is engaged in His priestly work in the True Tabernacle in heaven; "for if He were on earth, He should not be a priest." The type is finished. These two garments were held close to the priest's body by a girdle of blue,

purple and scarlet around the waist. The "testimony" of the bells and the "fruit" typified in the pomegranates filled with seeds holding red juice would remind us of Him who in dying, brought forth "much fruit."

Over the blue garment was the "ephod," an apron-like short garment made of blue, purple, scarlet and fine linen with threads of gold woven through. The threads were made of gold pounded flat and skillfully cut into threads that would glitter in the sunlight when outside the Tabernacle or in the lamp light when inside the Holy Place. This ephod was joined at the shoulders with the straps that kept the front part and back part in place. It also had a girdle so the two parts would be kept from moving around. On the shoulder pieces there were fastened two onyx stones on which the names of the tribes of Israel were engraved - six on one side and six on the other. The name could only be read from above indicating God was watching the walk of His people from day to day. Our walk is before God, not only before men. We are reminded of our constant need of God and His blessing.

On the front of the ephod was a breast-plate made of the same material as the ephod and girdle with twelve different kinds of stones held in place and in a designated order. The order of the engraving on the shoulder stones was by the order of the tribes starting with Reuben and ending with Benjamin. The twelve stones, each representing a tribe on the breast-plate were in the order of their position when they were camped around the Tabernacle and in the order of march when they moved through the wilderness. The shoulder stones would teach us that God carries His people and gives them needed strength in our walk before Him day by day. The twelve separate stones on the breast-plate indicates God's affection - His divine love for each and everyone of His own, from the least to the greatest. His love and affection for us can still be seen and experienced now. Two more articles, the Urim and the Thumin were enclosed in a special place in the breast-plate. When decisions were to be made, these were used to first make wise judgments and then to be sure the decisions made were carried out. Some things only God can see, but the evidence of them can be seen by others who look on.

One more piece of the priestly garments was the head covering called the "miter." It was made of linen and indicated the moral perfections of the Lord that are to be emulated in us as believer-priests. Holiness is not to be only in the actions of life and in character, but in thoughts that indicate who we really are. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." A gold plate was fastened to the miter in front and was "always upon his forehead." When we worship our worship must be consistent with the "mind of Christ." All of those garments indicated the need of "holiness to the Lord" as was engraved on that gold plate. Whether going in before God for us or coming out to bless us, our Lord Jesus' priestly work continues unceasingly.

*To watch the priest, go about his work in garments so rich and rare  
Would make all who watched every move he made conscious and aware  
That the God who has come out to bless us, knows each and every one.  
The type of the earthly priest is a picture of our Great High Priest, God's Son.*

*Much of what makes Him so precious is really hidden from human view.  
His perfections of character and life are more than any human knew.  
We do have glimpses of what God sees and what makes His work so great.  
The blessings that come from Him pleasing the Father, affects each step we make.*

*His care and representation for His own, is constant and on-going.  
Work for us that makes our prayers and service acceptable is done without our knowing.  
He knows what is needed and as our Great High Priest, He makes  
Continual intercession for us and mediates our case.*

*God has come out to us when He sent His Son to save us.  
Now our Lord Jesus is gone into heaven there to represent us.  
What marvelous blessings He brought when from heaven He came.  
Now what blessings we have when we make petitions in His name.*

*On-going without ceasing, the One who before the throne of grace  
Is there to represent us when we come into His presence by faith.  
Not with doubt or fear, but with respect and reverence that is holy -  
We enter in fellowship with our blessed Lord, trusting in Him fully.*

*"Father in heaven, in a reverential way this morning I want to speak to Thee about the Lord Jesus Christ. He is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heaven" - this I know. He has pleased Thee in every way and has constant access to the holy throne of God - this I know. He is my Mediator, my Intercessor, my Great High Priest - this I know. He is my Savior, my Lord, my God, my coming King - this I know, I praise and honor Thee for giving these truths in Thy Word. Amen."*

**EXODUS 28:29.** *"And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually."*

**BEAR THEIR NAMES.**

*High on His shoulders in the place of strength,  
Fastened tightly by fingers of gold –  
Two blood red stones – each name in its place  
Indicating the High Priest does hold  
The names of God's people in the Holiest of all,  
Divine government He is responsible for there.  
There are some times when God's people fall,  
But the High Priest their names before Holiness bears.*

*Out in the open where everyone can see,  
Are twelve stones each one different from the other.  
Around the breastplate in four rows of three,  
These jewels testify to the love of the Father.  
His only unique Son became our Great High Priest  
Publicly declaring we truly belong to Him.  
Because of His grace we can state our personal trust,  
Telling others that His love includes them.*

*Unseen to others, known only to the Priest and God  
Are two stones hidden and held securely in place.  
The judgment keeping me from fellowship with my Lord;  
He became accountable for by His amazing grace.  
Near to His heart – knowing how my life will end,  
The High Priest feels each infirmity plaguing my soul.  
The judgment a Righteous God could upon me send,  
He became accountable for not part but the whole.*

*A plate of gold on the forehead of the Priest,  
He bears engraved with "Holiness to the Lord."  
The character of the One who bears iniquity of the saints,  
Is there showing the divine nature of our God.  
Our "Forever – High Priest" bears our names continually,  
One His shoulders, on His heart and on His head.  
We are there represented by His acceptability,  
Our Great High Priest died, but is risen from the dead.*

*"Holy God, our Great High Priest there at Thy right hand has certainly given us such a blessing as to be able to come into Thy presence and be acceptable. Gratefully I give Thee thanks for the intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ on my behalf continually. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

**EXODUS 29**

**CONSECRATION - IDENTIFICATION**

The whole congregation of Israel were to gather at the gate of the Tabernacle when the consecration of the priests was to take place. It had been God's intention for every person in Israel was to be a priest to Him, but because of Israel's sin this could not happen. The family of Aaron, the son of faithful Amran and Jocabed, was identified as priests on behalf of the whole nation. The gathering would have impressed all who attended with the seriousness of approaching God and of God approaching them. God was teaching His people how to worship Him. The priests were publicly washed indicating the necessity of cleansing from sin

that speaks to us of salvation. The washing of the Word and the preparation by the Holy Spirit was typified by what took place at the laver before the priest went into worship in the Holy Place. That is needed today in order for us to truly worship "in spirit and in truth." The appropriate attitude (spirit) is linked with God's will (truth) when we come to worship. The washing in verse 4 of this chapter is a reference to moral cleansing teaching us the necessity of the new birth as cleansing from the guilt of sin. The whole person was cleansed. One unwashed priest approaching God on behalf of the people would have jeopardized every person he represented. These similar two words for "clean" are used in John 13:10. When one comes to Christ, he has had the bath - has been morally cleansed - but in daily life we contact defilement and need our feet washed by the continual intercession of Christ.

After the washing, the garments for "glory and beauty" are worn as the priestly service was inaugurated. The oil with which the High Priest was anointed is a type of the Holy Spirit. The priests were anointed later. There was no question the Holy Spirit "anointed" Christ when He was here on earth. He was in fellowship with the Spirit, He was led of the Spirit. The disciples were anointed by the Spirit after He ascended into heaven. When Christ entered His public ministry there was no doubt as to His holiness, His uniqueness, His fellowship with God in every act and word. The garments of the priests were different than that of the high priest but were similar. There should always be a similarity in our walk, our work and our ways to the Lord Jesus Christ. We have been given the divine nature and are able to engage in holy service for God.

Before the priests could go into the presence of God and engage in service for Him, there had to be offerings made. The bull for the sin offering was brought and the hands of the priests were pressed down on its head. By doing this there was the type given of the sinless substitute bearing their sins which were transferred to it before it died. That solemn ceremony involved the bull being killed, its blood being put on the horns of the altar and poured out at the bottom of the altar. This is the basis of reconciliation. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission." We have been "justified freely by His blood." Peace has been made through "the blood of His cross." The fat was burned on the altar and the rest of the bull was burned outside the camp. The Lord Jesus Christ suffered "without the gate," but the sweetness of His Person was accepted by God on our behalf. "He was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." In the sin offering, the pressing down of the hands of the priests on the bull's head identified them with the one who was to die in their place for atonement for their sins.

Now a ram was brought for a burnt offering and the priests pressed their hands down on the ram's head. In this way they were identifying themselves with the excellence of the substitute. We are not able to please God in every way during our life. But the perfections of Christ do please God. In the burnt offering we are accepted by God because of the perfections of Christ our substitute. In the sin offering Type, "He was made sin for us... that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" - the burnt offering. The perfection of the ram was accepted by God for the priests. We are "accepted in the Beloved."

The second ram was the one to signify consecration. This is the peace offering, teaching us about the blessing of communion with God. The Lord Jesus never turned aside from His devotedness to God. The priest pressed their hands down on the head of this ram to show they were identified with the ram of consecration. Our Lord Jesus was "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." The Lord could say of Himself, "I do always those things that please the Father." That is consecration. Consecration is not what we give up for our service for the Lord, but what is our attitude toward the privilege of serving Him. The more there is of Christ in our life, the less of self-will is seen.

Blood on the ear of the priests means we first hear the Word of God and the blood on the hand means we obey that Word. The right hand of power and skill is for God. It made the priests fit to handle the sacrifices on behalf of the people and for God. We need to do what we do with the best of our ability "as unto the Lord and not unto man." The blood on the foot indicates separation unto God in a consecrated walk. As believers we are not free to do our own will or to go our own way, but are set apart for God. "You are not your own, for ye are bought with a price."

All that spoke of Christ were put into the hands of the priests for a wave offering before the Lord. Their hands are filled in consecrated service with Christ in His death - parts of the ram; Christ in His spotless life - the loaves. God got His part and the priest got their part. The flour teaches us of the perfect life of Christ; the oil of Him being begotten of the Holy Spirit; the wine of the joy of communion with God as we share with Him in the perfections of His Son.

The meeting place, the Tabernacle was consecrated by God's glory. People could only come to the gate. Those who were priests were allowed to enter. Now God chooses to dwell with the people. "Ye are the temple of God." "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost." "The temple of God is holy."

**EXODUS 29:1.** *“And this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them, to minister unto me in the priest’s office: take one young bullock, and two rams without blemish,”*

#### **TO MINISTER.**

*They were not unusual - just common men, but set apart  
Like those today God calls by grace.  
Life changes when we are under high authority  
Offering to God, sacrifices as priests - taking others’ place.*

*Washed carefully with water [v.4] – cleansing is needed  
To be able to serve for the people.  
Pure white coats, girdles and bonnets [v.8] indicate the righteousness  
God requires to deal with the problem of evil.*

*Stepping apart from others: cleansed, white-robed priests  
Move forward, stepping into a new role.  
Life for those who are consecrated to service for God alone  
Is different – holy priests have their hands full.*

*Hands are placed on the head of the animal to die [v.10]  
For them – and us, a sacrifice is made.  
Blood shed and placed on ear, thumb and toe [v.20] – redemption’s price –  
Results in hearing, service and walk in holiness displayed.*

*Waving back and forth in sight of God and watching men is evidence –  
The sacrifice [v.24] has opened a new way to God.  
Newly liberated priests are bound in a blessed bondage for life  
To a service meaningful and lasting for their Lord.*

*No more do we strive to be accepted by labors unremitting –  
Polluted by the efforts of self-centered longing.  
Now by authority divinely given and maintained by heavenly power –  
We enter into His courts in blessed service – and with singing.*

*Our High Priest goes before us, and we follow with hands cleansed and filled  
To do His will and work with glad abandon.  
We walk and work – worship, and with holy hands, lift up our sacrifices  
Waving them before our God with joy as priests – and children.*

*“It is a great privilege, Father God, to approach Thee with offerings and praise; with sacrifices and thanksgivings. I know the need of cleansing, holiness and appreciation by one who once was dark and far away. But now, consecrated to Thy service and with redemptive blood applied to hearing, service and walk – may I never take these holy privileges as if they are something I deserve, but as a calling and a choice made by Thee. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”*

#### **EXODUS 29:38-45**

#### **MORNING AND EVENING**

There is a consecration that takes place, and it sets aside those who are priests to God once for all time. That act of consecration isn’t one to be repeated. But as the people of God we need a continual awareness of who our unchanging God is. That is typified by two lambs that were sacrificial as burnt offerings every morning and evening. Just as the first ray of sun was seen in the east (“the hind of the morning,” Ps.22), one of the lambs was slain and offered even as the remnants of the evening sacrifice that were reduced to ashes, were taken away. There was to be a perpetual burnt offering of continual worship and appreciation that was offered with the meal offering and the drink offering at the same time. This was continually going up before the Lord. The altar always had a fire burning during the busyness of the day and in the night when all were sleeping, the fire was still burning. The Lord was receiving the worship of His people constantly. We need to worship our God in the morning as we thank Him for the blessings of salvation and appreciation of all that has been brought to us through our Lord Jesus Christ and His sacrifice of the cross for us. It is

important that we do the same in the evening, for God is always awake and working in blessing upon us. "Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life..."

The meal offering burning at the same time upon the lamb reminds us of the eternal perfections of the Lord Jesus Christ. The perfect joining of deity and humanity as a Man among men gave worth to the sacrifice. The burnt offering was all burned in an act of total consecration. This would teach us the value of our occupation with our Lord continually. The blessings of such early morning occupation attend every act of service we engage in during the busy hours of the day. Similarly, in the evening it is very important we consider every aspect of our Savior put on display as were the parts of the slain lamb in order on the altar. The skin that was given to the priests would be a type of what God expects of us. We should be observed to be like Christ always. This offering was on-going and even when our Lord was crucified, the meaning of Psalm 22 becomes more real to us. This was the psalm of the morning sacrifice.

An early riser in the camp of Israel perhaps would see a priest carrying a burden through the camp on his way to a clean place outside of the camp where there would be nothing defiling to be found. That walk he would make of an hour or more carrying a load of ashes would remind every person who saw him as they were out gathering manna, that the sacrifice had been made. God is pleased with His own people and His blessings continue. Some untaught might say, "What's the big deal? They are only ashes. The offering has already been consumed." That pile of ashes though, was a testimony to the fact that God never forgets what has brought satisfaction to Him. He is always appreciating what has been given to Him in the way He intended.

Nothing that has been for God alone and given entirely to Him, is forgotten. A woman giving her last two mites is not forgotten. Mary breaking an alabaster box of spikenard and pouring it on the Savior is not forgotten. A sister who comes to remember the Lord in the way He appointed and brings her praise and thanksgiving is not forgotten. What is done for the Lord Jesus may never be seen or appreciated by men, but God does not forget. The "ashes" in the "clean place" are remembered by Him. They may seem to us as a forgotten pile of ashes but to God they are the precious things that still gives delight to God. The body of the Lord Jesus was placed in an "outside place" in Joseph's "new tomb." That was a clean place and it wasn't secret. There were those who watched that burial and appreciated all that the Lord had done for them. There were others who knew of that same place and didn't appreciate it at all - "Lest some should say He is risen from the dead."

It is a great blessing to the soul who in the morning and evening, meets with the Lord. The Lord said, "I will meet you, to speak there unto thee." God does not connect with His own people through strange feelings or out-of-the-body experiences. He meets where His people consider the preciousness of the sacrifice of Christ. When we are obedient to His Word and are in the place of His choosing, He will meet us there. Not only will He meet us, but He will dwell with us and will share with us in the blessings of the sacrifice He provided. "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." For us to enjoy all that means, we have to realize the value of the sacrifice that has pleased God. When the Lord was dwelling with His people there was evidence of His presence. The cloud and the fire could be seen. The smoke from the brazen altar consuming the morning and evening sacrifice could be smelled. The presence of God was not something secret. We need to maintain all that He commanded and faithfully carry out the pattern so we can enjoy the conscious privilege of God with us.

*"Where are you going this morning," one might ask the priest  
Who is carrying the container of ashes to a carefully designated place;  
"I am going outside the camp, to a place clean in the sight of God.  
These ashes belong in a clean place; they testify to the holiness of the Lord."*

*Some may not realize the need of continual fellowship each day.  
They often reply to the priest carrying ashes, "I worship in my own way."  
But the one bearing the ashes outside the camp has been to the altar and seen  
The value of the Sacrifice offered and the need for a place that is clean.*

*So, while some go one way, he in obedience goes another.  
Some may stay where they are for convenience, he is willing to go farther.  
Outside the camp there may be lepers, but in a clean place the ashes are kept.  
It was outside the camp the Lord was buried; it was there the worshippers wept.*

*It was in the evening kind hands buried the Lord in Joseph's own new tomb.*

*It was in the evening ashes of the morning was moved so there was more room  
For the evening sacrifice to be laid in its orderly fashion, and then  
Through the night it burned before God as the smoke of the sacrifice did ascend.*

*When the first rays of the dawning day were seen in the eastern sky,  
The collected ashes were taken to where they were seen by God's eye.  
While men saw only the new sacrifice and the flame and smoke ascending,  
God saw that, but also the ashes, bringing satisfaction that never is ending.*

*The morning and evening sacrifices remind us of a price that was paid.  
The sins and guilt that followed, upon the Lamb of God were laid.  
Now in the morning and evening there is also incense on another altar placed.  
And as priests, we go into worship our God and praised Him for His grace.*

***"Father, there is great benefit to my soul in these mornings and evenings. "Unto us which believe, He is the preciousness" is not just a scripture quotation but a reality in my soul. I thank You so much. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

## **EXODUS 30**

### **THE FRAGRANCE OF HOLINESS**

There were three places in the area of the Tabernacle where the Lord God met with His people. The first meeting place was at the brazen altar in the courtyard where sinners could come because a sacrifice for sin was made. This speaks to us of a work in the past that was accomplished when the Lord Jesus was here on earth. The second place of meeting was at the golden altar in the Holy Place before the veil on which was incense was laid on coals from the brazen altar in the morning when Aaron dressed the lamps, and in the evening when he lit the lamps. This speaks to us of the present work of our Great High Priest, our Lord Jesus Christ in heaven, where at the right hand of God "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." Atonement for sin was made at the brazen altar as a type of the atonement the Lord Jesus Christ made for sin when He was on the cross. Now for us He is our constant Intercessor and "to all our prayers and praises, He adds His sweet perfume. And love the censer raises, its odors to consume."

The golden altar was a small, square piece of furniture about the length of a man's arm from the elbow to the tip of his fingers. It was nine or ten inches higher than all the other flat surfaces of other furniture; it was made of acacia wood plated with gold; a "crown" and horns were on the top of the altar. The position of the golden altar was in front of the veil with the four horns pointing to in each direction - east, west, north, south. From every part of the world the prayers and praises of the saints are raised and our Great High Priest with the fragrance of the moral perfections and beauty of His Person, makes the acts and words of worshippers acceptable to God. The incense on the altar was not burned with a flame, but was put on hot coals brought in from the brazen altar, and the heat of the coals released the pleasing scent. The blood placed on the horns of the altar once a year is a reminder to us of the on-going value of the work of Christ on the cross. The source of heat from the coals came from the fire that consumed the sacrifice. All of our blessings and the source of our worship, comes from the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. That motivates our worship to be focused on the Lord Jesus in every way.

Atonement money that was given by those twenty years old and upward, indicate there is a responsibility we have toward God and His people when we are redeemed. We do not pay for salvation in any way. However, we do have obligations to others to see they come to understand their need of redemption. That fellowship we have with God is based only on the fact that we have been redeemed ourselves. One of the first responses of a new believer is, "How can I help to reach others with the Gospel?" It is a natural response of the newly-alive spirit to want to do what one can to please God.

The looking glasses (mirrors) of the women were brought to make the laver, a basin for the cleansing by washing the hands and feet of the priests before they entered the Holy Place. If the shape was square it would give a similar reflection to that of the priest as he looked at his image. If the laver was curved his reflection would be magnified and any uncleanness would appear more obvious. If the water was still, he would see a reflection of himself and would face the need of washing. The size and shape is not given, but it was for the cleansing of both the hands and feet. Perhaps it had two parts, an upper part for the hands and a lower part for the feet so the priests could be carefully cleaned before going into the Tabernacle to worship and serve. After passing the brazen altar where there was cleansing from guilt by the shed blood, the laver was in place before the door of the Tabernacle. Moral cleansing by the Word of God speaks of the need for cleansing of our ways, not just our nature. What we do (the hands) and where we go (the feet) effect our

right to worship. Self-judgment is needed to keep our worship, prayers, service and enjoyment of God from being hindered.

The anointing oil for the Tabernacle, the furniture and the priests were to be made and used only for that purpose. Some things are for God only and for holy purposes only. To mix that which is for God with that for man-made purposes is totally forbidden to the extent of being cut off from God's people. The main ingredient of myrrh reminds us of the sufferings of Christ. The cinnamon has a sweet scent that teaches us of the sweetness of the Savior that comes from within His Person and nature. Calamus (myrtle) comes from the center of what is called "measuring reeds." This speaks of the inner and deepness of the attitude of the Lord Jesus as they relate to the will of the Father and His own work. Cassia is used for healing which teaches us of the healing of the soul that Christ alone can give. The olive oil was pressed to bring it out of the fruit. The sufferings of Christ were necessary before the Holy Spirit was given. Only priests anointed with this special oil were able to worship in the Tabernacle of God.

The sweet incense placed on the golden altar came from the blending of certain ingredients, that all worked together to make an unusual fragrance. One did not overpower the others. The stacte, from within a tree came out in drops. The sweetness of Christ was seen in His tears. The onycha gave off its fragrance when it burned. Who can measure the value of the suffering of Christ? Galbanum by itself has a calming, soothing effect. The Lord gave us His peace. Frankincense when burned, not only gives off fragrance but smokes when it is burned. All of these were used together not only to permeate the air in the Holy Place, but the priests who ministered there would bear that particular fragrance wherever they went. When we worship the Father in spirit and in truth, there is a spiritual fragrance that attends us wherever we go and whatever we do. How valuable is the fragrance of holiness when God's people worship in the "Holy Place."

**EXODUS 30:8.** *"And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations."*

#### **YOUR GENERATIONS.**

*Only glimpses from beyond the gate comes to the watching eyes –  
But there is assurance to them because of the holy "sameness."  
Floating on the air is a faint scent of incense from the golden altar.  
God is still with His people and rising into His presence is worship –  
God holiness is unchanging – the priestly ministry continues –  
And represented in the presence of the Holy God by the High Priest –  
The lampstand glows brightly, blood is on the horns of the altar – incense rises –  
God's people are still accepted as generations pass.*

*A new generation of priests has come – the older ones passed on,  
Still it stands in the appointed place between the altar and the door.  
Each priest stops to wash hands and feet from the defilement of earth.  
Watching from beyond the gate in the line of those bringing sacrifices –  
A new generation sees their representatives stop to wash at the laver.  
God house is a holy place, cleansing from any defilement is essential –  
The "water of the Word" is needed before the priests enter to worship –  
Your generation of priests are there serving God in the same way.*

*It is only oil mixed with spices, who remembers what belongs  
In the flask that was filled by the first generation?  
God remembers, the past generations of priests and Levites remember  
And pass on that important information to your generation of priests.  
Consecration is no small thing to God – it never should be to us.  
To be set apart for God makes even the smallest vessel valuable.  
Your generation has the same significance as the first –  
Your generation is set apart for God – just like the first one.*

***"Father, may I always be able to convince the new generations coming up of the high value God places on their salvation, their cleansing, their service, their worship, their consecration to Thee. May they never take their privileges as a kingdom of priests to be something of little value or insignificance. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

## **EXODUS 31**

### **THE COMMISSION**

In any work we do the purpose needs to be made plain. The Tabernacle was to be the place where God would dwell with His people. This made the work of building the Tabernacle of absolute supreme importance. There could not be a practice run permitted to learn how to do what God commanded. There was no "trial runs" to get mans' approval. All that was given in the instructions given to Moses. God knew what it would look like and that was all that mattered. He also knew Bezaleel ("In the shadow of God") and identified him as the person He wanted to take leadership of this work. God left no question as to the person He was entrusting this work to. This man was "filled with the Spirit of God." Bezaleel's family before him were trusted people who had leadership responsibilities, but that didn't qualify him for the work he was to do. He was from the tribe of Judah, the first one in the order of march when Israel traveled. Aholiab ("The tent of my father") was from the tribe of Dan, the last one in the order of march. And from all those in between, God put into the hearts of people what wasn't naturally there. Along with their natural talents, the spiritual gifts God gave them enabled them to accomplish what was the revealed will of God. The same is true today. Because one may be very skillful in the occupation they work at daily, does not give them priority above others of God's people. God knows each of us and according to His own purposes of grace, enables us and gifts us to fulfill the work He wants us to in the place of His choosing.

The work of the Holy Spirit in God's people isn't always something obscure or seemingly miraculous. Bezaleel was given wisdom to picture in his mind and heart, both of which are closely joined together, the results of the project and the reason behind it before it was begun. He knew what he was doing right from the beginning. The Holy Spirit uses what we have taken in, to produce, by His power, what God intends to be. "To devise cunning works" indicates an artistic mind that can visualize the finished work. When one can do this, he needs wisdom to pass this on to others who may not be able to see what he sees. In using wisdom, a leader may only need to pass on certain parts of the work to different people. His wisdom helps him discern a person's capabilities. One may be skilled in making perfect lumber out of hard wood. Another may know how to make fine gold plate. Another may be able to cast silver and another skilled in weaving and leather work which probably was Aholiab's specialty. In the same way God had His people build a dwelling place for Him. He could have made it instantly with a word. He is using His people today in building His Church. We have a commission also. it involves going, making, preaching, teaching, observing in much the same way the Tabernacle people did their work. We need wisdom from God.

Understanding was given as well because the material they were using was very precious and costly. There was no room for mistakes or "trial and error" work. How to use all that precious material in the right way the first time they took in hand called for unnatural understanding. It had to come from God. We are not dealing with merely perishable material when we are involved in our commission. The Gospel must be clearly understood and presented. The truths involving the new birth, eternal life, eternal security, and the eternal future need to be understood. There can never be allowed in the work of God any misunderstanding of the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Any human insertions in relation to the way of salvation has eternal consequences that can never be changed. Understanding of the objective of our work as well as wisdom to see how to make it known to others is how the Holy Spirit enables us to do God's will.

The actual work involved in accomplishing the task of building the Tabernacle called for the special dispensing of knowledge by the Holy Spirit. To be able to actually do the task one has been given may at first cause fear and trepidation lest we make a mistake. Some would rather do nothing to avoid making a mistake. That, of course is not something we can allow to happen because the work is more important than my comfort. We learn to trust the guidance of the Holy Spirit when we are involved in the work of the Lord, not just looking at it or fearfully anticipating it. When we have focused our attention on the work and will of God to which He has called us, then we are given the wisdom, understanding and knowledge to do what God intends in the way He expects us to do it.

All this would have created a big stir in the camp of Israel as the sound of hammers, saws, and calls of workmen sounded day after day where the work was going on. But on the seventh day there was only silence in the camp. No shouts of instruction, no sounds of laboring people, no buzz of voices talking over the project at hand. There was only silence as the busy people rested. But isn't it more important to get the work done as soon as possible? Why waste time? The communion we have with the Lord is much more important than what we do for Him. His work in our hearts is more important than the work in our hands. Fellowship with God and communion with Him focuses our attention on our relationship with Him instead of what people around expect of us or can see as a result of our efforts.

The nations around watching Israel would wonder at the silence of a huge tent city of people for a whole day. The people of God would have to trust God to preserve and protect them on that day of rest. The eerie

silence perhaps would have concerned those prying eyes looking on from a distance. They would see the cloud and fire but no activity as the sign of rest between God and His people went on and on hour after hour for the whole Sabbath. God was refreshed by rest at the end of the six days of creation, and He was passing on this same refreshing rest as a sign to His earthly people. During rest periods we are able to reflect on what has been done, and prepare our minds for the work that is ahead. This has the tendency to challenge each laborer to consider who God is, where he fits in God's plan of things, how he has been doing, has he been giving his best to the work and what is reasonable to expect in the next six days of labor. Rest to the body also gives rest to the soul and spirit. Then we are able to be more effective as we move ahead in the "calling wherewith we have been called."

**EXODUS 31:17.** *"It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed."*

#### **A SIGN.**

*Signs are not always boards by the road,  
Or advertisements to get you to buy.  
They can be evidence given by the Lord,  
From seasons to colors in the sky.*

*One that stands out across the world so wide,  
Is the Sabbath day set apart for the Jews.  
That day tells humanity, the Lord says, "They're mine,  
If you attack them, I guarantee you'll lose."*

*It was to be a holy day to that nation alone -  
Setting them clearly aside from every other group.  
It was serious enough to affect every home -  
God intended they would place only in Him their hope.*

*When God makes a covenant with them or with us,  
Remember it is never to be taken lightly.  
It is a perpetual agreement that in Him is our trust -  
If I deny Him before men, before angels He'll deny me.*

*The Sabbath is not a sign to the Church today,  
It was given to remind Israel they were His.  
The New Covenant we have - hear and obey,  
Is a sign that what is His will, I will choose.*

*"Father, In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I give thanks this morning that You have been willing to let me be identified with the kingdom of God. I hope there is the sign of my covenant with You in the response I make today to Your revealed will. Amen."*

## **EXODUS 32**

### **FAITHLESS WAITING**

Waiting times that God arranges have a reason. Guidance from God is not an insignificant matter in any part of our lives as the people of God. Lessons should be learned as we read of the worldly response of the children of Israel to the absence of Moses in the mountain. They still were looking to Moses the man they could see rather than to God. Even though they had experienced the presence of the unseen God and had been blessed every day by His provision, they still looked to man as their guide. Even though we may have enjoyed fellowship with God and have had personal dealings with God in the past, there is an enemy nearby who is waiting for an opportune time to subtly cast doubt on our confidence in God. Faithless waiting takes our eyes off the Person in whom we have placed our trust, and focuses our attention on ourselves and the things of the world around us.

The golden calf that was cast and then "fashioned" by Aaron was a return to the thinking, interest in, and worst of all the worship of Egypt. "This Moses" to those people in a short time was no more than a memory in spite of his godly leadership. Aaron was a gifted speaker, but he was a poor and weak leader. It is not always the articulate spokesman of an assembly who is able to lead the Lord's people in ways that please

God. In a very short time and as the result of one man's wavering decision, a whole chain of events began that brought pain and suffering to the people of God. We must always remember God is fully aware of every activity we engage in, every decision we make and the consequences of our choices.

Moses was a quiet man but he was a very committed man. He knew his God and for the second time, refused a kingdom. "He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter" and the kingdom of Egypt. Now he refused the "nation of Moses" because he knew the promise God had made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He also knew the value of the testimony of a small weak people among the nations around looking on to see what happens when people follow an unseen God. God's power was not in any way diminished because of Israel's sin. We must remember the purpose for which we have been called. It is not to be another religion and many religions. It is not to be an alternative form of a church to please people and accommodate to their comfort and interests. An assembly is for God and is called "the house of God." We may have to wait a long time to see God work among us in His own time and way, but let us wait in faith.

Loud noise seems to accompany much of what is called "Christians worship" today. Clapping, shouting, drums, cymbals and loud music drown out the quietness of those who one time worshipped "the Lord in the beauty of holiness." The noise is to please the ears of the people. The abandonment of dignity and reverential respect characterizes many great gatherings of people as they come to "praise God." We must remain committed to God by doing what He has commanded in His time and in His way even if there doesn't seem to be great results seen. The evidence of effective worship is known and seen by God. We should be continuing in "well doing, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not." The noise and revelry, the nakedness and abandonment of dignity was the cause of Moses' anger. The rejection and turning away of the people from Himself were the cause of the righteous anger of God. Whether it is the righteous anger of God or a righteous man, it is the cause for action to be taken. The spirit of apostasy stops the fellowship between God and His people.

Inappropriate and ineffective leadership cannot continue unchecked. Aaron had to be confronted. He was the one responsible for making the golden calf. He tried to blame the people but leadership has consequences and many are affected by the decisions those in leadership make. Wise leaders will wait to consult with others who share the responsibilities of guidance and "feeding the flock of God." Faithless waiting on the part of a leader is a serious danger to all of God's people. The ultimate result of acting apart from the will of God and not waiting for divine guidance, was that 3000 died and brother was against brother all through the camp. They had to live like that with a degree of separation continually. The tribe of Levi was set apart from then on. They were not rejected because of Aaron's weak leadership. They did step out "on the Lord's side." It would not have been easy for them to go through the camp and slay those who had agitated against Moses and put them to death. Discipline of any kind is hard to carry out especially if you have been guilty of doing the same thing. But genuine repentance is accepted by God and means a renewing of commitment to God and His will.

The broken law didn't change the demands of the law and the reason for it. We must do what God says no matter what others may do of a contrary nature. Moses was willing to be put to death for the people if God would forgive them on that basis. The true leader cares for those who one is called to lead. Yet there is only so far we can go and anything beyond that is in the hands of a Righteous, Holy, Omniscient God. The pressure may be upon us to go back to the ways of the world or to find some way to make sinful people "feel comfortable." But we must remain "steadfast and unmovable" in the work God has called us to, and patiently wait in faith for God to show us His will.

*To wait is never easy when so much around us is going on.  
We may think we've overlooked some act or are doing something wrong  
The only way we can deal with drought is to wait for refreshing rain  
And trust in God alone who can renew us to be effective for Him again.*

*To wait means I must learn to be patient even when I want to act.  
If I only look at what is missing, I will be unqualified when the facts  
Of God's Word are revealed and the time comes to be called to labor  
In a new work that is right, and blesses with divine favor.*

*To wait in faith, I will have to remember the promises God has made.  
Instead of making my own plans, my glowing pictures have to fade  
To where I am ready to do what God wants in His own appointed way,  
Then the work I have been called to by Him will be one here to stay.*

*To wait, leaves me with work that seems trivial and I am just passing time.  
If I am not careful in those waiting day, I will change God's plans for mine.  
It is important that I watch and pray, and even though daily tasks are mundane;  
When that time comes for action, I will have authority given in Jesus' name.*

*To wait can place me in the danger of doubting and complaining.  
And possibly when in that mind-set, I may question myself about remaining  
Where I am because the inactivity seems to go on forever -  
And I think I could do more and better if the ties to this place I sever.*

*To wait in faith means I can trust God to always do what's right  
And I know in whom I have believed so I live by faith not sight.  
In God's good time I do believe His will for me He will show,  
And I can they apply myself to it, because His plans I then will know.*

***"Father God, with patience and a sort of anticipation, I am waiting to see what Thou art going to do here. There is joy in this camp and faithful people, but we are so limited by our age and health issues that we wonder what will happen next. So we watch and wait and hope - first and foremost for the Lord to come. And if that is awhile in the future, to see what Thou wilt for us and among us by Thy grace. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 32:19.** *"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."*

#### **BROKE THEM.**

*The laws were plain, not complicated –  
The words were easy, not sophisticated –  
There was a reason, they were consecrated –  
God expected obedience, He anticipated  
His love for them would be appreciated  
And they would keep His laws – but they broke them.*

*Though they left the "world", the "world" never left them.  
Though God expected their faith, they doubted Him.  
They knew what was right, but continued in their sin.  
They looked like they were right, but were wrong within.  
Not waiting for God, they acted on an evil whim –  
The first law God gave – they broke it.*

*Strangely as they danced – they claimed the golden calf was God.  
Leaping in nakedness – they were exposed to the world.  
Even while it was being written – they ignored God's word.  
They thought they were free to do whatever they would.  
How strange those who were liberated would worship their gold –  
And ignoring God's laws – they broke them.*

*Does it make any difference if I make plans of my own;  
Without considering the others who live in my home?  
Does it matter to God if I obey only some;  
Of the things He has requested, and only come  
To worship with others, and honor His Son?  
To not obey His words – is to break them.*

*Grace has demands, and is balanced with faith.  
God has given His guidance and His will I can trace.  
There are things I do here that I dare not replace  
With ideas of my own – "I can go any place,"*

*“Do what I think is right,” – until I look in God’s face –  
And realize His commands – I broke them.*

*“O Father, may I never in any way ignore Thy word and Thy will. May I never entertain the thought I can think my way is okay, when it goes differently than Thy will revealed in Thy Word. Help me to never consider breaking Thy words of truth. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.”*

## **EXODUS 33**

### **OUTSIDE THE CAMP**

The consequences of idolatry were great in more ways than one. The 3000 dead were buried each one a testimony to the holiness of God and the self-willed sinfulness of men. The grieving families were never the same again. The seriousness of sin was brought home to each one although it is doubtful that many even yet realized how damaging sin is and how much is lost in terms of fellowship with God when a person allows themselves to indulge the passions of the flesh any place. They were still of the promised seed of Abraham. They were still going to have an angel of the Lord to guide them and open the way for them - but they were going to be on their own. They had made it clear they had their own way they wanted things to be, and the lesson to be learned in regards to self-will and had not been learned well. They were going to have to go without God. He was not going to be in their midst. They mourned for what they had lost but not in repentance for what they had done. Some actions taken by God's people will have lasting effects from which we can never be fully recovered.

The temporary tent where Moses met with God was removed, and Moses took it a long way out from where the children of Israel were camped. Way in the distance they could see it erected and Moses go inside to speak with the Lord. There was remorse when the people of God heard they were on their own and with a sense of guilt they put away all the fancy clothes and ornaments. They had to face themselves as they really were. They were no doubt afraid, but only those who had real affection for the Lord went outside the camp to where that meeting place was. Most just stood at the door of their tents wondering what was coming next. Everyone who went outside the camp would be easily seen by other people as they walked past the tents and beyond the last one to walk to that far-off meeting place. We may know what is right and realize God is working, but unless we "go forth unto Him outside the camp," there is no real fellowship with God and those who are wanting to be separated to God. Many believers step away from the world but to separate unto the Lord is another thing again. That cost many are not willing to pay.

The evident presence of God at that outside place was easily seen. The pillar cloud was at the door of that place, not in the middle of the people. Moses had that special place of responsibility and privilege of meeting with God as the mediator for the people. But Joshua was nearby. This place of meeting with God was never meant to be a "fun place" like so many modern churches. This was where God was and Joshua was going to be there even if Moses wasn't. Joshua must have been conscious of his own need of God and of the need of sincerity and humility on the part of all who came to where God was. Others watched and experienced God's blessings but not God's presence.

When Moses was in conversation with God, he made an appeal on behalf of the people once again. He knew the futility of life without God's presence. The uselessness of forms without reality gives no joy even though people may flock to be entertained and made to feel good about themselves. Those who have known the blessing of true fellowship with God may often find themselves in the position of an intercessor on behalf of God. Moses had experienced the grace of God and on that basis, he makes earnest request of the Lord to work again on their behalf and with be with them again. The servant knew the need of knowing God was fulfilling the work of taking His people to the promised land. He knew the value of the grace of God and the presence of God. He pled with the Lord to not take His presence away from them. He made his appeal on the fact that this nation was God's chosen people. May we never lose sight of our need of God's presence. May we never allow anything to turn us aside from the truth of God and the practice of His revealed will.

It is important for us to understand the value of separation from the world. It is also important for us to remember we are separated unto Him. Moses caught a glimpse of God's glory in a visible way. It was more important to God to show him His goodness and the absolute moral purity of God. He would show not only His goodness but also His grace. That grace was bestowed where God intended it to be seen and experienced by His people. God was going to display His mercy on those who needed mercy. The true attributes of God make His character unmistakably plain to His people. When the Lord Jesus was here, He came "full of grace and truth." His mercy towards toward the undeserving was revealed again and again. We see God in the face of Jesus Christ. Through Him, His life, His walk and words God has been publicly seen.

We can these even today when we go to Him outside the camp. How greatly we need to have God in our midst. How much we lose if we settle for standing in our "tent door" and watch others go out to Him.

**EXODUS 33:13-15.** *"Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in the sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people. And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence."*

### **THE LORD'S PRESENCE.**

*The Lord sees from the place of being eternally present.*

*He sees the tabernacle in every detail before it is made. His dwelling place is known to Him.*

*He sees each one giving their goods and knows their heart. The motive behind the gifts we give is what is important.*

*He sees each wise hearted one and fills them for the work. His power and ability are passed on to those who can be trusted with such important work.*

*He dwells among His people, and is their God. The awareness of the presence of God gives us the desire for fellowship with God.*

*He receives the half-shekel from everyone, rich and poor alike, the same.*

*He is no respecter of persons among His own today.*

*He fills Bezaleel with His Spirit. The same Spirit that worked in times past through chosen people, does the same today with us.*

*He gives Bezaleel wisdom, understanding and knowledge of how to do every task needed in the work ahead. God has given gifts to us today that we might fulfill what He has called us to do.*

*He sees the hardness of the people. The imperfections and stiff-necked people of today, will grieve and quench the Spirit and bring dishonor to the Lord.*

*He knows all their sin and charges them with guilt. Sin cannot be covered forever, because God is the witness to every act we do and every choice we make.*

*He accepts their repentance and gives His promise to be with them. When His people humble themselves and repent today, He accepts that and goes on with us.*

*He declares to Moses His character. Far too often we do not realize who God is and what He is to His people today.*

*He is the Lord our God in the midst of us.*

*He meets with His servant and sustains him. Forty days was a long time to go without the necessities of life; so it may be that we need to go without things to fulfill what God intends for us to do.*

*He uses the talents of His people and their willingness. We are all different but God can use any willing person to complete a work that he wants to do for Him.*

*He accepts what is done and sets a date. It is more important to God than to us to have everything done in order and on time. We dare not procrastinate or do a second-rate work.*

*He moves to the place of meeting. God commits Himself to a work done in His way, in His time, in accordance with His revealed will.*

*He guides His people throughout their journey. We have not been left alone without guidance as to what God's will is and how He wants it to be done.*

*His presence is with us as we journey through this world today.*

*"O all-seeing, all-knowing God: when I read these pages, it came forcibly to me that You have an order and a plan for every work and every person. We are not called to be exactly alike or to do the same things as others. The real concern I have is for the presence of the Lord with us all the way to the end of the journey. I appreciate the rest You give along the road. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 34**

### **RENEWAL, RELATIONSHIP, RESPONSIBILITY**

Moses carefully hewed two stone tablets like the ones the Lord wrote the commandments on the first time he was on Mount Sinai and met the Lord there. As the sound of his careful work was heard by the people around, word would pass through the camp, "Moses is making stone tablets! He is going up to God again!"

The instructions given to the people were the same as before, and as Moses carried those stones with him there would likely have been a quietness and reverential fear over the camp. Three thousand graves testified to the seriousness of doing what God says and only that - and in God's way. God again came and "stood" with Moses. Moses would be assured by His closeness that the terms of the covenant and the intercessory work he had been engaged in on behalf of the people, had allowed the renewal of God's dealing with His people. God again wrote the words on the stones that would go in the ark with the children of Israel as they journeyed. The laws had not changed. The standards of God's holiness remain the same no matter what people may say or claim. No votes by a congress of men can change the standards of righteousness established by the Holy, Righteous, Unchangeable God.

In this meeting with the Lord, God makes declaration as to His name and His Person that establishes the seriousness of the covenant made. He is the Lord, He is Jehovah - the Self-Existent One. He is the eternal "I AM." He is the Source of Life and being, from everlasting to everlasting. The relationship He has formed with His people is of His choosing. He only is the Source of life and the Originator of every blessing that has come to us. Seven different titles identify Jehovah as the "One with whom we have to do." His mercy is part of His character. Compassion, love and interest in us is part of His essential being. He is full of compassion and His mercies fail not. "Gracious" and "merciful" are words generally closely linked because we deserve neither.

The Lord Jesus when He was here was "full of grace and truth." The work of grace is the reason salvation is offered to all mankind. God is a gracious God, not vengeful and antagonistic. His longsuffering reminds us that the Lord God does not have a quick temper. Longsuffering is really a characteristic best described as a "long temper" contrasted with a short temper. In His forbearance He looks for real repentance in those who sin, and is ready to pardon - not because He is weak in any way or His judgment is compromised by an inconsistent character trait. In His grace He waits for the sinner to repent and the wanderer to return.

The acts of kindness - "goodness," that have been shown towards us are like the pouring out of blessing from the endless supply of His loving nature. The liberality of God's goodness has been experienced by all mankind down through the ages, and yet most people take all He gives without a thought towards the Giver of "every good and perfect gift." The abundance of His truth teaches us that every part of Jehovah is enduring, steadfast and permanent. "We change He changes not." His Word is settled forever, it remains unchanged and unchangeable. His nature is truth. God cannot lie. That abundant truth was embodied in the Lord Jesus Christ when He was here as "The Way, The Truth and The Life." He guards what He initiates. His mercy is not limited and He guards that mercy by virtue of His own Person regardless of the many complaints people may make. He is a merciful God to all who call upon Him in faith and will accept His offer of mercy.

Forgiveness that is genuine means another person is willing to assume the responsibility for the guilt of another, and paid the cost incurred. Whether it is the basic nature of man that sins in thought as well as word and deed, God's forgiveness reaches to the extent that "He was bruised for our iniquities." The legal claims against the transgressor, the rebellious, the law breaker comes against us from the highest possible authority - the Lord God. Yet he is able and willing to forgive the transgressor and the one who is disobedient to God.

Those who refuse to repent and turn in faith to Christ are not cleared from their guilt. Release from punishment and guilt because of sin, but without "repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," will not take place. In fact, the consequences of such high-minded rejection will be felt by those who come after us. Our children and grandchildren will feel the sting of sin we have refused to acknowledge and face in the light of God's holiness. The response of Moses to quickly bow and worship makes it plain he was grateful for God's mercy to him. He wanted God "among" them all the time so the people of God would remember who they were and who they served.

God's covenant with Israel was reaffirmed and the responsibilities of His people were restated lest they forget the terms under which fellowship with God is maintained. We are not able to take or leave our commitment to God because of how we feel or what it might cost us. When a person enjoys covenant relationship with God, it doesn't only affect us but has an effect on others. Moses' time with God was evident to those who saw his shining face. Our time with God will impact not only us, but those who see us in our daily walk and listen to our words. A conscious and continual awareness of our Holy God will make us conscious and aware of the fact we need to be holy people.

**EXODUS 34:9.** *"And he said, If now I have found grace in Thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray Thee, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for Thine inheritance."*

## THINE INHERITANCE.

*A creative marvel of sinew, flesh, bone and blood –  
Beyond description or accident – beyond randomness –  
Yet more than the intricate twining of atoms and DNA –  
There is the unseen unity of soul, spirit and body  
That makes us in God's image – His inheritance by power.*

*Paid for, not piece by piece or a little bit at a time –  
But once for all – completely, fully redeemed –  
The cost so extreme, so high, so all encompassing –  
Its value defies any description rising beyond understanding.  
His life was given voluntarily – made a curse – blood shed –  
We are God's purchased possession – His inheritance by death.*

*Breathing slowly, rapidly, continually – appropriately alive –  
Miles of inner wires buzzing with messages that coordinate.  
Gallons of blood flow ceaselessly for years unchecked –  
Carrying life in many forms, meeting needs nonstop –  
Sustaining, maintaining – Christ our life – daily, eternally –  
We are members of His body – His inheritance by eternal life.*

*"Father in heaven: I am not my own. I do not belong to myself. I know this and I am glad for this. But sometimes I try to claim personal worth. Again, I surrender to Thee body soul and spirit because I am thrilled to be part of Thy inheritance. I worship Thee here, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## EXODUS 35

### THEY CAME

When Moses returned to the camp after another forty days and nights on Mount Sinai, all the Israelites gathered again to hear the words of the Lord through Moses. He had received the instructions relating to the building of the Tabernacle again. There were to be no changes. Those who were appointed and gifted by God for the work, were reminded of the necessity of carrying out the Word of the Lord. The regulations included a reminder of the Sabbath day to be kept even in the busy time of the work they were doing. Nothing justified disobedience to the commandments of the Lord and the sign of the covenant he made with Israel.

The materials to construct the Tabernacle with were not demanded from the people. God's appeal was to all those who had generous hearts and who were willing to give what they had to the Lord. Giving is to be from the motivation of love and generosity, not a guilty conscience. What we have been given is from God as the Source. Surely it is an evidence of gratitude and thankfulness when we are privileged to give of what we have to further the work of the Lord. When the Spirit of God moves the hearts of God's people to do a work or contribute to what others are doing to further the work of the Lord, there is willingness to participate that comes from the heart. Each contribution may differ in amount or substance.

Not only was there an abundance of material, but there were those who were willing to work in the building of the Tabernacle. Bezaleel and Aholiab were both divinely enabled to not only do the work of building the Tabernacle, but they were able to teach others how to do the work needed. There were able to delegate work to be done to those who had areas of expertise in certain trades. Bezaleel of the tribe of Judah and Aholiab of the tribe of Dan were men chosen by God. The material they brought from Egypt was gathered together in one place. Those who spun cloth, carved the wood, crafted the metal were all significant contributors to the work. In our lives as the people of God, we each have contributions to make to the work of God as we are able. There is no reason to compare what one does with what others may do. Whoever we are and whatever we can do, God can stir our hearts to use what we are and have for His purposes.

The work of the Lord we are involved in today in evangelism, teaching and assembly life needs to be passed on by those who have been gifted by God to do this for those who are coming behind us. We need to be able to explain the reasons behind the actions we take in Gospel activity. It is essential we do not go beyond, or fall short of what the scriptures teach about this work. The same holds true in assembly life and in teaching ministry. God has given talents to us by nature and gifts linked with the new birth that can be

used by Him and for Him. It is important that we commit ourselves to the best quality of work and faithful stewardship.

*They came with arms full of bounty  
A lifetime of labor had given ample provision  
The value of what they gave is beyond counting  
From willing hearts these precious treasures were given.*

*Some came to give themselves freely  
Their talents and their time were the best they had to give  
The key to giving then and now, is given sincerely  
A cheerful hearted giver contributes the best they have.*

*I've watched people at the work they do  
And sensed in some there is a higher motivation  
Than to rush a task, so quickly they are through  
Instead of a well-done work that gives satisfaction.*

*A work done for God to bring honor to Him  
Deserves the very best as we bend into the task,  
To visualize the results is important before we begin  
The means of doing the work, then is something we can grasp.*

*The final outcome of a work, at first we cannot see  
But there are those who may see what God intends  
Enough that the effort expended comes willingly  
And God will find satisfaction in the work to me He sends.*

***"Father, the blessings of unity, fellowship and meaningful service are all cause for thankfulness as I bend to the work today. May there be glory for Thee in this. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 35:21.** *"And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all His service, and for the holy garments."*

#### **THEIR HEART.**

*With willing hearts, they search darkened places for hidden gold  
And precious things they'd planned to use for themselves –  
But now – Now a higher call, more supreme – for God.  
Their Deliverer had saved them – called them to Himself  
And claimed their allegiance and now their willing hearts.  
They are given an opportunity to give what was their own.  
Coming willingly to give what they had – doing their part –  
Many thousands are coming from all different parts – as one.  
We, like them, come willingly with willing hearts to worship;  
Worship by giving our sacrifices of praise, thanks and goods.  
Like those of old, each of us gives from our hidden stores, in fellowship –  
Giving from willing hearts of old and young – to God our Lord.*

*They came voluntarily from different walks and ways,  
To do what each was qualified to make with hearts made wise.  
Willing hands fell to the work, with zest and vision giving praise  
To God Himself, doing what they could to please God's eyes.  
Women spinning hour by hour producing beauty  
Worthy of places of honor and glory in God's dwelling place.  
Each wise-hearted one doing what she could for joy – not duty  
For years to come and future generations each glorious thread could trace.  
We too, with roles given to us by God in wisdom infinite,  
Can fill our hands and time with work to beautify His house.*

*Ours is not the threads of hair or linen, but holiness in angels' sight –  
That our gracious Lord is publicly honored by our hands, hearts and mouth.*

*Their hearts were stirred, knowing the work to which they were called  
Came from the highest possible Source – God, speaking from the holy mount  
Gave the pattern to follow, from the smallest pin the fence to hold –  
To the Holiest of all, and every piece of furniture and incense' scent  
Was planned by God Himself to represent His people and His Son.  
Burning hearts, stirring with holy fire, brought all that was needed.  
Then working with willing and wise hearts, continued until the work was done,  
Pleasing their Lord and finding inward satisfaction because His will they heeded.  
Down through the years, hearts stirred by knowing God's will –  
And appreciating the needs and dangers of all those ones around –  
God's present-day people press ahead here and abroad – still  
Moved by hearts made warm by God – and the beauty of truth's pure sound.*

*"This may be a cold day outside Father, but as I trace the course of Thy ancient people with willing, wise and warm hearts; I can see the same in my brothers and sisters today. I watch the older ones come and hear their words and watch their faces, and I know they are giving all they can. I read the words and listen to the voices of those out on the front lines of earth, and I pray for them that they, and I, will always serve our Lord from our hearts. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 36**

### **ALL THE WORK**

Meaningful labor has always been one of the most satisfying activities in a person's life. To be able to do a work well and see it completed is one of the ways we can see what God is like. Six days He worked to create what we see all around us and He saw the work He has done was good. His rest at the conclusion of the creation was not to cease from being weary of the labor but of satisfaction at what His labor accomplished. When the Lord Jesus was here, He said to the Father, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." The daily task of gathering manna in the predawn darkness would be over and the people of God then went with enthusiasm every morning laden with material to where the Tabernacle was being built. Each did what they could and brought what their heart moved them to give to the Lord.

Group effort by a company of the Lord's people often is one of the highlights of their service for the Lord. Coming together to build a meeting place for the assembly of God's people has often been a cause of joy and unity. Pictures taken years ago of the saints working together, are often looked at fondly and wishfully. "Those were good days. Wouldn't it be nice if we were the same today as we were then!" These are not unusual comments made when thinking of times of unity and purpose. We are never really happy as bystanders looking on at the work of God from a distance. Enthusiasm for a work to be done for God reaches far beyond the project to where the spirit and soul are nourished and refreshed. Worship, praise and thanksgiving are greatly enhanced.

The tanning and dying of animal skins; the tedious weaving of huge amounts of goats' hair cloth, linen cloth for the fence and the beautiful cloth of blue, purple and scarlet would have put people together for hours at a time - day after day. The review of years of slavery in Egypt, the miracles along the way, the sense of guilt and shame because of the golden calf incident was probably discussed as they worked. When they began to see the results of their labor and the magnitude and beauty of the efforts they were putting forth, they would also learn of the wisdom, holiness and character of God who designed the Tabernacle.

Every completed silver and brass clasp and socket; every finished piece of curtain would be a reason for inner satisfaction. They had a part in the work of God. Meaningful involvement is a blessing to the one who labors, and especially when they can see how their part fits in the whole scheme of things. It is not uncommon for people today to say, "I remember when we poured that cement. I was pushing the wheelbarrow." "Joe and I put the shingles on the north side of that Gospel Hall when we came to help in the work here." Similar comments made years later still have a unifying effect, and that in turn strengthens the saints.

More important than all of that is the fact that God is involved in activities is such as these. Nothing escapes His view. No small piece of work goes unnoticed. The shape of the clasps, the look of a finished gold-covered board, the details of every aspect of a work is observed by God. "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily

as to the Lord and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."

A farmer does his best to have his field look good. It reflects on his character. He has a sense of honor in the small things as well as the outcome of the harvest. There is a reflection of ourselves in the way we wear our clothes and the kind of clothes we wear. The attitude I have towards the Bible I carry, the way I read it and the teaching I give from it expresses my commitment to it. "All the work" displays the value people put on their association with the One we serve. A willing heart, enthusiastic labor, a job well-done, appreciation for the labor of others and a unity of purpose are all results of "the work."

What goes on from day to day, and the motivation behind our work adds to the joy and blessing of accomplishment - and brings glory to God.

*They come - many are uncomplicated people  
With a deep desire to be a part of something holy  
Many are not skillful at the finer things but can shear a goat  
Or cut a tree down or use a hammer - and that pleases God.*

*They come - well-known for their creative ability  
Others came to them previously for the finer things of life  
And now they come to join their skills with the work of others  
A joint-effort that unites them all - and pleases God.*

*They come - with skilled hands, ladies who know  
It is not an uncommon practice to weave - for hours  
The vision of the cloth made beautiful is in their minds  
And it comes out of their fingers - and pleases God.*

*They come - the young, the strong to bear the burdens  
The weight of years of slavery has bent many backs  
But theirs is strong to bear the yoke in their youth  
And move from place to place - their physical labor pleases God.*

*They come - hearts willing to do the menial tasks  
To pick up the "fragments that remain" for further use  
The piles of material provided finds its way where needed  
Because those who can walk and carry small things - please God.*

*They come - today as then, the projects are different  
The commands come from the same Holy God  
To "be zealous of good works," to communicate, to bear burdens  
To live "godly in Christ Jesus" - a deep desire to please God.*

***"Holy God, the order and use of materials great and small did not escape Thy gaze at that ancient time. May Thy servant today remember the small things as well as the big things need to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 36:1.** "Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whom the Lord put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the Lord has commanded."

### **WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING**

*Some things need to be together –  
Rain and wind produce bad weather.*

*Faith and works both are needed –  
To give assurance the Gospel's heeded.*

*Love and life provide the balance –  
Giving proof salvation makes real changes.*

*Rich and poor can both be bad –  
Either can make you sad or glad.*

*Wisdom and understanding need each other –  
Wisdom can put hard pieces together.*

*But understanding has a very unique skill –  
It deals directly with a person's will.*

*Wisdom places everything in proper order –  
Understanding recognizes what they're there for.*

*Wisdom follows carefully laid plans –  
Understanding completes the job with careful hands.*

*Wisdom guides me through God's Word –  
Understanding moves me to obey my Lord.*

*Wisdom reveals the past and future –  
Understanding tells me how to get there.*

*Wisdom guides us through its light –  
Understanding comforts, us in the night.*

*Wisdom is personified by the Lord –  
Understanding is why I obey His Word.*

*"I marvel Father, at the wisdom Thou hast given to many of Thy people – and even many who are not. I need wisdom and know that often I ask Thee for it. The many ways Thou hast spoken of to instruct me to gain wisdom are clear. Please give me understanding to know the reasons and uses of wisdom that I may better serve Thee. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 37**

### **THEY CAME TO WORK**

They left what they had been doing normally in the day by day activities of life to do this work of the Lord. It is true that whatever we do we are to do as unto the Lord. When these special times come it is important to be there and participate in the work right from the start. Such an opportunity for service in this way may only come once in a lifetime. We never know if we miss this time whether there will be another, or whether we will be allowed by the Lord to be involved in such a work again.

Bezaleel was the man of God's choosing to head up this work so his name is associated with every task. Some who labored with him could have thought, "Why is he the only one named." Leadership isn't only involved in the successful accomplishment of a work, but is also responsible for the failures. A wise leader of people refuses self-exaltation even though he may be credited with the success. Usually you will hear from a godly leader, "God blessed the effort and gave the needed help and power. TO GOD BE ALL THE GLORY."

Bezaleel started where God did, with the ark. Then moved on to the other furnishings and the work moved ahead smoothly and successfully. It is always important that we commit ourselves to God's work in God's way. The Holy Spirit reveals to us an orderly way to do God's work, and the people to give various responsibilities to. Those who are willing-hearted would show up for work each day and Bezaleel was able to delegate tasks to be done and give the instructions as to how to do them. Willing workers may not be able to see at first what is the value of what they are doing, but they have a right to expect those who lead God's people in God's work, to give clear guidance in a way they can understand. "It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." The stewardship of Bezaleel would not only have to do with the use of the material needed and given, but also in the wise direction and use of manpower.

As each day passed, the labor going on in different places would be evaluated by Bezaleel and Aholiab. As each project neared completion, from the large pieces of furniture, the boards, fence posts and curtains, to

the small pins and spoons, they would have to be inspected to be sure they met the Lord's specifications. Any work we do, small or great, is a reflection on the One we serve. Those areas of our life in which we ourselves or the work we engage in represent Christ, need to be carefully examined to be sure it is right.

When we come together at the Lord's Supper, we are instructed to examine ourselves. "Let a man examine himself and so let him eat." There is a reason for this. To participate in such a holy matter in an unworthy manner, not only negates anything I might offer, but it will affect all of those present. A crooked staff for carrying the table of showbread would stand out because of its imperfections. It wouldn't suit the perfections of everything else around it. A careless approach to God in prayer, a carelessly chosen song suited only to one person casts a discordant note on the whole proceedings of a congregation of God's people.

Those who lead God's people need to teach ahead of time, either publicly or privately, the appropriate way to participate in the things of God. The doctrine of the priesthood of all believers does not leave each person the right to do what they want in the service and worship of the Lord. Our commitment as priests who participate, is to follow the scriptural pattern. In the building of the Tabernacle, those who showed up for work each day were expected to do things for the Lord's dwelling place according to the pattern He gave Moses. The leadership of Bezaleel and Aholiab in turn was to be followed by those who put their hand to the work.

*To the work! With willing hearts filled with anticipation  
Eyes bright, hands ready, bodies already set apart in consecration  
Other things are of lesser importance - this demand all of my concentration  
What I am making is to be done for the Lord!*

*To the work! Don't wait until the time is more convenient  
Nor dare to insert into the work I do what I think is more important  
Bend every effort to do what I have been given as God intended it  
This work is to be done for the Lord!*

*To the work! Start early while the mind is fresh and bright  
Commit this work to God at the start to do it right  
Even though I may not know the reason, work by faith not sight  
The big picture is known by the Lord!*

*To the work! Others have their work to do and I have mine  
It isn't up to me to make changes to save some time  
If this is done right it will join easily to the next piece just fine  
The pattern came from the All-knowing Lord!*

*To the work! It may be a psalm, a hymn or prayer  
I will have nothing to contribute if I'm not there  
Let me plan what the Spirit gives with holy care  
This gathering is unto the Lord!*

*To the work! The Gospel with its message to those in need  
The teaching of the Word souls of others to feed  
To the ministry to the saints whose call we heed  
This work is not only to men but to the Lord!*

***"Father, today I am very conscious of a need that I can help fulfill. Give guidance to Thy servant as to how best to seek to meet that need I pray. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 37:1.** "And Bezaleel made the ark of shittim wood: two cubits and a half was the length of it, and a cubit and a half the breadth of it, and a cubit and a half the height of it:"

#### **BEZALEEL.**

*A Holy God, seeking a place to dwell with His people –  
A great work, carefully designed by God for testimony –  
Gave a pattern to be followed to the smallest detail –  
Needs a man – a man He can trust – a man who can follow directions.*

*An ordinary man, young in years, who had learned from his father –  
Who had watched his grandfather with steady hands, during a fight,  
Hold up the leader's tired arms, in spite of turmoil around him –  
Is available for God to use – is willing in spite of limitations.*

*The Gracious Holy Spirit moves to empower this man –  
To come upon him and use willing hands and strength for God –  
To give wisdom, understanding and knowledge to work –  
And gives this man – gifts, supernatural skills, to serve God.*

*Whether it be changing a stick of wood into a gold covered stave –  
Or oil and spices into an incense suitable for God Himself –  
Even taking a huge piece of gold and making a work of art to hold light –  
He humbly knows it is God working through him.*

*From spoons to dishes; from rings to an altar – he works –  
And forms each to divine specifications – and God's glory.  
Things never to be seen, he applies the same skill to –  
He knows his work is for God – not men.*

*An altar made of brass; boards skillfully bored –  
Sockets and bells, posts, pins and a table –  
A laver and an ark with its mercy seat –  
All formed by sanctified hands of a fit man.*

*Is there such a man as this for the work of building today?  
Is there a man available to work for God's glory alone?  
Is there one the Holy Spirit has full control over?  
Is there such a one sanctified for the Master's use?*

*From the "tribes" of God's people spread across the desert of earth –  
From the quietness of obscurity, does "John" come to warn?  
From the seat of intellectualism, does "Paul" come to reveal truth?  
"Bezaleel – where are you?"*

*"I am praying Father, that there will arise in my time a man suitable and available for Thee to use. We need to build again the 'Tabernacle of testimony' here and in many places. We need the power of the Holy Spirit to be seen again reviving Thy people, and speaking for God to a godless generation. I am getting older and feel my time is past. But I still want to be a Caleb, 'Please, give me this mountain!' If I can do something that will produce glory and honor for Thee in this small place, I am ready. If I am to reach to other obscure places, I am ready. If I am to help and guide a 'Bezaleel' or two, I am ready. I pray in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*

## **EXODUS 38**

### **THREE MEN**

Any work begun should not be left unfinished. Every piece had to be made properly and all of them had to be completed before the Tabernacle could be used. A partially done work is not suitable for use. A carelessly done project and work for God is not satisfactory. Three men seemed to coordinate their efforts to keep the work moving forward and at the same time not be careless or wasteful with the precious material they had to work with. When a work for the Lord is started it is wise to take time to plan the project and consolidate the assets to meet the objective. The Lord Jesus mentioned this principle when He taught the value of counting the cost of a work before beginning it.

Ithamar the priest, one of Aaron's sons, was responsible for the material. He had to keep track of all that came in for the work, and where and how it was used. His work was to make sure there was a record of the material and he would be able to tell Moses what was used. Moses had the design of everything in his mind as it was given to him by God. It is important to remember the Lord's people give of their "substance" to the Lord. That means it belongs to the Lord even though it may come into the hands of those who guide the

work of an assembly. It also means that when God's people support those who are working in outreach work or missionary enterprise, there needs to be an accounting for what is received and how it is used in the work.

Bezaleel was the one given the responsibility to use the material in the right way for the right things. He knew how to cast brass and see that it was formed correctly. He knew the size of the boards and how to cover them with gold plating. He knew what was needed for the curtains to be made and held in place. He was a man to whom the Holy Spirit had given wisdom and understanding. In this power he would be able to clearly explain to those who labored in the work what was needed to be done and how to do it. Communicators of truth and the reason for the things of God to be carried out in a certain way, are needed among God's people. To expect the saints to know all the issues involved in a matter, or how to accomplish a work without having ever done it before, is unrealistic and unfair. Gift and experience are to be used for the benefit of others. One who God can use, understands who he is himself and can maintain a balance between his own ability as to how a work should be done, and how it can be done by using the resources that have been given. The obligations and responsibilities we have been given by God are not greater than the assets and abilities God lays at our disposal.

Aholiab seemed to be the kind of person whose skill was obvious and could show, rather than explain, what was to be done. He could make a design of something to be made and then actually make it. He wasn't limited to only one kind of work either. The same Holy Spirit gave him skills to do what He wanted, as gave to Bezaleel the leadership qualities and workmanship skills he was to use. It is unwise for us to expect everyone to be the same or even similar in our service for God. Each person among us needs to be recognized for who they are as an individual. God can fit each person into His divine plans of things in the way that best serves His interests.

An assembly full of leaders would accomplish nothing if there was no one willing to labor unseen and unrequited for the Lord. On the other hand, if there are willing laborers but none who have vision and are willing to lead, there would be chaos. Too much leadership can cause contention and too little can leave us barren. The order of things in the building of the Tabernacle gives us insight into the way God works His will. Moses understood the Word of the Lord and was on the mountain with the Lord God until he knew exactly what God wanted His dwelling place with His people to be like. Moses in turn had Ithamar designated to be responsible for accounting of the gifts. Bezaleel had the big picture of the completed work that was passed on to him from Moses, and had the ability to communicate in understandable terms to the people what had to be done. Aholiab knew how to do the work and could show by example those who came to learn from him how they could do a work for the Lord. The willing-hearted people brought what they could and did what they could. When all the work was carried out in this way, the result was a beautiful dwelling place for God in the midst of His people. "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, for there the Lord commandeth a blessing."

*Different in personality, in age, in calling  
Yet united in service for God.  
Each one according to ability fulfilling  
The work designated by the Word of the Lord.  
When each talent and gift was made available  
A great work was able to be done.  
Each did the work for which he was capable  
And the result was they all worked as one.*

*God knows what is needed and who to use  
To do a special work for Him.  
That is why in His wisdom He will choose  
And allow participation by them.  
When the work one accomplishes is added to another  
The final product begins to take shape.  
Those many little things when all put together  
The dwelling place for God does make.*

*I may never know what work another person does  
My responsibility is to do the best with mine.  
Motivation by love for God is the cause*

*And things will come together in due time.  
God has a plan, my role is to do my part  
In the best way I possibly can.  
Then I trust God who saw the finish from the start  
To do what is impossible to man.*

*In some far part of the world one gives his best  
While in my place I am laying down to sleep.  
When the time of labor for him ends and he rests  
I am roused my watch for the work to keep.  
Day after day the church is being built  
Unknown in its whole by men.  
The day is soon coming when the last seat is filled  
We will marvel at what God accomplished then.*

***"Father, I pray today for those all over this world who are laboring to see the completion of the church. I don't know how far along the project is, but I pray Thee to help Thy servant to finish the work Thou hast given me to do. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 38:21.** *"This is the sum of the tabernacle, even of the tabernacle of testimony, as it was counted, according to the commandment of Moses, for the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar, son of Aaron the priest."*

#### **THE SUM.**

*A sum is the conclusion of many parts put together –  
Forming a whole of something never seen before.  
Each little bit a complete thing in itself, but never  
Reaching the potential God created it for.*

*Put together with others, but each one is different –  
Every one needed to present publicly God's plan.  
All the different forms together form the aggregate  
That forms the whole testimony visible to man.*

*The tabernacle of testimony completed by adding –  
The whole amount put together produces the one  
Thing God wants for His earthly place of dwelling.  
Each part of that tabernacle reflecting His Son.*

*Today the church God is building is like that of old.  
Each added stone, is a part of the total  
Amount of all that is needed to finish the whole.  
The tabernacle of old was a visible model.*

*The final sum is nearing, the church nearly complete -  
Increasing each day till reaching the number  
Of those predestined by God to be part of, and present,  
His testimony to the world to His praise and honor.*

*Each small part alone is really insignificant,  
But put together with others is a beauty to behold.  
With every part in its place, each one is meant  
To put on display our glorious Lord.*

***"O God, the great and mighty God that holds everything in Thy hand: the final pieces of material seem to be close at hand. Wherever this person is, I pray that all of us who form a part of this whole, will be each in our place when the Church is put on display to the whole world. Give me the understanding to be doing what I should be doing when the final piece is added. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

## EXODUS 39

### THEY HAD DONE IT

From the far parts of the camp of Israel the sound of busy industry slowed and then became silent. Then, from the different places where the work had been done, the people of God came, bringing to the middle of the camp the pieces they had made to be inspected by Moses. The pattern had been given to him by the Lord, and he was responsible to the Lord to see that each piece was done right. Perhaps Bezaleel and Aholiab were nearby watching anxiously to see if any piece was rejected. The question now wasn't who did the work or how it was done. The main issue to be considered was, "Is this what God intended each piece to be like?" "Moses did look upon all the work." We do not read of any pieces being rejected because it was done wrong or without due diligence. When we do God's work in God's way, it meets the standard of God's will.

We do not have to spend time evaluating the work for the Lord our brothers and sisters are doing. It is enough that our labor and the work we have been given to accomplish is done in the way God has instructed. Some of God's people have a big project they are responsible for. Those great sheets of leather and cloth for the covering of the Tabernacle would have needed a lot of people to carry them to Moses for inspection. A garment of white linen for a priest could be brought by the woman who made it. A brass pin brought in the hand of the person who made it would not be a big burden and could look small beside the brazen altar. But each piece was important. Each piece was scrutinized by Moses to be sure it was done properly. What a blessing it is when we can find joy and satisfaction in the work of others as well as in the results of our own efforts.

The clasps may seem insignificant compared to a gold-plated board, and the value of a clasp may not be seen until it is missing or is broken. Some truths may seem insignificant and be overlooked when we consider the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. However, the two words, "Jesus wept," have great meaning as we consider Him. "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree," certainly has a great impact when His Person and work are unfolded to us by the Holy Spirit. In another way, "The Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me," impacts our appreciation of the Savior. No part of the Tabernacle was without reason, and no part of our Lord Jesus Christ can be considered of lesser value than any other part of the "Revelation of Jesus Christ." We will see the importance of it all when we see Him and give account of our part in the great work of God.

As each piece was brought to Moses and he looked over it all, those thousands of laborers would stand by and see the great accumulation of finished pieces put in places where they could be easily identified when the time came to erect the Tabernacle. As Moses passed each piece brought to him by the waiting people, that person would add the work he or she finished to those already inspected. It wouldn't be long before the pin made by an individual could not be differentiated from all the rest of the pins. They didn't have their own initials on the work they did. It was all done for God. Pride in self for a work we think we have done for God, will make it valueless. Each of us does what we are given to do, and give God all the glory. One businessman said to his salesman, "It doesn't matter who gets the credit, as long as the firm shows a profit."

Everything we do, anything accomplished in service for God is for the furtherance of the kingdom of God and the building of the Church. The inspection of a teacher's work will be tested by fire, so each one who teaches should be careful his teaching builds up "the temple of God," not destroys it. Each Sunday School teacher and each Gospel preacher must be careful to make sure the truth of salvation has been clearly and properly presented lest there be those who think they are saved but are not. Each person in the assembly who influences and leads others, needs to be sure their guidance is biblical and does not mislead a follower into a path that will stumble them.

The people of God brought the work they had done to Moses and he inspected each piece. As they left the result of their efforts to be added to all the material to build the Tabernacle, Moses blessed them. The children of Israel did all the work and they experienced the blessing. Each one of us is blessed when we share in the work of the Lord with all of God's people. The faithful service of each will bring blessing to one and all.

*It wasn't that the plans were obscure  
Each task was given in detail.  
There wasn't a long time to endure  
If the work was right it would not fail.  
The inspection was to make sure it was right*

*Not to exalt the one who labored.  
Some parts would be hidden from sight  
There was no one especially favored.*

*When all the pieces were brought  
They came to be part of a whole.  
Each one had a special spot  
Like people, each had a role  
To fulfill what the Tabernacle represented  
The Person and work of our Lord.  
The building when finished, presented  
A united whole, built from God's Word.*

*Each stone in the building today  
That is being erected by the Spirit of God,  
Has a place, a task, a word to say  
That represents obedience to the Lord.  
Each one may be different in shape -  
But to the next one it is made to fit.  
The Great Designer wants us to make  
Our work to be done as He wants it.*

*When the Tabernacle was finally complete  
It became God's dwelling place.  
The Church built is a marvelous feat  
Done entirely as a work of God's grace.  
To look at the outside one might miss  
The glory that it contains within.  
The Church is something like this  
But God sees it perfect and complete in Him.*

***"Holy Father, to know that the work of God is still progressing encourages us to keep on with our labor. My concern is that what I do is according to Thy divine plans. Lead and guide Thy servant today in thought and word and deed, in ways that please Thee and fulfill Thy righteous expectations. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 39:32.** *"Thus was all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation finished: and the children of Israel did according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did they."*

### **FINISHED.**

*God laid His plans and finished the creation project alone.  
He created earth and heaven, and made man a living soul.  
Everything He made, and placed each where He should,  
He finished that work, and saw that it was good.*

*God gave a pattern to Moses telling Him what He wanted done.  
He wanted a dwelling with His people, sort of like an earthly home.  
They did exactly what He wanted; each part was finally finished.  
When all parts came together – God was with them – they were blessed.*

*Here to earth, God came as man; One with us – a work to do.  
Every act of mercy, and His many gracious words did show,  
Our Lord accomplished redemption, sin's cost He fully paid –  
When He cried, "It's finished," before He bowed His head and died.*

*A work is going on today, it has been going on for years.  
Daily new stones are added, completion is drawing near.  
The Church God started building, each member He indwells,*

*Is near to being finished, His plans will be fulfilled.*

*When all the saints are gathered home, and the workers from the past,  
Meet together when the King has come, and the kingdom's here at last;  
We will all rejoice with our Lord because all the plans He had –  
Are fully finished, each piece in place, God is pleased with what He made.*

*“What pleasure it must be to Thee, O God, when Thou dost see the final result of all Thy plans. Looking back, I am glad to learn that what You planned will be done. Creation was finished in the appointed time, the tabernacle was finished just the way it was supposed to be, and now the Church is nearing completion. I would really like to be here at the conclusion of the work of building the Church. Whatever is Thy plan for me, I will rejoice when it is finished. Amen.”*

## **EXODUS 40**

### **THE GLORY OF THE LORD FILLED THE TABERNACLE**

The Israelites had been slaves in Egypt, a year before the Tabernacle was set up. On the fourteenth day of the first month, the Passover had taken place and a great company of slaves had left Egypt in the night. Now, two weeks less than a year later, the Tabernacle was set up in the middle of the camp. Each piece had been made as instructed by God and each piece would fit to make the unique dwelling place of God, suitable for Him to dwell with His people. As these who erected the fence, the walls, the gate, the door and the veil put everything in its correct place, they would each be able to tell other of the particular glory of the pieces they saw. One of the many valuable things about fellowship is we are able to share thoughts of our Lord with others of God's people. "My, that's a wonderful thought." "I had never seen that before," and similar comments are made when we speak together with others of our Savior.

This great band of ex-slaves are now being unified around one common center - the Person of the Lord God of Israel. Moses was responsible on that first day of the year to erect the Tabernacle in an orderly fashion. The Lord told him the order of setting up the building. It was his responsibility to do it in that way. There was no trial and error method to this work. The Tabernacle itself was raised up first. Then the veil, ark and mercy seat were set in place. This was followed by the table and the bread was set on it. The lamp-stand was put in place and lit - the golden altar was set in the proper place and incense set on it to burn. As each piece was put in place, those who erected the Tabernacle under Moses' direction would be conscious of coming from within the Holiest and moving outward to the courtyard. The brazen altar had a burnt offering placed on it. The laver was set in place and the courtyard fence was set up.

When a new work begins, we do not want to carelessly experiment with things to see what satisfies or pleases the people. An orderly and carefully considered plan needs to be followed. What is done at first in a new assembly work is what the Lord's people will be doing fifty or a hundred years from now. The way people come to the Lord's Supper and the attitude towards it is established by those who were there when the work began. Our attitude towards the Bible, the way we greet each other, the singing of hymns, the way the emblems are approached and passed to each person is set when the work begins. Care needs to be taken right at first to be sure a sense of reverence, respect and holiness is maintained when we gather together.

Moses was given the responsibility to set up the Tabernacle. He would have delegated different jobs to people and expected them to do the work he gave them right. God allows us to participate in carrying out His will in holy things. We dare not sit idly by, because the task we have been given helps to maintain the whole work in an orderly fashion. One person who was to set a silver socket in a particular place could have stopped the whole work if he overslept or wanted to eat a leisurely meal before reporting to fill his designated task. There were many pieces to fit together and each one on the list of things to do was important. The small things we are asked to do may seem of little value unless we do what we do "as unto the Lord." The on-going service for the Lord in an assembly needs me ready and willing to do my part.

It appears the last thing to be done in the erection of the Tabernacle was to hang the multi-colored gate speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life. They knew the work was done right and everything was in order when the cloud of the Lord's presence covered the Tabernacle. Day and night the evidence of the Lord in the midst of His people could be seen. The comforting shadow during the day and the light shining in the night would give assurance to the people of God the Lord was with them. There is a real comfort and strengthening of the saints of God when we know the Lord is in our midst. The hymns we sing seem to make our praise real when we are not just listening to the talents of others. The audible and

silent prayers of the saints lead us to true worship that comes from our spirits. When the Word of God is read, the scriptures speak to us when they are suited to the time and place. What a great blessing it is to have come from slavery to freedom, from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God - and know the glory of the Lord is here!

*A year was nearly passed and so much was changed  
No longer Egyptian slaves but a nation with a name.  
We once had nothing but now have much to give -  
Before we had a living death, now with God Himself we live.  
We've come from bondage to freedom!*

*Melons, leeks and garlic was our food - and our breath was bad  
Now each day we have food from heaven the same as angels had.  
That holy food is here each day, we just have to rise and claim it  
Its taste is like honey, the food is pure, all is in it to keep fit.  
Even the food speaks of the blessing of freedom!*

*We have made serious mistakes as our old life tried to claim us  
In our impatience we looked back to Egypt's way that killed us.  
Without faith, at first, we forgot the Egyptian world feared us  
But our God in mercy by His power redeemed and forgave us  
And we are no longer in bondage but freedom!*

*It is taking awhile but we are learning that freedom isn't license  
To live in freedom doesn't mean self-will and independence  
Involved in freedom, is God's will, linked with common sense  
And includes the part of life more valuable than dollars and cents.  
Free in Christ, not sin's bondage, but real freedom!*

*When we are free, we are able to fit well with others  
Freedom brings us into fellowship with many sisters and brothers  
With those of like faith we desire to obey our heavenly Father  
And there is a very special unity when in Christ's name we gather.  
No longer in bondage but in freedom!*

***"Father, the freedom of fellowship and unity with Thee and Thy people who appreciate who appreciate orderly freedom directed by Thy will is a great blessing. We are free to follow the directions Thou dost give that enables us to live quiet and peaceable lives. There are meaningful goals given and guidance as to how to reach them when we are free in Christ. I thank Thee in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."***

**EXODUS 40:2.** *"On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation."*

#### **FIRST DAY OF THE FIRST MONTH.**

*The first day of the year starts up something new,  
Things never before seen from our human view.  
But to God who sees things as an eternal "now."  
He uses these "first days" to teach us somehow.*

*It was "first day - first month" when floods water dried.  
The flood was over, every person and animal had died  
Except those safe in the ark, who found grace in God's eyes;  
And going out from the ark, each started a new life.*

*"First day - first month" started the cleansing of the temple.  
Removing pollution from what is holy is really very simple:  
Things that don't belong there or anything unclean,  
Need to be removed and worship sanctified again.*

*Many left Babylon on the "first day of the first month."  
Seventy years had passed, in Babylon times were tough.  
God raised up some men to lead his people to their home,  
And recovery made a start, as they went to where they belonged.*

*Never think for a moment, "There's no way to make new starts."  
When sin's confessed, lives are cleansed—God touches grieving hearts,  
And leads them back to where they were and lets them start again.  
God does the same for us today, when we return to Him.*

*"Holy God, I am thankful to Thee for allowing those who fail and fall, to return to Thee again. "There's a way back to God from the dark paths of sin..." Often we find our lives so affected by what goes on around us, we hardly realize how affected we are by them. I pray I will be able to keep a clear sense of right and wrong, no matter what others may do. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen."*