

28. Let Us Make Man in Our Image and Likeness

God was determined to separate His chosen people from the idol-worshipping people of Egypt. Pharaoh was determined to prevent their departure. So, with one awesome destructive calamity after another, God devastated the pharaoh's power structure until the poor man could no longer continue his resistance. Only then did he stop trying to prevent Israel from obeying God's Word.

We've already seen that in His eternal nature, God is perfect. And we saw that Perfection never changes. So His purpose for separating His chosen people from the rest of the nations of this fallen world was perfectly in keeping with His original purpose for designing and creating human beings in the first place:

“God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.” (Genesis 1:27)

When Adam and Eve cut themselves from God's living Word, their true Head and Life Source, that decapitation killed them and their offspring, spiritually and physically speaking. The Latin word, *'mors'* (death) and *'mortis'* (of death), is the root of our English words, *'mortality'* and *'mortal.'* Our human nature was so devastatingly impacted that we were no longer able to know God, much less serve the purpose for which He created us. God is Life personified; but Sin killed us:

The Lord God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.” (Genesis 2:16-17 Emphasis added.)

God is the Source of all created life. So when humans 'decapitate' themselves by rejecting and opposing the Headship of God's creative Word, they commit suicide. That is why since Adam's fall, we are conceived and born into the state of mortality. That is Adam's legacy to us. So even as we're conceived...we're dying! In that sense, we are *'the living dead.'* And thus we are the exact opposite of what humans were originally created to be. We were created to be the image and likeness of God's living Word...but were so twisted and deformed by Sin that we became the image and likeness of the Serpent instead. And God's Word has been sent to seek us out and break the Serpent's hold over us...and restore us back into His image and likeness:

“My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you—but I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.” (Galatians 4:19-20 Emphasis added.)

“We (apostles) proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.” (Colossians 1:28-29 Amplification and emphasis added.)

So throughout all of Scripture, God's purpose never changes. He is always working to restore the original Perfection of His Creation. Although it does not always appear to be taking place, the progression is taking place... relentlessly making its way to its Perfect Fulfillment. So although we're born with dead spirits and dying bodies, God is restoring us. If we repent of our radical independence from Him, He regenerates and equips and empowers us to be transformed into His Word's image and likeness. The apostle Paul expressed this beautifully when he wrote these words:

"But when God, who had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus." (Galatians 1:15-17 Emphasis added.)

What an awesome statement that is... 'God was pleased to reveal His Son in me...' That's another way of expressing what God revealed in Genesis: 'Let us make man in Our image and likeness!' This is what we are all created and designed to be... living members of our True Head, God's living Word. That's why He is sent to seek us out and why He summons us with that awesome command, 'Follow Me!' God's living Word is here to kill the power that Sin has over the human race and to strip away the radically independent ways that cut us off and keep us separated from our Life Source. He summons us to exchange our living death for His eternal Life! His Life must be seen working in us, producing its awesome divine, supernatural Fruit from within our mortal flesh. Only when that begins to happen in obvious ways can we say in Truth that we are saved. The visible Fruit proves that we are being restored and actually share in God's Eternal Life. Then it is clear that we are embodying and reflecting God's living Word and His Authority and Truth to the rest of Creation:

"But we have this Treasure in earthen (mortal) vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the Power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live (in this present age) are constantly being delivered over to (the realization of our impending) death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh." (2 Corinthians 4:8-11 Amplification and emphasis added.)

God's Word covers our bankrupt spiritual nakedness and is fully restoring us. And that is why He chose Abraham's family to be His special instrument of redemption, salvation and restoration. That's why He commands them to remain separated from the idolatry of the nations (*goyim*) of this fallen world. Through Israel and the Torah He entrusted to her care, God must reveal His changeless Truth and Reality to the human race... so that we may all understand Reality as God has created it and understand what He has to do to redeem, purify, regenerate and fully restore us to our original *image and likeness of God* status and purpose.

We must be refitted and reconfigured to serve as the living embodiment of God's living Word. So God reveals Himself and connects us to Himself so that we can interact with Him to accomplish that purpose. To the degree that we embody and reveal God's Word as He lives and

operates from within us, to that degree are we in the process of being restored by God to the 'image and likeness' beings we are intended and created to be.

Yeshua's New Covenant apostle Paul was inspired to reiterate to the Jewish and non-Jewish Remnant of Israel in the first century and beyond, the same revelation Moses was inspired to write in the Genesis portion of the Torah! And thus we see God's unchangeable Perfection... His absolute Reliability and Credibility at work in the inter-relatedness of the Old Testament and New Testament texts:

"Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. Jesus Christ (God's living and written Word) is the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings..." (Hebrews 13:7-9 Amplification and emphasis added.)

Israel, God's chosen instrument

God chose to work with and through Israel... to restore the image and likeness of His Word purpose and destiny to every human being He has created! It is for this purpose that Israel was made His unique instrument through which '*all the families of the earth will be blessed.*' What God revealed and promised to them stands forever. And all other people will sooner or later see the inevitability of the absolute Authority of God's Word, working over and within and throughout all of Creation:

"Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (My image and likeness). These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel." (Exodus 19:5-6 Amplification and Emphasis added.)

"Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." Matthew 4:18-19 Emphasis added.)

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.)" (John 15:5-8 Amplification and emphasis added.)

"However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you." (Romans 8:9-11 Emphasis added.)

“For all of you who were baptized into Christ ***have clothed yourselves with Christ.***” (Galatians 3:27 Emphasis added.)

“Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. ***For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.***” (Colossians 3:2-4 Emphasis added.)

So we see that God is saying the same thing, over and over, in many different ways...image and likeness...Life of Jesus manifested in our body...vine and branches...disciples...holy priestly nation...complete in Christ...bearers of God’s Fruit, etc., etc.

God abhors and detests what the Serpent has done to us all. The separation that exists between Him and we humans who were designed and created to abide forever as one with Him, is an abomination! Ever since the decapitation of the human race took place, God has been intently focused on reconciling all of mankind to Himself and restoring us to our proper status and position and inheritance that comes automatically to us when we are the image and likeness, the living members forming one Body...under the absolute Headship of His living, creative Word. It is for the fulfillment of this purpose that He chose Israel to serve as His unique instrument of reconciliation and reunion and full restoration. He wants us all. And nothing in the heavens or throughout the cosmos of the created time and space universe is going to be allowed to prevent that Restoration from happening!

So this is some of the awesome depth of meaning and significance that underlie the events of the Exodus from Egypt. ‘Egypt’ is a Biblical symbol that stands for ‘those humans that are still trapped within the Serpent’s coils’. ‘The Exodus’ expresses our willingness to repent and demonstrates that we are truly forsaking and leaving behind our radical independence from God’s Word and our part in the rebellion of the powers of Darkness.

And ‘The Land of Promise’ into which we are ready to follow our Lord and Master is an earthly geographical symbol that represents the complete Restoration of our union and synchronized interaction with Almighty God, which is accomplished by and through our intimate, eminently obedient living interaction with His living Word, as His true disciples. The Land of Promise is the Fullness of God as contained and bestowed in and by His Heavenly System. And when we are united to God in His Kingdom, the Life of His Word and Spirit truly and authentically abide and work within us. The Holy Spirit of God validates and endorses and testifies to the Truth of the Word, with awesome manifestations of God’s Almighty, world-changing Power! And we prove that we are truly part of God’s Heavenly Kingdom, by the way in which the Life and Love of the King transform us and by the way we are able to love, honor and obey the King of all Creation.

The Exodus is More than a Story... It’s a Way of Life

As we’ve already seen, God commands both Jewish and non-Jewish people to join and become as one with the original Exodus from Egypt. He requires us all to absorb, protect and perpetuate the Exodus Reality in our lives, and share it with the world around us, from generation to

generation. The Exodus is not merely a Bible story about a multitude of strange, faceless, ancient people from history's dim and distant past. The Exodus is also about us and our children and their great-grandchildren! It includes us all, one way or another. We are either 'Egyptians' like the pharaoh, or 'Israelites' like Moses, Joshua and Caleb. We are 'Israelites' not because we're Jewish, ethnically speaking. It is because, like Abraham the Sumerian, we too have learned to become 'Hebrews'...we too have 'crossed over' and made the transition from 'decapitated, radically independent self-life' over to Spirit-filled and empowered '*Word of God Life,*' '*Messiah-Life,*' (Christ-Life).

So as we observe what happened to the people of the first Exodus, I ask you to see yourself among them. Whether we like it or not, God is showing us that we are all included in this story. The story is still unfolding. It began long ago with previous generations, but now we are being included. The story has reached our generation in time and space history. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses...and all the true Family Members who have lived since then, are now connected to and present with you and me and our households. Those who went before and those who are yet to come will now see the parts that we and the rest of our generation will choose to play and what ingredients we will decide to add to the continuing story.

With that in mind, we can begin to see more of the meaning underlying the events that took place as the original Exodus progressed:

*"Now when Pharaoh had let the people go, God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, even though it was near; for **God said, 'The people might change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt.'** Hence God led the people around by the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea; **and the sons of Israel went up in martial array from the land of Egypt.**"*

"Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, 'God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones from here with you.'" (Exodus 13:17-19 Emphasis added.)

The text above is packed full of meaning and significance for us. God, in His wisdom, is able to say so much with very few words. We will never be able to finish unpacking all of the truth and revelation that are contained. Once again we realize that we will never fathom the depths of revelation that are contained in each book, nor will we exhaust the opportunities contained within them for the Holy Spirit to reveal more of God's infinite, eternal living Word to us in every part of every text.

The text quoted above is a good example. The realities that the people of the Exodus were going to have to face were literally oozing with dangers of all kinds. God's people were being cut and separated from this most brutal and mercilessly hostile world. They were no longer to have any part in it; but no matter where they would go, they would still be surrounded and bombarded and tempted and opposed by one form or the other of the satanic world system. The separation they would have to undergo was not like being taken off of Earth and transported to a distant planet. It was the agonizing kind of separation that exists when you must remain *IN* the world, but can no longer be *OF* the world. Whereas once we were an integral part of it, now, although we

maintain our physical presence in it, we must transform into sons of God and citizens of our new Heavenly Kingdom. Thus there develops the great incompatibility between us and the other people that we are forced to live among:

“Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves. But beware of men, for they will hand you over to the courts and scourge you in their synagogues; and you will even be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say. For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

“Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved.

“But whenever they persecute you in one city, flee to the next; for truly I say to you, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel until the Son of Man comes.” (Matthew 10:16-23)

As the members of that original Exodus contingent found out, it is grievous for us to have to leave everything behind and tear ourselves away from those that were essential parts of our Egyptian homes and ‘comfort zones.’ Although they were once very high on our list of priorities, now if they should they decide not to join us in the Exodus, and stay behind, the Word’s believing obedient disciples are required to ‘deny themselves, take up their crosses, and follow God’s Word into the excruciating wilderness of transition. They must leave their former world behind, including those that at one time were very close and very dear to them. So, there’s no escaping the pain that will follow when we forsake and leave this world and its idolatrous system...and ‘cross over’ to the strange new, God-given identity, purpose, Kingdom, home and destiny that await us.

But in order for God’s people to be able to fulfill God’s requirements and serve as Almighty God’s authentic image and likeness, God’s Word and Spirit must be free to do the actual work of obeying and loving God in us and through us and in our name. This is the awesome Truth that we must grasp. That is why we must die to relying on and trusting in our fallen flesh and limited devices. We must make the transition over to total trust in and focus upon God Himself. When He is our Life, He will also be our Righteousness and His Perfection will clothe and cover us in the sight of Almighty God.

This radical departure puts us at odds with family members and close friends who choose to remain behind in the realms of self-life and separation from God. Our hearts, and theirs, will be pierced and broken as we begin to obey and follow God’s Word out of Egypt. The deepest, most intimate personal relationships we once valued and treasured in Egypt will be inevitably affected and perhaps completely destroyed as we follow our Master to where He is going to lead us.

“Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man’s enemies will be the members of his

household. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it. (Matthew 10: 34-39 Emphasis added.)

“Now large crowds were going along with Him; and He turned and said to them, ‘If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and consider whether he is strong enough with ten thousand men to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions.

“Therefore, salt is good; but if even salt has become tasteless, with what will it be seasoned? It is useless either for the soil or for the manure pile; it is thrown out. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.” (Luke 14:25-35)

Is not the issue expressed by Messiah Yeshua the very same issue He was expressing to and through Israel in the books of Genesis and Exodus? Is God not driving home the point that He will allow nothing in Creation, no matter what it is, to come between Him and the image and likeness of His Word! Is He not always protecting or restoring what we really are...what He truly created us to be...the image and likeness of His living Word?

“And those who are in the flesh cannot please God. However, you (who obey God’s Word) are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ (God’s Word living and reigning within him), he does not belong to Him. If Christ is (actually) in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of Righteousness!” (Romans 8:8-10 Amplification and emphasis added.)

The Living Word Must be Our Life!

God will never change His mind or plan for us. So regardless of whether or not we believe it or agree with it, or not, the living God of Israel is after the same thing with every human being He creates. It is what He was after with those who followed His Word, through Moses, out of Egypt. And it is what He will require of every disciple that comes after them throughout history. They will discover sooner or later, regardless of how blind and stubborn and contrary they were in their earlier years, that as far as God is concerned, everything that concerns us, and the rest of Creation, revolves around His Son, His living Word. The Word of God is the Life and Provision of it all. God’s living Word MUST be found living and working within our innermost being if we are to be truly human in a God-satisfying way. The Word must be our Life. We must be one with all that He is and all He has done in humanity’s name, in order to pass God’s Judgment.

This is because:

“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.” (Colossians 1:15-20)

“...am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ. For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

*For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the Church of God (those Jews who embraced Yeshua as their Messiah) beyond measure and tried to destroy it; and I was advancing in (Yeshua-rejecting) Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions. **But when God, who had set me apart even from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood,** nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.” (Galatians 1:10b-17 Emphasis added.)*

The innermost being of true disciples of God’s living Word is so deeply pierced and penetrated by the Spirit-given revelation of God’s living Word, that they experience a death and resurrection transition. They truly die to all that they were before, regardless of what it may have been. And thereafter, they live only to God, in Messiah Yeshua, from then on. Nothing can ever be the same for such people. When that inner radical change takes place, their hearts are truly circumcised, and nothing about them remains the same. They cross over completely...from the ranks of God’s enemies...into total regeneration and transformation. They become Spirit-generated ‘sons of God,’ temples of God’s Holy Spirit, and the image and likeness of God’s living Word. The Word once became flesh in the form of Yeshua of Nazareth. But now, after His Resurrection, He becomes flesh in and through His New Covenant disciples!

So obviously, the powers of Darkness can no longer have any legal hold on such people. Once Yeshua becomes their Head and Life and Lord, Owner and Master, they become His living manifestations... ‘*The Light of the World*’ ...and therefore, nothing of the Serpent’s Darkness can be allowed to remain in them after that:

“You are the Light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand (menorah), and it gives Light to all who are in the house. Let your Light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in Heaven.” (Matthew 5:14-16)

So now we can see with greater clarity and understanding, why God must separate those who are to contain and embody His Light, the Light that comes from His living and written Word...from the Darkness in which the enemies of His Word choose to remain. That Darkness is caused by their unbelief and their rebellious anti-Word attitude and outright disobedience to God's revelation and commands. This Exodus is the 'line of demarcation' that God 'draws in the sand of the wilderness' through the instrumentality of His Israel. In so doing, He proclaims and explains to the whole world and all of its generations, that once we become one in the Eternal Covenant with God's Word, our hearts must truly be circumcised. But if we choose instead to play games and render God nothing but 'lip service,' it may appear externally, for a time, that we are part of the Exodus...but sooner or later...it will become apparent that our hearts never truly left Egypt.

“The rabble who were among them had greedy desires; and also the sons of Israel wept again and said, “Who will give us meat to eat? We remember the fish, which we used to eat free in Egypt, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic, but now our appetite is gone. There is nothing at all to look at except this (God-given) manna.” (Numbers 11:4-6 Amplification and emphasis added.)

What God provides in and through His Word is Life and Light to creatures made to be His image and likeness. But to reject what comes from Him in favor of something that He created and that we covet and choose to place above His Word in our hearts ...is to choose to remain in 'Egypt.' God's intent is to form His Word in us and reveal Him through us. If we ignore and exclude Him, and center our attention on ourselves and on alien priorities of our own independent choosing, then we are 'sons of disobedience,' worshippers of false gods and members of the 'army' that God sent His Word to confound, dismantle, expose, discredit and judge.

So once more we repeat and emphasize:

Since God created us to be the image and likeness of His living Word, the Word, who is now revealed to us as Messiah Yeshua, He is to be our Head and we are to be His living members. God requires that His Word, His beloved Son, is to be free to reveal and express Himself on Earth, through us. So it's not about we who are the members; it's all about our Head. He must increase in our awareness and priorities; and everything else must decrease. So, when God regards us, He is looking at us with this in mind. This is the sole issue with which He will be concerned:

“How much of My Son (My living Word) is in you?”

It doesn't matter whether we're Jewish or non-Jewish. It doesn't matter what nation or ethnic group or racial color we embody. God is not concerned with which culture or language or philosophy of life or religion we once embraced or endorsed before He revealed His Son to us. It doesn't matter what social and economic level we used to identify with. God will not be impressed by whether our names were listed in 'Who's Who' or what honors or fortunes we managed to achieve and amass in this life with the gifts and faculties He gave us to use. The only thing that will matter to Him when it's time for Him to judge us as individuals and as a corporate entity

will be whether or not His Son, His living Word is our King and Lord...and whether or not He is free to be what only He can be and do what only He can do, to us, in us and through us!

This is what Genesis and Exodus are about. This is what God's True Israel is about. And it is what all the rest of Scripture, leading up to the Book of Revelation at the very end, will be about. So, beloved, take to heart what God is revealing to us. To know the Word is to know the Father that reveals Himself through the Word. And to embrace the Word is to embrace the living God that sent Him to us. However we respond to and think about and interact with the Word...is exactly how we are responding to and thinking about and interacting with the living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!