

2. Why Obedience to God's Word Is So Important

Why must God deal with us so stringently? Why do Exodus and other books of Scripture have such harsh-sounding passages in them? And have you noticed that Yeshua at times speaks harshly to people at times? Why does God do this? It's because He knows decapitated people. He knows their fallen, spiritually dead state. He knows they only operate by their fallen soulish and carnal faculties that are Sin-corrupted, twisted, distorted and conditioned purely by their worldly, God-less surroundings. He knows how difficult it is for His Word to 'get through' to such spiritually, mentally and emotionally deprived, obtuse beings. So He knows that 'jack hammering' is necessary to get through the Sin-concrete in our souls and brains. Nothing short of that kind of force will be effective and productive in getting through to their innermost being.

Over the centuries, fallen humans have manipulated and 'morphed' God's Word into various shapes and configurations to suit themselves. They've tried to make Him squeeze and fit into their preconceived notions, theologies, desires and expectations. They've attempted to manipulate Him like pliable putty with their religious rituals and others have tried to refashion Him into being a vindictive tyrant, or an utterly meek, syrupy-sweet, non-demanding source of endless comfort and reassurance. Others depict Him in religious paintings as an overly tender, ever-compassionate, accepting, dotting, passive, non-confrontational 'blob' of total acceptance with no boundaries whatsoever.

So naturally and inevitably, Father must bring the Truth about Himself and His utterly holy, righteous, perfect nature back before our innermost being, even when we lack spiritual, mental and emotional eyes and ears with which to perceive what He is trying to show us. So He reveals His Word in sharp, astoundingly penetrating ways, ways to restore a sense of His true integrity, authority and reality, as they really are. The real Word of God cannot be confined, controlled, distorted or manipulated to suit the whims of fallen, Sin-corrupted flesh. God's real Word breaks out of every deceptive mold and manipulated 'still photo' taken of Him by which men keep trying to confine Him and ignore His Truth. The real Word says and does things that do not at all meet the expectations of the fallen world system, religious or otherwise:

"Beware that your hearts are not deceived and that you do not turn away and serve other gods and worship them. Or the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its fruit; and you will perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you. You shall therefore impress these words of Mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead." (Deut. 11:16-18 Emphasis added.)

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit." (John 3:6-8)

In our New Covenant era, the disciples of God's living Word live and interact with Him day and night. He is their Home and their Life and their Preoccupation! They know and interact with Him deeply and intimately even as He takes them through the various stages of their personal boot camp training and corrects and realigns and disciplines and explains everything to them. And as this goes on, they receive a completely different view and understanding of Him. He increases in their inner awareness, and everything that used to stand in the way of Him progressively disappears. And they come to know the Perfection of His Presence and behold and regard Him continually...and that process transforms them into His accurate, authentic, image and likeness. He is what God requires disciples to embody and reflect...not just things about Him...but the Lord Himself...just as He really is. Disciples do not 'dilute' or downplay the real issues. They do not try to 'sell' Him to the public by making Him more acceptable or palatable to their tastes and sensibilities. They proclaim and embody Him as He really is:

"Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces." (Matthew 7:6)

*"...He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the **money changers** and overturned their tables..."* (John 2:15)

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves!" (Matthew 23:15)

Eternal Salvation Depends on God's Authentic Truth

God's Word must be precise, exacting and demanding with us because our eternal salvation depends on the authentic Truth and Reality of God's Self-revealing Word, exactly as His Father sent Him to reveal it to us. And God's Spirit is commissioned to reveal, protect and sow God's Word in total, perfect accuracy and authenticity. This is because every human being is specifically designed and created to be the perfect image and likeness of God's living and written Word! Our original fall into Sin, through Adam, was catastrophic because it fatally damaged our nature and cut us off from the Reality of the Word that is our one and only Source for everything real, true and good! By allowing the Serpent to dominate, corrupt, disfigure and drag us into his rebellion, we stopped being the Word's image and likeness and became the image of the Serpent instead! Such beings will never be allowed into the Kingdom of Heaven.

"But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, 'Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all.' And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands on them." (Mark 10:14-16
Emphasis added.)

We are now far removed from the original state and purpose for which God designed and created the human race. Now, we are now conceived and born into a state that is terribly flawed, maimed and contaminated by comparison. We're born with a strong craving to rebel and sin against our Maker. So our normal state is far below the God-established standards of righteousness God

requires His true humanity to meet. Now it is normal for us to remain Head-less, that is, to live and operate apart from and at odds with, God's own living Word. And so nothing is more important than for God's Word to pierce, penetrate and get through to us to make sure we understand our dire situation and doomed position while we have time to let Him do what it takes to save us. God loves and values us enough to be that truthfully stern and demanding with us. And that is exactly what our dismal state and desperate need for Salvation and total Restoration require.

The Salvation and Restoration of the human race to its original human 'image and likeness of God' purity, are as serious as anything could possibly be! That is why God is so serious and precise and demanding and unwilling to be superficial or 'cut corners' with His Chosen People. When He set them free of their slavery to Egypt, He did not do it to impart lives of careless leisure on them He did it to bring them into His exclusive, very demanding service. Their God-given task and purpose is unbelievably important for the salvation of the rest of the human race. The Salvation of the world depends on their ultimate success! So when it comes to Israel, and the fulfillment of the purpose He gave to her...God is dead serious and as adamant as He can be.

So compared to the way the rest of the Head-less humans on earth naturally tend to think, act, react and interact, the Salvation Alternative God offers to His chosen ones seems, to decapitated, worldly eyes, utterly absurd and ridiculously impossible! Instead of running amok like the people around them do, God requires His people to remain highly focused and disciplined by comparison. The chosen ones must live according to military-level focus, discipline and precise obedience. They must become utterly pliable, flexible and cooperative in God's hands. They must allow God's Word to do whatever He must, to them, in them and through them, to restore them back to His image and likeness! He must remove all traces of Sin from their hearts and reconfigure and restore them back to His own Beauty, Purity and Righteousness! So compared to what the world thinks, hopes, lives and aspires, the disciple way is a very narrow path indeed!

Anyone called by God's Word to be His disciple must come to grips with the Reality that He is our absolute Lord and Master! God Almighty Himself is summoning us to come out of the world system. He is requiring us to follow Him out of what we are originally part of and bonded to. He is requiring us to forsake all of that, and leave it behind so that we can be God's exclusive property. Then His Word can lead us into proper and true discipleship and service to God. And that requires total devotion and a wholehearted love for God's beloved Son, the Word. The Word teaches His disciple to walk with Him according to His ways. He requires them to mirror and embody the total devotion and wholehearted obedient Love He has for His Father! That closeness to God's Word will result in total union between us and God Himself!

"Therefore (Israelite disciples) if (since) you have been raised up with Christ (Messiah); keep seeking the things above, where Christ (Messiah) is, seated at the right hand of God. 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 3:1-4)

This is the destiny and purpose of God's True Israel. The union and interaction between true Jewish and non-Jewish disciples and God's living Word will be like the oneness a devoted

husband and wife share throughout their lives as they live out their blood covenant love-bond with each other. We are to be as one with our Lord to that depth and beyond!

The Image and Likeness of God

God is utterly Perfect. And His Word is Perfect and so is His Holy Spirit. The Father and His Word and Spirit are One! So by the time the Word's disciples reach the end of their God-given Exodus journey, they will be God's perfect image and likeness. This will never happen by chance. We won't cross the 'Finish Line' by coincidence or by accidental haphazard, flaky, meandering. It won't even happen because of the extreme effort and self-generated religious striving of our soulish will power. It will only happen when we forsake all of those things and rely exclusively on and draw from...the infinite All-Sufficient Authority of God's Word and the limitless Power of His Holy Spirit! It will happen when God Himself is free to live and operate from within our yielded flesh and supply us continually from the Treasury of His Perfect Finished Creation, Original Blessing and Eternal Redemption!

When God is free to live His Life from within us, on His terms, He can meet His own Perfect Standards in our name. And the results that He achieves from within us will be Perfect. God must to do it all, from start to finish...in our name:

*“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, **fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith**, who for the joy set before Him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the Throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” (Hebrews 12:1-3 Emphasis added.)*

This is the narrow Exodus Covenant Path that ultimately leads to utterly astounding transformation. This is the inheritance and the destiny that await God's sons. Would we expect anything less from such an awesome, infinitely perfect God?

*“The Rock! His work is **Perfect**, for all His ways are just; a God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.” (Deuteronomy 32:4)*

*“The law of the LORD is **Perfect**, restoring the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.” (Psalm 19:7)*

*“Therefore you are to be **Perfect** as your heavenly Father is **Perfect**.” (Matthew 5:48 Emphasis added.)*

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, made ready as a Bride adorned for her Husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, ‘Behold, the Tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His People, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.’”

*“And He who sits on the throne said, ‘**Behold, I am making all things new.**’ And He *said, ‘Write, for these words are faithful and true.’ Then He said to me, ‘**It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.** He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son...’” Revelation 21:1-7 Emphases added in all texts.)*

The Narrow Path is The Path We Must Follow

The delusional radically independent alternate lifestyle the Serpent presented to Eve and Adam deceived them into trying to take charge of their own fate and following any course they wanted. That *‘do it yourself’* pattern is not at all narrow or restrictive. On the contrary, it is expansive and extremely loose. The Serpent tells us, *‘choose and do whatever you think is best. As long as it does not come from or align with God’s living and written Word, go ahead and do whatever you want. Anything goes!’*

Of course that takes God’s Living Word and Holy Spirit completely out of the picture! And that is the intent of the spirit of *‘Anti-Christ’* or, *‘Anti-Messiah.’* His way will decapitate and keep you separated from God’s Word who is our only hope of Salvation and Restoration! The prefix *‘Anti’* gives this connotation: ***‘Of the same kind as the Original; but exerting a continuous pull in the opposite direction.’*** And that describes well what the Serpent’s deadly agenda really is. Satan is a spirit too. He is... *‘of the same kind;’* God is a pure Spirit and Satan and the other angels are also spiritual beings. But the thrust, agenda and destiny of the created Serpent differ greatly from the thrust, agenda and destiny of God’s uncreated living Word and Holy Spirit! The Word we serve and embody is, by essence and nature, one with the Father who sends Him. He does what His Father does, no more and no less. He is the Father’s perfect image and likeness and contains all of the Father’s Fullness. So to be one with the Word is to be one with God Almighty! Only when we’re one with Him, can we be Almighty God’s image and likeness. And that, compared with the condition most human beings are in, is a very narrow path.

But what real need is there for any other route? What possibility is there, for an alternate to even exist? THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD! Every other possibility leads to the coils and eternal fate of the Serpent! So what choice do we really have, but to acknowledge and obey our Creator, in Spirit and in Truth?

God sends His Word to lead, teach and train His disciples to follow Him and learn to be as one with Him, as He is with His Father. The Word is here to recover and restore His original human image and likeness! That’s why He draws us out of our inherited demonic delusionary insanity and back into the Truth and Heavenly Reality and Eternal Lovingkindness that only God is...and is ready to share with us! He won’t allow the satanic hypnotic trance under which most people labor, or their Sin-defective faculties and God-less mindsets to befog the understanding of disciples and allow them to remain blind to the true human situation and peril. If He must, He will say and do things that blast His people out of their Serpent-induced stupors. No matter what it takes; no matter what stands in His way...God will have the last Word! And the last Word will overcome and overwhelm and replace everything the Serpent may have done to deface what God created in the beginning, with His first Word. So if His people insist on clinging to anything that stands in the redemptive intent of God’s Word...God will indeed be stern, harsh and strict.

“BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen!

“I AM the Alpha and the Omega.” says the Lord God, “Who is and Who was and Who is to come, the Almighty.” (Revelation 1:7-8 Emphasis added.)

Satan’s Deadly and Deceptive Enticement

The Serpent browbeats us to join his rebellion and defy God’s Word. But if we do, we become his slaves! Satan doesn’t care about us or our well being. His only agenda is to try to usurp the Authority and Position of his Creator! This is the madness that captivates that doomed demonic spirit. He invents incredibly preposterous lies and dangles them as ‘bait’ in which deadly barbs are concealed. He suggests to any human foolish enough to take him seriously:

‘In my realm, anything goes. You can be, do and have whatever you like...as long as it has nothing to do with Yeshua. To follow Him is bondage and slavery. But if you follow me, you’ll have total self-expression, liberty, pleasure, fulfillment and glorious freedom! I allow you to be whatever you can imagine and to have, do and believe anything you like! So why limit yourself to doing only what God’s Word requires you to do?’

How insane and unreal is that? How different it is from what the real Word of the real, living God tells us:

“A disciple is not above his Teacher, nor a slave above his Master. It is enough for the disciple that he become like his Teacher and the slave like his Master.” (Matthew 10:24-25)

“The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His Word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.” (1 John 2:4-6 Emphasis added.)

The Serpent strives to destroy God’s image and likeness by duping us into believing we can ignore or reject or twist God’s Word without consequences. He leads many to assume they are free to ‘edit’ or change God’s Word to suit themselves. So people morph and ‘cut and paste’ and rearrange God’s revelation and commandments any way they like, according to what seems best to them. But if you pore over the entire span of the Scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation, you will never see God giving anyone permission to do that to His living and written Word.

So in the book of Exodus, God sternly reveals the true Reality and Standards of His Kingdom in Heaven. So He says to those He has chosen for His personal service:

*“Now then, **IF you will indeed obey My voice (Word) 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...**” (Exodus 19:5-6a Emphases added.)*

God's Rescue Mission

God is here to rescue and retrieve and fully restore His living Word's image and likeness. But that requires us to come back fully under His Word's Authority! We must *die* to the radical independence and rebellious cravings that we inherited from the fallen human nature of Adam. God's Restoration Agenda goes against the natural 'grain' of our Serpent-bitten fallen nature. That's why that nature must be forsaken and crucified and plunged into our Messiah's atoning death. Then God is free to regenerate our spirits and fuse them to His own Spirit.

God Himself must empower and raise us to the required level and status that are worthy of Him. And that is what He is here to do. So when He gives us commandments, He is revealing what He Himself is prepared to do to us...in us...and through us...to His eternal satisfaction.

After God fills and equips the disciples with His Spirit, His Word is able to include them in His invasion of the Serpent's domain of Darkness and Rebellion. The disciples abide with and draw everything from God's living Word as He continues His advance and together they can destroy the lies, deceptions, works and damage done by the Serpent. Since the prince of Darkness chose to declare war on God's Kingdom, war is what he shall have...to his eternal destruction and devastation! And so there can be no 'exempt civilians' among the disciples. They must be 'in uniform' and 'under orders'...in the midst of deadly warfare...ever at the service of their Lord and Head...the living Word of God.

This is what must take place any time God's Word summons people into His service. It began with Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph. And now, in Exodus it continues with Moses, Aaron and the rest of the children of Israel. The chosen ones must always be extracted and separated from the world system that is dominated by the Serpent and his minions. There is only one way to obey God and do what He requires. His living Word is The Way. And so disciples must become as one with God's Word, so that the Word can obey His Father in their flesh...in their name. He has absolute Authority over all of Creation. And He commands you and me and all the rest of us to be and do everything as one with Him...to follow Him everywhere, at all times and in all things...in every issue, circumstance and challenge; in every temptation and situation we encounter. That is how the Word of God takes back all the Authority the Serpent temporarily usurped. He does it one human heart at a time.

So to be disciples, we must learn to operate with our Master the way a glove operates with the hand that wears it. The two must move and operate as one. We must learn to abide in that level of close union with Him. This is the Narrow Gate and Narrow Path to which God's living Word was referring in Matthew 7:13-14:

"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it."

Disciples are disciples because, unlike most humans, they have the proper 'Head', God's living and written Word, attached to their spiritual 'shoulders.' The Head leads and they follow Him at all times. This is in direct opposition to the lifestyles of the Head-less self-actualizing humanistic slaves of the Serpent. The broad gate and path the world follows and the narrow gate and path

the Word's disciples follow are separated by an infinite chasm. On God's side of the chasm are His Reality, Truth and Kingdom...and on the opposite side of the chasm, lie the Serpent's Lies, Unreality and Desolation. And that is why there must be separation and conflict between the two kingdoms...until God brings it to a final conclusion. This is the underlying issue that Genesis and Exodus and all other books of Scripture reveal and explain at length.

"...an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and Truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in Spirit and Truth." (John 4:23b-24 Emphasis added.)

The Narrow Gate and Narrow Path

To His first century Israelite disciples, our Master expressed this all-important Blood Covenant issue in poetic Hebrew terms. He introduced the concept of passing through the '*Narrow Gate.*' That's where we begin...we become one with Yeshua in God's eternal Blood Covenant. But as was revealed through what happened to the first Exodus generation of Israelites, going through that *narrow gate* is just the beginning. The narrow gate is like engaging in a blood covenant marriage ceremony. You initiate and commit yourself to the contract in that initial ceremony and legally bond and become as one, with your covenant partner. That is the narrow gate through which you enter the union. You commit yourself for life to this one spouse. By doing that you forsake every other possibility and every other possible partner. And disciples do the same; they forsake all other gods in favor of the true living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Covenant binds disciples to Him only...and His Word becomes their Lord and Life...for eternity. That is our '*Narrow Gate.*'

But the ceremony and entry through that gate is only the beginning. The ceremony is not the marriage union. The ceremony only gives the participants the right and responsibility of building and protecting and developing a marriage union. From the moment the ceremony ends, then throughout every day of their lives, the Blood Covenant partners must continually live out and fulfill the covenant vows they made to each other. Only that will prove that their bond is real. The proof of authenticity is in the fulfillment of the promises and responsibilities that they undertook in the beginning. Now they must remain faithful to them...to their dying breath. This is the Blood Covenant Biblical significance of the '*narrow path.*' And this is at the heart of the Exodus from the Land of the Living Dead...'*Egypt*'

Our Covenant with God is for all eternity. Once we become legally one with Him, we must act out our intimate union with His Word to whose Authority we surrendered ourselves. Once we say '*yes*' and '*I do,*' the Blood is shed to seal it...then the Covenant meal is shared by the participants and then the Covenant is finalized. Thereafter, the partners will be expected to walk out and fulfill their commitment to each other all the days of their lives. But our Covenant with God is for our lives in time, but also for all of eternity. And God, through His living Word and Holy Spirit, will take us and sustain us and empower us all the way along the obedience path and into eternity.

And in that case, the Serpent will no longer be able to make any claim on us. That is why the incident of the 'Golden Calf' that took place almost immediately after God and Israel were 'married to each other' in God's Eternal Covenant, was such a heartbreaking, devastating

disaster. What happened originally in the Garden between God and Adam and Eve...took place again at Mt. Sinai. And, unfortunately, it continues to happen among many of us to this day:

“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.” (Matthew 10:21-22)

This need to persevere to the end is what Yeshua was referring to when He spoke of the ‘*Narrow Path*’. And this is what He intended to reveal and propose to the several million former slaves He was about to deliver from the cruel domination of Egypt. The need for this Exodus from the world system followed by true, authentic ‘marriage-level union’ with God’s Word never changes. God’s living Word brought the same Eden issue forward to Mt. Sinai...and He also brought it forward for His disciples in the early days of their training in the first century C.E.

“Enter through the narrow (Torah) gate; for the (Head-less) gate is wide and the way (of the sons of disobedience) is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.” (Matthew 7:13-14)

Do you think He was joking when He warned Adam and Eve? Was He joking when He warned Moses and Israel at Mt. Sinai? Was He joking when He gave the above warning to His first century disciples? They were all called to be True Israelites! The first century disciples had the Scriptural and cultural historical background to be able to understand and grasp what He was saying to them. They knew this was the same issue that took place in the Garden of Eden and that Israel and God contended with each other at Mt. Sinai. They knew how serious God was when He said what He said. And they knew that Yeshua was God’s living Word...the very same living Word that had appeared to and interacted with their forefathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob...He was the same Word that had appeared to Moses and to the entire nation of Israel in the book of Exodus! And the Word of God was the one that had now called them and said: *“Follow ME!”* Now the question is...do you and I realize who it is that has called us?

Life... or Death?

Who would know better than Yeshua that being cut off from His Authority is no laughing matter? Who would know better than He that to be separated from Him is Death? This is why He has to speak and act with sharp severity at times. He must make stubborn, bull-headed, fallen obtuse humanity aware of the *eternal life vs. eternal death* stakes that are involved in our habitual attitudes toward Him. This Truth has to hit Sin-full mankind right in the pit of the stomach – with full, unmistakable, relentless force! God will never joke about this. He will be just as serious with us as He was when He began to deal with Israel in the book of Exodus. And when He was dealing with them from Mt. Sinai and just as serious as He was when He first warned Adam about this in the Garden of Eden:

*“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 2:15-17 Emphasis added.)

The Lord showed Adam a very small, excruciatingly narrow opening through which he and all the rest of us must remain. The narrow gate and narrow path are confining because they only offer one choice. This is the choice: obey the living and written Word of God in all things and at all times, period! For true disciples, no other choice exists! Our Covenant only leaves this possibility on our menu of options: *“You shall obey My living and written Word with ALL your heart, soul, mind, will and strength...at all times and in all things!”* (See Exodus 19:4-6 and Deuteronomy 6:4-9)

When you see what God’s Son is really saying to His True Israelite disciples, you realize how narrow the path is that our Covenant with God requires us to walk...and how lost the clueless world really is:

“Therefore everyone who confesses Me (God’s living and written Word) before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in Heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in Heaven.

“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 (God’s Word) 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 (Head-less) life will lose it, and he who has lost his (Head-less) life for My sake will find it.” (Matthew 10:32-39 Amplification and emphasis added.)

Choose Life!

Does these texts sound as if our Master is joking and does not really mean what He says? Or does it sound as if He’s talking about dire Life or Death issues? Do you really think He’ll allow the humans He loves with an eternal passion to be lackadaisical, sloppy and careless in obeying His commands? Or does it sound more like He’s taking us into His ‘Boot Camp’...to drill, drill and drill us some more...to discipline and correct and instruct us until we learn the discipline and precise skills that will enable us to survive and overcome amid the deadly spiritual combat with the malicious powers of Darkness through which our Master will have to lead us...if we’re truly going to be saved and restored according to God’s Perfect Specifications?

When He spoke of taking up our cross and following Him, Our Master was showing us what He Himself was going to have to endure in his own flesh in order to represent us and atone for our Sin and shield us from the eternal condemnation for Sin that we all justly have coming. He was about to face and endure excruciating torture, crucifixion and death on the Cross. He was showing us what is in each of us for which He was going to have to atone. He had to pay for every bit of our individual and corporate guilt and condemnation before God’s infinitely perfect Justice and Judgment! And He warned us that if we follow Him, He would have to lead us through the same narrow gate and path that He had to walk before us in order to cleanse and free

us. So now He actually has to lead the rest of us along that path...in accord with God's perfect standards of Righteousness. In effect, He was saying:

“I Am the Lord your God...you are My image and likeness...so do what I do and obey what I tell you at all times. Trust Me...I am your Shepherd and your Guide. I am also your Protective Covering and only Way to Salvation and Restoration and everlasting Perfect Righteousness!”

Our Master doesn't give us a wide range of choices from which to pick. There's only one choice... **OBEY ME!** So He must teach His disciples to listen and observe and discern with Holy Spirit wisdom, what it takes to follow Him so that He can safely lead us through the demonic mine fields that the spirit of Anti-Christ continually places all over the Earth...before all of mankind:

“Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits...” (Matthew 7:15-16)

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in Heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS (TORAH-LESSNESS)’” (Matthew 7:21-23 Emphasis and amplification added.)

Not even the highly religious and superficially pious decapitated ones will pass the awesome Scrutiny of God. The Torah reveals God's utterly Perfect Nature and changeless Standards of Righteousness. It provides the disciples' with a sure and safe protective underlying structure, the clear-cut channel in which we are to abide and through which we must pass. This channel reveals God's unchanging nature and His eternal ways. It also reveals our true, beautiful God-given nature and purpose as His Holy Word's true image and likeness.

Perhaps from this you can begin to see that true disciples of God's living Word are not just a unique and highly specialized sub-group remnant, lost amid the vast majority of humanity. It seems that way right now. But God's intent is for each and every human being that was ever created to be such a disciple of His Word! And that tells us how far below God's original standards that Adam, Eve and all the rest of us actually fell! It shows us why the fallen world's system is such an abomination to God and why the enormous Exodus He requires us to make from it is so necessary. We **must** come out of Darkness...while we still have time to do it.

“You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” (James 4:4-5)

As soon as our first parents fell into Sin, all of human nature was terribly, mortally maimed and mutilated beyond recognition! And we all inherited that nature at conception. So now we have a very strong natural tendency to be selfish, self-centered, rebellious, manipulative, controlling,

predatory and terribly destructive of ourselves and of others. We're born with a strong disposition to remain decapitated and radically independent. That means we have a strong drive to continue to think and live as the living dead image and likeness of the Serpent! THIS IS THE ISSUE GOD SENT HIS LIVING WORD TO DEAL WITH! Whose image are we going to be? Who and what will we choose to settle for and abide with for all of eternity? That is the issue.

We Must be Born Again!

So what is the Bible trying to tell us? It's telling us that we are naturally born to be enemies of God! It's telling us that, despite the naysayers and scoffers and arrogant contradictions of fallen flesh...we must all die to that original life thrust and be reborn into a brand new level of God-given life. Only that will spiritually equip us to be *image and likeness-level* disciples of God's Word. We must repent of what we naturally are and how the residue of our fallen nature which remains in our mortal flesh keeps urging us to think, act and react. We must forsake our Sinful radically independent life completely and die to it so that God's Word can be free to regenerate and fuse us into Himself. We cannot have both lives. We must die to one and fully embrace the other. Our Sin-corrupted original life and identity and track record are what keep us on death row! So we must surrender to the Authority of the Lamb of God and join that original life to the atoning death of His human life on the Cross. Then in place of our former living death existence, He will be able to share His eternal, perfectly righteous and holy Resurrection Life with us. He will 'breathe' Himself into us by the Holy Spirit, and reconnect us to God!

This is the truly marvelous, glorious, supernatural gift God sends His Word to be to us. And if that exchange of lives is truly and properly made, we are empowered and enlivened by God's Holy Spirit. He becomes our Strength, Power and Ability to embody our Master, God's living Word, in spirit and in truth! And then we are equipped and commissioned to serve as His disciples:

"...work out (release and express) your Salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:12b-13)

The 'Narrow Gate,' by which we enter into Covenant union with God, leads immediately to the 'Narrow Path.' God's Covenant connects us with our Creator and Sustainer, Provider and Protector. He, *Yeshua*, is our eternal Shepherd. He is the Way and the Path on which God's Chosen Jewish and non-Jewish People must abide. Being Jewish or belonging to some 'World Religion' will not save us. Being one with God's living and written Word saves us. *Yeshua* is *The Path* God commands us to be one with and to follow. He is our Messiah and only He can include us in God's Eternal Covenant and make us to be 'sons of Abraham' in spirit and in truth. So He is our Exodus – our way out of the fallen world system and He is our eternal Life with God. The Exodus that matters is not an event or any created thing; it is our Creator Himself...free to do to us in us and through us...what He knows has to be done!

Can you see why our Master is so serious about this? If we fail to learn this and live it out, the Light of the World...the Light that is meant to lead the Headless Gentile pagans out of their Darkness...will go out! And that is exactly what the Anti-Messiah spirit is trying to accomplish.

“You (disciples) 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, 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 (of obedience to Me) and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven; for I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees (who ignore or reject Me), you will not enter the kingdom of heaven!” (Matthew 5:14-20)

If we do not know what Genesis and Exodus are revealing to the world about God’s living Word and what He is here to be and do for us, we will have no access to the Gate and Path which lead to Eternal Life! In that case, we will surely perish. But if we do know God’s Word, and avail ourselves of the Salvation He is to us, we will realize that God’s Torah revelation is the foundation, the God-poured ‘footings’ upon which our eternal Life with God must be built.

“I will raise up a Prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which He shall speak in My Name, I Myself will require it of him.” (Deuteronomy: 18:18-19)

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them may be compared to a wise man who built his house on The (Torah) Rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on The Rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall.”

“When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.” (Matthew 7:24-29 Amplification and emphasis added.)

One Lord, One Authority!

The above text describes the Israelite contemporaries of Yeshua, marveling at His Authority. Of course Yeshua had authority! He is the living Word God promised to send to Israel and the rest of the world! He is the living Word that creates, sustains and provides for all things! He is the one that God revealed to Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob! He is God...the Shepherd and Redeemer of whatever exists in Heaven or on Earth. He is the *Standard*, the ‘*Plumb Line*’ against which everything about all of us will be measured and compared when the time for the Judgment of God is at hand! To the degree that He can be seen living and operating in and through us, we are God’s image and likeness! How could God not be pleased with His own image and likeness? How could He not validate and endorse and testify to Him and all that He says and does? And so to the degree that He cannot be seen living and operating in and through

us, God will have no regard for what we offer Him as a substitute. But of course this too was revealed long ago, in Genesis:

“So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions (a substitute innocent life to represent and take the place of his own Sin-corrupted life). And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his (Covenant prescribed) offering; but for Cain and for his (radically independent self-determined dead) offering He had no regard.”

“So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. Then the LORD said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well (and obey the revelation and directives of My Word), will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well (but instead continue to do as you think best), Sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it (by re-aligning yourself with and obeying My Word).’ Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that (the Serpent that continued to dominate) Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.” (Genesis 4:3-5a Amplification and emphasis added.)

The Father’s Heart

The issue, as far as God is concerned, is this: **‘How much of My Living Word (Son) is in you?** How much of Him is behind what you’re thinking and choosing? How much of Him is in your actions, reactions and interactions? Show Me...in your own life...the One in whom I am well pleased! Show me that My Word is your indwelling Life and Lord! Prove to Me that it is His Spirit that is empowering and guiding you to meet My perfectly perfect standards...perfectly!’

This is how close, how ‘married’, how, ‘*as one*’ God wants us all to be with His beloved Son! And this is what God sent His Word to teach to Moses, Aaron and the entire nation of Israel...so that they could teach it to the entire world!

“Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest? For My hand made all these things, thus all these things came into being,” declares the LORD.

“But to this one I will look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My Word.” (Isaiah 66:1-2

God will be dealing with all of this in the book of Exodus. This is what He expects all Israelites to hear, understand, believe, demonstrate and teach and share with the rest of the decapitated world. What you will see in Exodus is not at all a mere collection of ancient Jewish Traditions, reserved for just a long-dead ethnic group of forgotten people. Torah is not merely a ‘*Jewish thing*.’ This is a ‘Biblical thing’...meant for ‘*all the families of the earth*.’ So Exodus is revealing to the entire world...through the Jewish people...what it is going to take for all of us to get off of the *Titanic* before it sinks and takes all of its occupants with it! The Gospel of Salvation begins in Genesis and carries through in all the other books of the Bible. That is the only Gospel that existed in the days of Yeshua and His original apostles. That is the Gospel they preached...long before the New Testament ever came into being. And it is the Gospel that must be preached now

and till the end of Time. God didn't leave anything out in Genesis. He put the entire Gospel of Salvation in the Torah. And now, may we all have the eyes and ears to perceive clearly what God is saying to this fallen world.

Do you think the Gospel God put in the writings of Moses was good enough? Do you think it covers everything God requires the world to know? Do you think it is as perfect as the God who gave it to us is perfect? If there is anything that appears imperfect about it, perhaps the imperfections lie in the viewpoints and understandings that the fallen faculties of men and women have gleaned from it historically. Perhaps the trouble lies in the faulty, highly-limited understanding of God's living and written Word that persist even to this day!