

### 43. The Significance of the First Four Commandments

In the first four of His ten commandments (Exodus 20:2-11), God shows Israel what the true and proper response to His Word's Authority and Revelation should be. This is how the human image and likeness of His living Word is to respond. Remember: God is restoring the fallen, Sin-corrupted, living dead human race to Eternal Life in His Word! And so even though this is far from natural to people who begin their existence in a spiritually 'decapitated' state, God's Perfect Standard of what true Humanity is and does, is summed up for Israel, and the world, in the commands given in Deuteronomy 6:4-9:

*"Hear (Obey), O Israel! **The Lord is our God; the Lord is one!** You shall love the Lord your God **with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.** **These words,** which I am commanding you today, **shall be on your heart.** You shall **teach them diligently to your sons** and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." (Emphasis added.)*

Naturally, if we were truly God's image and likeness, this is the way we would be at all times and in all things. But in Reality, the human race, as it is now, is anything but God's image and likeness. Nevertheless, God in His Perfection never changes. So we must change. And God is revealing to us what He must do to us and in us in order to fully restore us to His specifications. Dust cannot create Humanity. It can't cause itself to be anything other than what it really is. So God isn't placing responsibility for this Restoration on the dust. He's placing responsibility on Himself. He is the one and only Source. But He is telling us what we must allow His living Word and Holy Spirit the freedom to do to us and in us, so that God can reveal Himself through us! Thus we see the responsibility to agree and obey His Word, that God places on each Israelite family. God requires mankind to welcome, embrace and obey His living and written Word, in the pure, simple, wholehearted way that existed before mankind fell into Sin and its radical separation from God, and the living death that causes.

When the Restoration is taking place properly, the Word penetrates deeply into the innermost being of a person. He is embraced and absorbed by the mind and heart as absolute Lord, Master, Owner and Head. Then He can begin to repair the damage that Sin has done to the entire human race... one redeemed person at a time. This Israelite-level of relating to and interacting with God's living Word will destroy and remove every trace of the Sin of radical independence. It will also remove, bit by bit, every speck and trace of idolatry from a human heart. It will also topple and destroy the myriads of false gods that the decapitated worldly people of this fallen world are always devising for themselves. The first four commandments are meant to wipe unbelief and idolatry completely out of our minds, hearts and deliberations. And if we cooperate and receive what the Word is sent to do in and for us, we become God's redeemed, restored emissaries to the rest of the world. He can effectively reach out to all the others in the world and

save all those who will receive and absorb the Word of God just as Israel was instructed to present and relay Him to the world, in her service to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

### ***Israel...God's 'first born' Nation***

So take note of the obvious importance of Israel's calling. She is God's 'firstborn nation.' Through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, she was the first to be included and bonded to God in His Eternal Blood Covenant. But God had all nations in mind when He was revealing Himself through Moses and the Torah. He intends to save them all, by grafting them into the 'Olive Tree' called, *Israel*. Israel was to share the awesome Covenant bond and spiritual legacy God first entrusted to her, with all the other peoples of the earth. Her task was to protect God's Salvation Legacy and demonstrate it fully, from generation to generation – for the salvation and restoration of all other families of the world!

So the Ten Commandments are not for just Jewish ethnic, genetic line. They are universal commands that the Creator of the universe gives to each human He creates. Anyone with a rational mind and free will is obligated to embrace, obey and fulfill the living Word of God that gave us these commandments. This is what the Bible reveals.

But why does God command such devotion from such weak and spiritually inept people? Is it because He suffers from insecurity and personal neediness? Is He so personally emotionally fragile that He needs constant affirmation and reassurance from His human creatures? What does God personally gain? How does He benefit from our observance of these commandments? Was He doing this for Himself; or did He do it for us – to fulfill some enormous personal needs that we don't even know we have? Yes, that's it! He is doing this for our eternal benefit! The revelation and these commandments are made for Man...for our total Redemption, Salvation and Eternal Restoration and Benefit. A true Human Being is the image and likeness of Almighty God! But you certainly would not assume that to be the case with that bedraggled, fearfully victimized horde of former Egyptian slaves, not to mention the idolaters that were spread out all around them, throughout the rest of the world!

God wasn't moving Israel out of one form of bondage and slavery so that He could impose another form of bondage upon them! He was setting them free so that, through them, He could free and restore all the rest! Man is not made to be a slave to anything, not even to a bunch of rules and regulations. In their fallen state they could never obey and fulfill God's Perfect Standards. The commandments were a description of what God intended to do from within them, to restore them to the level of humanity they had lost! The commandments describe the awesome transformation we will all undergo as soon as we begin to trust, believe and obey God's Word. These commandments are made to serve Man...to make it possible for God's Word to keep us on the narrow path...remaining perfectly aligned with God's Perfect Infinite, Eternally changeless Love Nature. God gave us the blueprint and the means by which His living Word will restore all of us to our original true Perfect, image and likeness of God humanity! The Word of God is the Instrument by which God brings the Serpent-dominated 'living dead' human race back into His Eternal Life and Inheritance! The commandments are for Him...to obey and fulfill them from within our flesh and in our name.

## **Why the Commandments Are so Important to God**

We've already seen that God's Word did a perfect job of creating and supplying everything that all Creation would ever need to fulfill its God-given purpose and destiny. His Eternal Perfection, in all that He is and does, is the reason why God enjoys eternally complete, uninterrupted Sabbath Rest! God created each of us to inherit and enjoy the Rest, Peace and Freedom that He enjoys and to have full eternal access to all of the abundance and joy and fulfillment that flow out of His Perfection! This is what was conveyed in God's Perfect Original Blessing that His Perfect Word was commissioned to be for the human race:

*“(By the working of His Word) God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and (through His Word) God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”*  
(Genesis 1:27-28 Amplification added.)

The living, creative Word of God IS God's Perfect Blessing. He confirms, restores and applies to mankind all that is contained in God's loving heart which abides in perpetual abundance, rest, peace, success and wellbeing. The Word reaffirms, restores, validates and ensures the perpetual enjoyment of the Perfect Sabbath Rest into which the human race was born and with which God endowed us all...from the moment He created the first man and woman. The Blessing contained in God's Word covers and keeps us safe within the Fullness of God's Perfection! It describes what God's image and likeness is to be at all times. We are made to be God's authoritative, abundantly endowed, successful and regal sons!

So we see that the Perfect Creation and Perfect Blessing and these commandments are linked into one integrated structure...an instrument that reconfigures us and directs the flow of our energy in a way that transforms us back into our true image of God nature...back into being the perfect reflection of God's Perfect changeless Nature. In His Eternal Perfect Love, this is how God eternally regards and treats His image and likeness. This is what He designed and created each of us to be. This is how much He eternally values us and how much He desires us to have and enjoy what He enjoys. This is why it is so important that we know God's Eternal mindset, viewpoint and agenda. He intends to restore us to our original eternal inheritance in His Perfection. Remember that Perfection never changes. God is not unstable; He is not given to 'mood swings' and changes of mind, motivation or intent. He is always the same – Perfect! And so what He determined to make us to be will also never change!

*“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 Word) **is the same yesterday and today and forever.** Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by (resting, peace-filled) grace...”* (Hebrews 13:7-9a Amplification and emphasis added.)

So...God never wavered after Man fell into the Serpent's Sin. He is the same after the fall, as He was before it. Even our decapitation and degeneration into living Death did not change God's mindset and purpose! But He has to let decapitated, Darkness-ridden worldly men know...that

He sent His Word to bring them into the full and total Restoration of the original Perfection that He created and put into all of His Creation. This is why He commissioned the Family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to cooperate with Him in restoring everything Sin destroyed and took away from the human race and everything else He had made. God never intends to leave anyone out of His glorious Salvation Plan. So, the commandments, and what they lead to, are for everyone! (See Deuteronomy 28 to understand what obedience to the commandments is meant to provide for us, as opposed to what decapitation from His Word leaves us with.)

Anyone who will believe, trust and obey the Perfect living Word will be fully reconnected to the living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God will regenerate and completely restore them to the enjoyment of His Eternal Perfection! Disobedience to His Word is what killed us. But reconnecting with the Word, through the obedience of faith, brings us back from the dead. It enables God to join us to Himself so that we can be forever one with Him and share in the Eternal Perfection of His Life and Name and Inheritance once more.

Perhaps this will help us better understand what is in God's mind and heart as He beholds and considers us in the present...even though Creation still bears the scars and marks of being corrupted and mortally wounded and although much of it remains engulfed in the current demonic Darkness and even though humanity for the most part remains fallen and mortally wounded and still very broken and filled with grief and desolation...nevertheless, God's attitude and purpose will never change toward us. He will never hate or despise or resent us. He loves us with His everlasting Perfect Love. He understands what Sin did to us, and that in ourselves we are nothing more than dust. So He is not requiring us to supply anything for Him. He, the Creator, is obligating us to *receive* everything from Him! This Truth and Reality will forever be the same. And we will always be, in God's sight, His intended image and likeness. He leads and we must follow. He gives and we must receive...100% of everything...100% of the time.

### ***Torah – the Foundation of Faith and Our Inheritance***

And through the Foundation of His Torah Revelation, and the amplification of that Revelation which He gives in the rest of the Bible, He lets us know how intimately close He desires to be to His own intended image and likeness! He works to restore us because of His eternal desire to be completely one with His own image and likeness! So whatever He intended to be for us and to impart to us in the beginning, before the Serpent deceived Eve and Adam so profoundly, is exactly what He is intent on restoring to us all, now and always! His commandments are meant to help us better understand more of what Sin really is and where it comes from and what it does to us. He wants us to know how radically damaged and deformed and 'off course' the human race still remains. God's commandments are the 'proper, correct coordinates' that keep us on course and insure that we can always make the proper, necessary course adjustments so God's Word can continue to lead us Home. This is what His '*Follow Me*' Salvation-Restoration summons is meant to initiate.

*“They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. **Then the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?”**” (Genesis 3:8-9  
Emphasis added.)*

“For thus says the Lord God, ‘Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd cares for his herd in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land. I will feed them in a good pasture, and their grazing ground will be on the mountain heights of Israel. There they will lie down on good grazing ground and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I will feed My flock and I will lead them to **REST**,’ declares the Lord God. **I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong** (those who are radically independent and complacent and at peace with the Serpent’s rebellion) **I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment.**” (Ezekiel 34:11-16 Amplification and emphasis added.)

Hopefully, we can begin to see what God must do to effect the reconciliation, redemption and restoration He sent His living Word to be for us. We must know what really happened at the fall of Adam and Eve and what it did to all human beings. We must have no delusions or misunderstandings about our disastrous fall and true devastated Death-ridden spiritual state. We must see what the Serpent’s lies did to us and be aware of all that he destroyed and stole from us. Then we can know why God is so intent on doing whatever it will take, regardless of what the cost may be to Him, to properly restore us. When we can understand what we mean to Him, we will understand His relentless, never-wavering intent to restore us to Himself. And we will see the awesome Value of the Inheritance the Serpent stole from us. This is what the Torah is revealing through these Commandments. This is why God created a chosen messenger called Israel:

“Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father’s house, to the land which I will show you; and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; **and so you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed!**” (Genesis 12:1-3 Emphasis added.)

### ***What Restoration Really Looks Like***

God’s Perfect Love Nature requires, no...it demands...that His Perfect image and likeness of God Creation must not be altered or diminished in any way. God never changes; and so neither must His image and likeness ever change. So He must restore us all to the way we were originally intended and ordained to be. And that is how we will be ...by the time our Master leads us across the Finish Line that separates Time and Eternity. When we complete our Exodus from Sin and demonic Darkness, we will be *perfect, as our Heavenly Father is Perfect!*

So all men must be able to see and understand what a cosmic, monumental catastrophe the Serpent’s rebellion and mankind’s fall into Sin actually created. God placed Adam in charge of the Earth and gave him dominion over all the creatures that were to inhabit it. He and his human family were to be God’s Blessing-filled vice regents, in charge of administrating and caring for each other and everything else that God placed on the earth in their care. But when Adam gave

in to the Serpent's lying delusions through Eve's persuasiveness, he caved in and legally ceded all rights over himself and his family and the dominion God had given them over the Earth... was surrendered to the malevolent domination of God's eternal enemy – the Serpent.

Thus in one complete devastating corporate stroke, Adam, his wife, and all of their yet unborn descendants died to the Perfect Sabbath Rest into which the human race was born. We were all disconnected and dragged away from the free, endless access to the boundless Provision God had already given to us. Man gave up the Perfect Original Blessing and God's Perfect Sabbath Rest, when he rejected God's living Word who IS our Creator, Sustainer and Eternal Blessing. And so, according to Eternal Blood Covenant Justice, since a man surrendered this birthright and lost our inheritance to the Serpent... a Man had to overcome the Serpent and win it all back for us, by remaining free of the coils of His Sin, Death and Darkness.

And so the living Word of God became that Sin-less, Spirit-Filled Man and served as our Eternal Blood Covenant Representative, our anointed Messiah. By His Perfect Human Life (as the Son of Man) and His Perfect Infinite Atonement (as the Divine Lamb of God), the Last Adam legally and perfectly recaptured and took full possession of what the first Adam had surrendered to the Serpent. And our Redeemer, by joining Himself to us, is now able to join us to God... through our obedient faith in His revelation and commandment directions and coordinates. If we are ever going to be saved and restored from Sin, Death and Eternal Darkness, we must be fully reconciled to God's living Word, who is our Creator and Sustainer. We must repent of our mistrust and stop believing the Serpent's lying slander against God and His intentions toward us. We must repent of our unbelief, disobedience, and devotion to the false gods behind which the powers of Darkness hide in order to continue to deceive and manipulate and ultimately destroy the decapitated human race.

And we must constantly be on guard against the demonic lies and delusive traps that are meant to pull us away from God and His living and written Word and Holy Spirit. There is only one God... the living God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Israel. All other 'possible options' and 'alternate routes' are deadly demonic traps... delusions that deprive men of any hope of deliverance from Eternal Death and restoration to Eternal Life.

*“So Jesus (God's living Word made flesh) said to them again, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the Door of the sheep. All who came before (and after) Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. **I am the Door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.** The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have Life, and have it abundantly.*

*“**I am the Good Shepherd; the Good Shepherd lays down His Life for the sheep.** He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep. **I am the Good Shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My (human) life for the sheep. I have other sheep, which are not of this fold (the Gentiles); I must bring them also, and they will hear My Voice; and they will become One Flock with One Shepherd.** For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My (human)*

*life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have Authority to lay it down, and I have Authority to take it up again. **This commandment I received from My Father** [See Isaiah 55:10-12].” (John 10:7-18 Amplification and emphasis added.)*

If we don't truly love, respect, honor and obey our Creator and His Word and Spirit, we will most certainly not love and honor the other creations that He loves and treasures so deeply. If we will not love and respect God, we will not love and respect other people that He also created to be His image and likeness. All of our other relationships receive their significance, power and direction from the relationship we have with our common Creator, Sustainer and Provider. This is why the first four commandments focus all attention on God and the primary relationship we must have with Him through our response to His Word. We must get this right first. God must be our top priority. Nothing created can be placed before or above His Word in our mind and will. His Perfect selfless Love must first flow into us so that we can know Him and believe, trust and receive everything we need from Him. Then we can rest and rejoice in His Perfect Fullness and All-Sufficiency and overflow with the Life that only comes from within the living Word of the one true God. This is the Life-restoring Wisdom that God's commandments give to us.

*“...Jesus stood and cried out, saying, ‘If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’” (John 7:37-38 See also Ezekiel 47:1-12)*

### **God Gives...We Receive...and then Share what We Receive**

When the Word can flow into us; He can overflow out from us, in every direction. When we cooperate with Him in this way, He can love and bless the rest of His precious Creation. He becomes our True Head, and we become His true, living members. But we must be willing to receive Him just as He is, on God's terms. If we follow His lead, He continues to fill us and empower us to share what He gives us, with His other creations. He gives to us all – without reservation or discrimination. And the commandments keep us in line with God's Perfect Openness and Freedom as He gives of Himself to us. Through His obedient disciples, the living Word can reveal His perfect working out of His Heavenly Father's Perfect All-Sufficient Grace and Redemption. We are to receive everything necessary from our Perfect God, whose Perfect Nature, Word and Spirit provide everything for us. Everything must come from the Infinite Authority of God's Word and the Omnipotent Empowerment of His Holy Spirit. When God's Word is our true Source and Provider, He truly lives in us and manifests Himself through us. Thus we work as one with Him, and serve as the 'image and likeness' of Almighty God.

This pattern can be seen in its purest, simplest most basic form through the lives of the first two human beings. The primary relationship of Adam and Eve was to look to and rely upon God exclusively. This was before all false, man-made religion came to be, before Darkness and confusion and deception filled the earth. In the beginning, Adam and Eve were the only humans in existence and God was their one and only Source! There was nothing created that stood between them and God. Nothing got in the way of their relationship with God. And from his union with God and what he received from his faith interaction with God...Adam could fulfill his secondary relationship with Eve, his mate. Because God created them both to be His image

and likeness, and to cooperate with Him in the generation and growth of His image and likeness, their purpose was to allow God's Word to provide, and to govern them and to abide and work from within their innermost being. Thus Adam could allow God to love and 'garden' Eve, through his thoughts, words and actions. And Eve could allow God to love and 'garden' Adam, through her thoughts, words and actions. And both of them could allow God to love and protect and form and 'garden' their children, and all other creatures under their care, through their individual and combined Spirit-empowered obedient thoughts, words and actions. As long as Adam and Eve continued to abide in and follow God's Word, He was their Life. And He equipped them to fulfill their identity, purpose and destiny, as God's image and likeness. And by their personal example, they could successfully pass along the proper human image and likeness of God pattern legacy to their children, and grandchildren, etc. etc.

Conversely, the children would be expected to love, trust and revere, obey and honor their parents. They were to take the God-given patterns their parents lived by and embrace, absorb and embody them as well. In that case, their children and grandchildren would also receive God's legacy and they would have been able to be truly human and fulfill their true identity, purpose and destiny as well.

So all humans – parents, children, families and communities of families are required by God to cooperate with Him so that through them, His Word can govern and administrate the Earth that God originally placed in their charge:

*“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them; and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”*  
(Genesis 1:26-28)

## **God is Our Only Source**

So, before the Serpent's 'God can't be trusted' Lie, and the Sin that followed, did their lethal damage to the human race, there was a simple one-way polarity of love, nurturing, protection and grace flowing 100% from God, into His earthly creation, through the first humans. In Truth, everything actually begins with Him. To assume that we can have other, alternate sources (false gods) is a total delusion and insanity. So this revelation of the one true living God given in the Torah is solid bedrock Reality that will never change. No matter what the Serpent may try to do in his insane rebellion and refusal to accept this Reality, he will never be able to alter or inhibit it in the least. He too is a creature and, no matter how rebellious and disobedient he becomes, he will always still be 100% dependent on God's Word for his existence.

And so, Word-obedient humans who abide in God's Reality and remain aligned with His Truth, remain equipped to operate as His image and likeness. They continuously look to and wait upon the living Word and Spirit of God to initiate and give to them whatever they need from moment to moment. Every human must always receive everything from the one true God. Only He can

equip and prepare us to administrate and govern and care for each other and the world in which He has placed us.

So we can see the primary importance God places upon each married couple. Each father and mother must receive from Him what He wants to give and impart to the children and to all other humans that He entrusts to their care. Each gender complements the other and together, they give the full, balanced benefit and example of what God's image and likeness is meant to be. So in order for us to interact with each other as God intends, we must love, honor and obey Almighty God first. Only when His Word is our Authority and Head, can we be equipped to be and do what He requires us to do in our interactions with everyone and everything else that we encounter in daily life. Therefore, we can obey and honor the authority God gives to our parents and other legitimate authorities, as coming from God Himself. This is God's original Plan.

We dare not try to alter or reverse the order or the polarity or the God-given priorities that the Word revealed to us. We must not idolize ourselves or other creatures like us and place them and their opinions, desires, commands and systems above God and the Authority of His Word and Holy Spirit, in the heartfelt devotion, priorities, affection, love and service of our daily lives. That's what Adam and Eve did and it killed them and their children. If we perpetuate that, we will forsake God in favor of one of His creatures. We will for example, favor man and his words over God and His Word. We'll try to please man and gain his favor and acceptance, by disobeying God's Word and grieving His Holy Spirit. But then we decapitate ourselves from our true and only Life Source!

*“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. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign the members of his household! Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. **Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell!** Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows. **Therefore everyone who confesses Me 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.**” (Matthew 10:24-33 Emphasis added.)*

Because the stakes are Eternal Death vs. Eternal Life, we dare not compromise and betray our one and only God and Source. He is Eternal Life. He must therefore remain Supreme over us all. And although most other men refuse to acknowledge and obey Him, we must be all the more diligent in honoring and serving and obeying God. God does what it takes to save us, regardless of the cost to Him. And we must remain focused on and obedient to our Source of Eternal Life, regardless of any temporary cost to us. We must never favor a creature and that creature's self-interest and affections and give them the higher priority that belongs only to our God. To do that is the Sin of idolatry. And it 'decapitates' us, as it once did to Eve and Adam. Then we embody and reflect the Serpent, rather than our Creator. This is what was at stake when some outwardly religious Judean Jews tried to trap and discredit God's living Word made flesh. But, Yeshua,

instead of trying to please their ears and endorse their man-made religious traditions and curry their favor and acceptance, He remained ever faithful to His Heavenly Father and what He had revealed in the Torah through Moses:

*“...When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered themselves together. One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, **testing Him**, ‘Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?’ And He said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”* (Matthew 22:34-40)

### **Modern day cultures cripple our ability to know, absorb and observe God’s Blood Covenant ways**

Hellenistic thought patterns are very common in the modern world, even in the modern Jewish world! But those patterns omit the Reality of the living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And they ignore or reject His revelation and commandments. They are humanistic to the core and give rise to worldly self-centered mindsets and priorities that steer people away from the true God of Israel. God used the ancient Hebrew Blood Covenant culture by which to reveal Himself to this fallen world...not Hellenism. The Hebrew matrix into which God embedded His living and written Word is based on His Eternal Blood Covenant with His Word! Thus God’s thoughts and ways are covenantal and corporate-minded. The Bible is a ‘Blood Covenant Document!’ It is Family oriented and views all participants in God’s Eternal Blood Covenant to be ‘One’ or, ‘*Echad*’. So the Serpent’s self-centered individualism, selfishness and contempt captivate, fracture, divide and destroy mankind. But that self-centered Hellenism has no place in God’s true revelation. If we are in Blood Covenant with God, we are one with God. God’s Reality makes all Covenant participants, one with each other, just as they are one with God. But the modern world knows virtually nothing about that because the Serpent deludes it into remaining obsessed with the narcissistic worship of ‘*Self*.’ But God’s Kingdom is not about that. It is all about The Creator of all things.

***“He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward. And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward.”*** (Matthew 10:40-42)

*“Now Saul, still **breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord**, went to the high priest, and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him; and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, **‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’** And he said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said, **‘I am***

Jesus (Yeshua, God's living Word) ***whom you are persecuting...***" (Acts 9:1-5 Amplification and emphasis added.)

Understanding God's Blood Covenant mentality helps us to see who we really are in God's mind. We are a revelation of Him! Thus we are created to be His image and likeness. But radically independent Self worships and seeks to glorify and 'actualize' itself! That is truly a false god! To follow that pattern is to be the image and likeness of the Serpent! And this is what helps us to see, acknowledge and understand the link that truly exists between the first four commandments that govern our relationship with God, and the last six that govern our relationship with our fellow human beings. When we know God's thoughts and ways, we realize that the people around us are also created to be God's image and likeness and that what we do to them, and what they do to us – we are all actually doing to the living God who created and owns us – all!

### ***God's Nature Revealed Through His Commandments***

The commandments are further Biblical revelation that God's Perfect Nature is pure, self-less, Blood Covenant-level Love. They tie in with and amplify the Perfect, Eternal 'To the Death' Blood Covenant Substitution and the to-the death-Loyalty on the Cross that God showed to mankind through His beloved Son. As the Perfect Image and Likeness of His Father, God's living Word loves us, who are God's intended image and likeness, with an Eternal Love. That is why He loved all of His Sin-corrupted, condemned human brothers or 'neighbors' just as He loved Himself. Thus He sacrificed Himself on the Cross – for their sake! And as His disciples, we are, as His image and likeness, required to reflect and embody this unique Godly characteristic. God's Love extends to every bit of what He has created. So His Word died for all of us...each and every human being...even deadly enemies that hated Him...without exception!

*"But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, ***and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.***" (Luke 6:35-36 Emphasis added.)*

This essential truth bears repeating... because He is Perfect, God's love extends to all that He creates...without exception. The commandments not only reveal the Perfect Nature of God, they also reveal the God-intended nature of Man. Man is designed and created to be God's image and likeness...the living embodiment of God's living Word, the Creator of all things. Our Perfect God has created, blessed, redeemed and is in the process of restoring, the human race, through His Perfect Word. So the Word is our Shepherd, Sustainer and Provider for all things, at all times. He contains God's Perfect Presence, Authority and Power. He pronounces the commandments over us in His Father's Name, and because He abides within His own disciples by the Holy Spirit, He is also the Perfect Obedience that can fulfill and obey those commandments in the name of His disciples! All we need do is...receive...all that He has given.

### ***God's Nature Revealed through Man, His Image and Likeness***

So, because we are made to be God's image and likeness, our Creator makes us one with Himself through His Eternal Blood Covenant. Through this Covenant Union, our Perfect God can be our All-Sufficient Blessing. And through us, He can love and bless the rest of His Creation. As long as He can work in us and through us...through our obedient actions, reactions and intercessory prayer, He freely reaches out...to whoever and whatever happens to be around us. Thus God reveals Himself through His living Word, who is to be the Head and Covenant Representative of the human race. Every human child, including you who are reading this, is eternally intended by God to be born into His Original Perfect Finished Creation and Perfect Original Blessing, and to serve as His Word's human image and likeness. God's Word, Yeshua, has been sent to be the Infinitely Perfect Blessing and All-Sufficient Redemptive Covering that God has eternally given to all of His human Creation. So pay attention to what God's living Word says to you. He will never change toward any of us. But we must repent of our stubborn independence from Him and be willing to receive Him on His terms, wholeheartedly, regardless of those that will continue to reject and oppose Him and those that follow Him:

*"It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called (Me) the Head of the House Beelzebul (the Serpent, or, Satan), how much more will they malign the members of his household! Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. **What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.** Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows. **Therefore everyone who confesses Me 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.**" (Matthew 10:25-33)*

### ***The Fall of Mankind into Sin and the curses that Sin created.***

Because Sin decapitates us from God's living Word, it removes us from the flow of the Blessing that can only come from Him. Our state of decapitation prevents the Blessing that He is, from including us; thus we reject His Perfect Righteousness. We remain naked and deprived of His redemptive covering. So...separation from Him takes us out of position and prevents us from receiving God's Word who is here to be His Blessing to us.

Because of our fall into Sin, all children of Adam and Eve are born with damaged DNA that predisposes us all to assume that our radical independence and state of Darkness are normal, acceptable human realities. Instead of life, decapitated parents can only pass living death to their children! But that is not normal or acceptable in the Kingdom of Heaven! That is a gross Serpent-induced deviation from what we were truly designed and created to be! The Darkness of Word-less existence is eternal Living Death! And despite how accustomed to it we become, that state is infinitely removed from the Eternal Life that God intends to be for us. Apart from His Word, we can never be what God truly created us to be. So, just because living death is so common in our fallen world, that state of decapitation should never be seen as the normal natural habitat and state of being for human beings.

Yes, we are all born decapitated and predisposed to the state of radical independence and self-centeredness. And yes, it's true our original fallen nature makes us to be naturally selfish, self-centered, rebellious, manipulative, predatory and so destructive in our natural urges and desires that we are always driven to choose to do things that sabotage our own lives and those of the people who depend on us. But just because that's the way we are now, doesn't mean that we're 'okay.' We're *not* okay! We have the Sin-damaged DNA that all offspring of Adam pass on to each of their children. And that damage forces us to remain trapped with deviant, destructive urges and passions that cause us to gravitate toward, and strongly desire, the cursed fatal state and broken, cursed circumstances caused by the Serpent's Sin of radical independence. It is true that we are used to abiding in the Serpent's Darkness and consider it to be our home. It's true that the Light of God's Word appears to be an alien distant unreal idea. But only true repentance, leading to total union with God's Word, Messiah Yeshua, can restore the original abiding in the Light of God that He is here to be to us so we can be restored to our true, God-given Humanity.

We are designed, created and destined to be children of God and citizens of His Kingdom of Light. We are meant to be the image and likeness of His creative living Word. We are created to be sons of Almighty God! And even though from our conception and birth into this world we knew nothing about that, and were born completely separated from and alien to it, the Truth remains... We are made to abide and be one with God, through His Word and Holy Spirit. And so He has sent His beloved Word to become one with us. Now we can know and relate to God, in and through Him. He is here to reach out to us... to reconcile with us so that He can redeem and restore us to God's Perfection. God's Word and Holy Spirit are here to fulfill and truly satisfy our innermost nature by making us into brand new beings with the Blessing-endowed, success-oriented DNA that Almighty God always intended us to have. Only this living bond with God's Word can predispose and equip us to continually receive and pass along God's original Blessings to our children and their children and all of our other fellow human beings. This is part of what Yeshua was explaining to Nicodemus, and this is what that esteemed, highly educated religious Jewish spiritual leader had such difficulty understanding:

*"Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

*"Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?' Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 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.'*

***"Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can these things be?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony. If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly***

***things?** No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.*

*“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. **For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.** For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. **But he who practices the Truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.**” (John 3:1-21 Emphasis added.)*

### ***The Restoration Process through Abraham’s Family***

Yeshua wasn’t telling Nicodemus anything new! He was reminding him of what He had previously revealed and entrusted to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and the Chosen Family – Israel! But Israel became self-centered over the centuries, instead of remaining God-centered. We must all be restored to a disciple-level relationship with God’s living Word! He must become one with our Lord, Master and Head, so that we can serve as His living members on Earth. Only then can we become truly human once more...only then can we serve as the image and likeness of God! Separation from God’s living Word puts out our spiritual eyes, no matter how religious we think we are. In that state, there’s always a ‘veil’ over our eyes. That is what the veil that separated Israel from the Holy of holies was meant to represent! At the very moment that Yeshua, God’s living Word died on the Cross, He completed the time and space revelation and fulfillment of His Eternal ‘Lamb of God’ Sacrifice. Then the veil that separated God’s Presence in the Holy of holies of the temple in Jerusalem from the people, was torn from top to bottom, signifying that the human race could have full access to Almighty God...but only in and through, His living Word made flesh, Messiah Yeshua, the risen Lord of Glory.

*“And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. **And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom;** and the earth shook and the rocks were split. The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised...” (Matthew 27:50-52)*

The Blessing and Covering God’s Word came to restore to Adam and Eve was, and is, meant for the entire human race...and God has already given it to us all – in and through His living Word...through the living interactive relationship with His Word that Israel was commissioned to receive and embrace and demonstrate to the rest of the fallen world (Cf. Deuteronomy 4; Isaiah 9; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 34; 36: 22-28; 37-47; Romans 9-11)

So in God’s view, Israel must remain open and available to God’s Word and Holy Spirit, and through Israel’s Messiah and His Remnant, God can continue to reach out to all of mankind, regardless of color, creed, cultural background, era or location in this world. Through Word-united Israel, God intends to reveal Himself, cover, redeem, renew and restore all of Mankind.

And this is why the commandment-directed roles of parents and family members are so vital in God's Plan of Redemption, Salvation and Restoration. It is through the union of the parents within this Blood Covenant Family Legacy that the revelation of the one true God is to be taught and passed on, from parent to child in home to home and from generation to generation.

Abraham and Sarah did not send Ishmael and Isaac to some divinity school or Bible college to learn these things. It was their responsibility to sit their family down around their campfires to explain, teach...and above all...to demonstrate with their own lives, what it meant to be part of Almighty God's Blood Covenant Family here on Earth. Each male child and future household head was circumcised into God's Covenant. And on that basis, Ishmael and Isaac began to learn to follow the example of their father Abraham. And Isaac and Rebecca did the same for Esau and Jacob. And Jacob and his wives were required to do for all of their children, what should have been done for them by their parents and families, and so on.

God's living Word and Holy Spirit radically change people from what they originally begin to be. After they encounter God's living Word and believe, repent and obey, the restoration transformation begins to take place in them and it changes their spiritual DNA. Then it becomes obvious to the people around them that they are new creations! And their living example and interaction with God's Word becomes the pattern for their children to learn and follow and pass on to their children and grandchildren.

Abel had honored his parents by following the Word-dependent pattern they taught him. And Isaac 'honored' his father and mother by learning and eventually reproducing the Word-obeying pattern he had learned from them. And eventually, Jacob learned to do the same thing. And from among his sons, Joseph learned and obeyed and demonstrated the pattern wherever God led him to be. Isaac, Jacob and especially Joseph, 'honored' their fathers and mothers...by embracing and believing and obeying God's living Word and Holy Spirit according to what they were given in their lives and times and circumstances. And this is the pattern that God repeated through Moses and revealed in the Torah...when He was commissioning and teaching the nation of Israel to do her job on behalf of the whole world:

*"See, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do thus in the land where you are entering to possess it. **So keep and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'** For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the Lord our God whenever we call on Him? Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today? Only give heed to yourself and **keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons.** Remember the day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb, when the Lord said to me, 'Assemble the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words **so they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.**' (Deuteronomy 4:5-10 Emphasis added.)*

*"Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God; the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with*

*all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. **YOU SHALL TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY TO YOUR SONS and shall talk of them** (in their presence) **when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.**" (Deuteronomy 6:4-9, emphasis added)*

Can you see what an impression our obedience to these commands would make on each one of our children if we raised them in this manner from the day of their birth? We would impress our love for God and our continual interactive relationship with His Word and Holy Spirit into their brains and nervous systems. And we would program those patterns into their hearts and souls... even before they could speak or reason! And that Rock-solid Foundation would protect them from the world's alien ways and remain as the God-given guidance system that would influence their hearts, all the days of their life.

And when this pattern is followed by the Remnant of Israel, then the rest of Mankind can learn about Him and receive His Word and Holy Spirit and learn His ways, through the obedience and devotion given to Him through the Word's Israelite disciples and their 'obedience of faith' example. All the families of the earth are required to revere, respect, appreciate and cooperate with Israel's Remnant as with a spiritual 'Parent.' And they are to honor their spiritual teachers by assisting them in doing their God-given 'job' of being God's '*Light to the Gentiles.*'

Regardless of what Jewish and non-Jewish people and Christian and non-Christian people have actually done throughout human history to this point, it is the task and responsibility of the Word's Last Days disciples to keep looking at what God put into His living and written Word for us to discover and embrace and allow God's indwelling Word to obey through us...in our name. The apostle Shaul (Paul), that lifelong '*Pharisee of Pharisees*' had this to say about His risen Messiah:

*"But whatever things were gain to me (in the days before Messiah Yeshua revealed Himself to me), those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ (the Anointed One of Israel). More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the (former self-centered observance of the written) Law, but that which is through faith in Christ (the Spirit-transmitted LIVING Law), **the Righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith** (in the Word's Perfect Finished Work), that I may know Him (directly and personally) and the Power of His Resurrection (Life abiding within me) and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the (Full, Eternal, Perfect Fulfillment that comes to us when we too share in His) Resurrection from the dead.*

*Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as are perfect (by receiving the Perfection He is to us),*

*have this attitude; and if in anything you (who are still learning) have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; however, let us keep living by that same standard (of Yeshua's Perfect Eternal Finished Work) to which (purely by God's Grace) we have attained."*  
(Philippians 3:7-16 Amplification and emphasis added.)

## ***Don't Allow the Status Quo to Discourage You***

Yes, there are great discrepancies between what God has written, and what men have actually done, and the way we are today. But the story is not over yet. Our job is to continue to look at what God has written, in order to remain on His 'narrow path' and keep our lives solidly grounded on God's granite-solid Rock Foundation. If we do, God's Word and Spirit will continue to lead us closer and closer to our Perfect Eternal Destination. God will finish taking us all the way to the Destination of the Exodus He started so long ago...to Perfection!

We are not responsible or answerable for the personal responses that all other men and women of past history and those living today. But we are responsible and answerable for the personal responses we, as individual parents and believers and disciples of God's living and written Word will make throughout our lives on this Earth. What God intends for Israel on a worldwide 'macro scale' is to be followed on a family-by-family 'micro scale.' Each person of each individual family unit is required to receive personally, the Covering, Redemption and Blessing God gives to all of us, through Israel. We are all required to cooperate with Israel, as One New Man in Messiah, in passing that spiritual Legacy and Treasure to each new child that is born. And the children, once they grow and mature, are required to do the same for their children, and so on. So we are all required to receive, believe, obey and revere God's living Word and Holy Spirit with the love, devotion, focus and obedient service of disciples. There are no exemptions; we are all expected by God to 'follow' His living Word at all times, and in all things...so that He can continue to give to each of us, everything we will ever need in order to fulfill our true God-given identity, purpose and destiny. (Cf. Psalms 1 & 119 – Abiding interactive union with God's living Word; Jeremiah 17:5-10; Matthew 11: 25-30)

As we said, this plan, throughout Israel's history, was only partially fulfilled. Only Israel's Remnant hears, repents, obeys and follows God's Word. But for the most part throughout the ages, what God originally intended to do for the world through Israel as a whole, was found to be wanting. It fell far short of God's Perfect Standards. And as long as Israelites continue to try to ignore and bypass God's living Word made flesh, and strive to love, serve and obey God in their own strength, through their own religious striving and traditions and ritualistic efforts, they will continue to fail. The Sin of radical independence from God's living Word cannot be covered and redeemed by anyone or anything that remains removed and separated from God's living Word and His Blood Atonement for Sin. Only the Lamb of God Himself can repair the damage...by reuniting humans to Himself and making them to be as one with Him once more.

*"Jesus answered them and said, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. **Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the Food which endures to Eternal Life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal.**' Therefore they said to Him, 'What shall we*

*do, so that we may work the works of God?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘**This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.**’” (John 6:26-29 Emphasis added.)*

God’s living Word created mankind originally; but now He must **RE-CREATE** us...now that we are all conceived and born into the state of radically independent corruption and Sin-disfigurement. Being born into the ‘right natural genetic family line’ is not enough. That can’t go deep enough to touch our original decapitated living death Sin-state. Only when God’s living Word, The Creator, is able to reunite with us as our True Head, will God be able to regenerate us spiritually. But apart from His living Word, we have no chance of being regenerated or renewed in accord with God’s awesome Standards. It’s not enough for us to try to train and discipline and educate our fallen, Sin-corrupted souls. The original decapitated DNA of our physical makeup will still be there, as long as Yeshua Himself is not able to take over as our Lord, Master, Owner and Infinite Perfection.

*“He who receives you receives Me, and **he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me!**” (Matthew 10:40 Emphasis added.)*

So the true path to God’s Eternal Salvation is indeed a very ‘narrow path.’ It boils down to one Person and the Perfect Eternal Work and that He has already done...Messiah Yeshua, the living Word of God made flesh. This Gospel is utterly RADICAL and TOTALLY EXCLUDES all other human attempts to find an alternate route! No other man-made religion and no set of self-improvement techniques, or academic and scientific formulas for achieving human excellence, and no religious and theological ‘correctness’ or soulish theological formulas and flesh-performed religious rituals will ever take Messiah Yeshua’s place. Only He can reach deep enough. Only He effectively deals with our Sin and our mortally damaged DNA problem! Redemption and Salvation are not a matter of what we do or fail to do. It is a matter of what Sin made us to BE! What we are by nature, must be redone. We must be created anew! And only He, the living Word of God, the Creator and Sustainer of all things, has the Authority and Power and Ability to make us brand new, fully renewed children of God from beginning to end and top to bottom. God’s Perfect Nature requires this. And only God Himself, through His living Word, can make it happen.

*“For Christ also died for sins once for all, the Just for the unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison (the Serpent’s Darkness), who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water (as God continued to separate His Light from the Serpent’s Darkness).*

*“Corresponding to that, baptism (into the Resurrection Life of God’s living Word) now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—**through the resurrection of Jesus Christ**, who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.” (1 Peter 3:18-22 Amplification and emphasis added.)*

*“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me (and join Me in My death and Resurrection); and where I am, there My servant (disciple) will be also; **if anyone** (Jew or Gentile) **serves Me, the Father will honor him.**” (John 12:24-26 Amplification and emphasis added.)*