

51. After the Betrothal...Reality!

*“Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of the Lord and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice and said, **‘All the words which the Lord has spoken we will do!’**” Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord. Then he arose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain with twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel. He sent young men of the sons of Israel, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as peace offerings to the Lord. Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and the other half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; **and they said, ‘All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!’**”*

*“So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, **‘Behold the blood of the Covenant, which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.’**” Then Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, **and they saw the God of Israel;** and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself. **Yet He did not stretch out His hand against the nobles of the sons of Israel; and they saw God, and they ate and drank.**”*

*“Now the Lord said to Moses, ‘Come up to Me on the mountain and remain there, and **I will give you the stone tablets with the Law and the commandment which I have written for their instruction.**’” So Moses arose with Joshua his servant, and Moses went up to the mountain of God.” (Exodus 24:3-13 Emphasis added.)*

So now it was done. The betrothal contract terms were to be put down in writing, in the form of a total of 613 commandments. God intended to use that format to instruct or ‘tutor’ Israel so she could get used to abiding with and knowing Him, and His ways. That kind of instruction would progressively transform God’s people into His image and likeness. And they would be able to bring Abraham’s Covenant forward in time, confirm it in their generation, and impart the legacy to later generations. The union between God and this generation of Israelites was sealed in Covenant blood and finalized when Israel’s elders shared in a Covenant meal in God’s Holy Presence. Now Israel was more than a tribal family. Now she became God’s ‘firstborn’ nation and was entrusted with the rights and responsibilities of the firstborn as she took her unique place before all the other nations of the earth.

Recently we have explored the depths of the underlying meaning of the Ten Commandments. So now let’s ask Father to show us what was actually happening in the Wilderness between Him and his chosen people. On the surface, legal proceedings took place. God and this generation of His chosen people became one in an official blood covenant sense. In His inscrutable Wisdom, God reveals His nature and His ways through the Semitic covenantal cultural matrix that the ancient Israelites knew so well. But before we in modern times can grasp God’s meaning and intentions and understand what was really happening with authentic precision and integrity, we

must become familiar with their Hebraic cultural matrix and ponder what God is revealing of Himself within this unique context that He chose as the instrument for His Self-revelation. We must keep in mind that everything God reveals and does to, in, with and through His chosen people...He does through the legality and characteristics of an eternal Blood Covenant. By such a covenant, two separate parties join themselves to one another and became one legal entity. The interests and future well being of both parties merge, and each becomes responsible to, and for, the other. And it is understood and required that they remain committed to protect and enhance one another's interests and well being, to the death. So it's like a marriage between a man and a woman. When those two representatives become one, all the members of their respective families are joined also and they become one family.

We already know that because God's nature is absolutely, infinitely Perfect, His Standards of Righteousness are Perfect. His Judgments will always be made according to His Perfect nature and standards. So for God's nature to be satisfied, for Him to be at rest and at peace with Israel and be able to accept her performance in this Covenant... her performance will have to be flawlessly perfect as well! The image and likeness of our awesome Perfect God must reflect and embody His Perfection!

So through this Hebraic Covenant event, we realize that what happened at Mt. Sinai was a very solemn marital level of union that bonded God and Israel to one another, forever. It was a very serious event with life or death consequences. There was no foolishness or inane levity involved. The stakes hanging over the head of the fallen human race were much too serious and filled with eternal consequences for any of this to be taken lightly. Once the written terms of God's Covenants were agreed to by the parties involved, and the Covenant was cut and sealed in blood, the participants were forever bound to honor and observe the terms to Perfection, **under pain of death!**

So the question naturally arises: what chance does this Covenant have of turning out well? How can it be perfectly fulfilled, when the people of Israel are the fallen, Sin-corrupted, living dead children of Adam? How can Sin-corrupted human flesh ever hope to interact with the living God on His utterly Perfect, Holy, Righteous level? What chance did poor bedraggled Israel have of succeeding when she boldly agreed to meet God's Perfect Standards...perfectly?

The obvious answer to that question is that Israel had no chance, and that is the point God was making. Israel was the world's 'mirror.' By looking at her, we see ourselves. We don't have a chance either. This is why, when we consider these issues, we must never forget that very significant Genesis Covenant that God, through His living Word, had already made with Abraham. That original Covenant was **unilateral**. God took sole responsibility for its Fulfillment! So this Sinai Covenant was vastly different in nature. It was bi-lateral! God was responsible for fulfilling His part; but Israel was responsible for fulfilling her part. So the death penalty that was attached to that bilateral Covenant had very serious and ominous undertones for Israel, since it was certain that her weak, Sin-corrupted flesh would falter, stumble and, sooner or later, she would fall into some type of serious violation. So take note of Israel's self-reliant attitude. Notice the self-confident state of mind the Israelite elders and the people were entertaining at that time:

*“So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the Lord had commanded him. All the people answered together and said, ‘**All that the Lord has spoken we will do!**’ And Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord.” (Exodus 19:7-8 Emphasis added.)*

By accepting God’s proposal, Israel assumed responsibility for meeting the terms of the Covenant! And notice that to this day, much of Israel still thinks they have what it takes to fulfill their part of it. And notice that most of the modern world we live in is just as sure of itself and just as arrogant and independent in attitude today, as Israel was back at Mt. Sinai and throughout her subsequent history! But where does that self-assured sense of righteousness come from? Didn’t we learn in Genesis that all the children of Adam are born spiritually decapitated, and are therefore, dead in trespasses and sins? Hasn’t God revealed that men, by nature, are nothing but dust? That means that men, especially fallen Sin-corrupted men, are helpless in themselves and totally dependent on their Creator for everything! God must supply whatever we will ever be or have or do through His creative Word! And we already know that through Adam and Eve, all of humanity fell into Sin and became corrupted and spiritually dead!

So was God pulling a cruel hoax on these poor ex-slaves, setting Israel and the rest of the human race up for disastrous failure? Was He leading these people He claimed to love into a deadly trap? He knew what Sin did to us. He knew that we’re all born decapitated from His living Word. He knew these people at Sinai were spiritually blind, deaf and bankrupt. So what was He doing, offering such an impossible proposal to spiritually bankrupt human beings?

He was teaching Israel and the rest of the world a lesson. And at the same time, revealing more of the significance and preeminence and all-sufficient fullness contained in His living Word. But, for the most part, after all of these centuries, during which the desperately sick human heart has been exposed repeatedly, the lesson of our bankrupt helplessness has not yet sunk into our heads. The majority of Israel and most of the secular and religious world still do not grasp what God has revealed about Himself and about us. We still refuse to admit that we’re dead, helpless and bankrupt. We still assume that we’re alive, that we have an independent life of our own, a life we’re in charge of and that we have the power to control and direct! This delusion comes from the satanic rebelliousness we inherit through the DNA that our first parents passed on to us. We know we’re all going to die. We know we are born in a dying state. But we refuse to come to grips with the implications of the utter bankruptcy that is caused by the Death that we know is in us.

So God is exposing the nature of our rebellious, self-adoring, humanistic flesh. He’s helping us to see why we insist on denying our helplessness that Scripture so clearly exposes and discredits. Men and women scream their denials and contradictions at God. They refuse to accept His revelation. The following is a good example. It is a list of denials that are expressed in the first ten (of fifteen) tenets contained in the Humanist Manifesto that is on the website of the American Humanist Movement www.americanhumanist.org. This is an example of the typical denials that fallen flesh uses to rebut and bypass what God revealed through His written Word, and throughout the experiences recorded in the bitter annals of human history.

Humanism proclaims:

FIRST: Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created.

SECOND: Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as a result of a continuous process.

THIRD: Holding an organic view of life, humanists find that the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected.

FOURTH: Humanism recognizes that man's religious culture and civilization, as clearly depicted by anthropology and history, are the product of a gradual development due to his interaction with his natural environment and with his social heritage. The individual born into a particular culture is largely molded by that culture.

FIFTH: Humanism asserts that the nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantees of human values. Obviously humanism does not deny the possibility of realities as yet undiscovered, but it does insist that the way to determine the existence and value of any and all realities is by means of intelligent inquiry and by the assessment of their relations to human needs. Religion must formulate its hopes and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method.

SIXTH: We are convinced that the time has passed for theism, deism, modernism, and the several varieties of "new thought".

SEVENTH: Religion consists of those actions, purposes, and experiences which are humanly significant. Nothing human is alien to the religious. It includes labor, art, science, philosophy, love, friendship, recreation--all that is in its degree expressive of intelligently satisfying human living. The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained.

EIGHTH: Religious Humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now. This is the explanation of the humanist's social passion.

NINTH: In the place of the old attitudes involved in worship and prayer the humanist finds his religious emotions expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and in a cooperative effort to promote social well-being.

TENTH: It follows that there will be no uniquely religious emotions and attitudes of the kind hitherto associated with belief in the supernatural.

Do you see how these proclamations ignore and therefore, reject, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and snub what Scripture says so clearly? This is what I call, the 'decapitated' perspective. When such people consider this world and ponder what Reality truly is, all they can see is what we call 'The Wilderness.' That is, they are limited to a horizontal view that only takes in what happens within this physical earthly, time and space dimension. They are limited to whatever the scope of their own intellects and powers of observation may be able to pick up from the enormity of what is taking place in that dimension. But they are blind and deaf to the spiritual dimension that requires God-given spiritual faculties and faith. So worldly people assume that what they can see, sense, comprehend and measure 'scientifically' is all that exists and the only things that should be taken into account. To them, that realm constitutes the full extent of what there is for mankind to know. And so Humanism assumes that Man is '*the measure of all things*' and that the human intellect and its scientific tools enthrone him as the ultimate judge and assessor of all that can be known.

But when we have been regenerated spiritually and are equipped with spiritual faculties, we know that our Eternal God is always imminent, always ready to descend upon The Wilderness. He responds to the faith, trust and expectation of people who have been pierced to the core with the revelation imparted by His living Word and Holy Spirit. Anyone blessed with this gift can perceive spiritual realities through spiritual faculties that decapitated people know nothing about, and do not have. And so they have no clue as to what God's children are talking about when they mention matters that concern God and 'faith.' People with the gift of faith are able to know, love

and obey the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. They know that He and His Heavenly Hosts are here...throughout The Wilderness...ready to cover and interact with us and be everything we need Him to be. These people of faith serve as 'points of entry' for God and the resources of His Perfect Finished Work of Creation and Redemption. Through their faith, the hosts of Heaven can enter the Wilderness dimension and add whatever may be missing to protect and supply for their well being. But the chronic opposition and antagonistic tension against believers that is generated by those who cannot see Heavenly Reality give rise to the ongoing war between Light and Darkness, between God's Truth, and the malicious opposition created by the Serpent's contradicting lies.

The annals of history are filled with countless voices that were raised to try to drown out God's Word and contradict what He revealed to Israel and entrusted to her care. They emerge and then, after flourishing for a time, they die and are forgotten. But God and His Word remain and abide forever. And of course, the unbelief and scorn in which the world holds the God of Abraham, place poor little Israel in a very difficult position. Her humanity is no different from that of the rest of mankind. But because God chose her to be His messenger and example for all the rest, she remains a perpetual 'thorn in the flesh'...an enigma to the religious and secular portions of this fallen world. They do not acknowledge or believe Israel's God. Therefore, they refuse to acknowledge the God-given position that only Israel occupies. So the decapitated world does not know what to do with Israel. And, very often, even God's chosen people do not know what to do with themselves! Even they disagree and struggle to define and understand what true 'Jewishness' is and how the authentic meaning of 'Israel' is to be explained.

It has been this way since the awesome revelation from atop Mt. Sinai was given. Israel was required to respond to God, but because of His infinite Perfection and Humanity's fallen Sin-corruption, just like all the rest of men, they did not have it within themselves to fulfill their part of this additional Sinai Covenant! And ever since then, vast confusion and contradictory opinions have been devised to try to understand, explain and come to grips with God's Torah (Law) and what it is really meant to do.

The Eternal Covenant Bond

So it's vital to remember that the Eternal Bond between God and the children of Abraham was not created at Mt. Sinai. Sinai renewed and amplified that bond, but the actual union was created centuries before when God, on His own initiative, unilaterally brought Abraham, his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob into this awesome Eternal Union. While Abraham slept, God included him and all of his still-unborn descendants. The Covenant and the Fulfillment of its promises were to come into the world through Abraham's yet unborn son Isaac, and his grandson, Jacob. The descendants of these three men were given this Covenant birthright and commissioned to share it with the rest of the world. But they, like all the rest of mankind, must choose whether or not they will believe God's Word and whether they will accept or reject His offer to become one with Him in this objective, everlasting Covenant bond...subjectively

So the question always is: will the children of Abraham chose to avail ourselves of this opportunity for Salvation and Eternal Life, and agree to the terms given by God's Word? And will the rest of the world choose to enter into it too? Our subjective response isn't automatic. We

must deliberately choose to believe and receive the privilege offered to us of becoming ‘*Blood brothers*’ with Almighty God! We all have the right to accept or reject what God offers. And this is what God was revealing to Israel at that time:

*“Now then, **IF** you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, **THEN** you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.” (Exodus 19:5-6)*

God initiated His Covenant with Abraham unilaterally. That union is an objective fact. But at Sinai, He proposed marriage to the entire nation of Israel on behalf of His Son, His beloved living Word. So the second Blood Covenant made at Sinai was placed WITHIN the matrix of the original Genesis Covenant. God had already obligated Himself to protect, maintain and fulfill the first Covenant for Abraham’s sake. He assumed the two-part responsibility, pledging Himself to fulfill His part, and also, through His living Word, He pledged Himself to fulfill the part of Abraham’s family. And so God, in His Eternal Perfection, made this original Covenant and sealed it forever in Blood...while Abraham slept:

*“Now when the sun was going down, **a deep sleep fell upon Abram**; and behold, terror and great darkness fell upon him. God said to Abram, ‘Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve, and afterward they will come out with many possessions. As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you will be buried at a good old age. Then in the fourth generation they will return here, for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete.’*

*“It came about when the sun had set, that it was very dark, and behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a flaming torch which passed between these pieces. **On that day the Lord** (unilaterally) **made a covenant with Abram...**” (Genesis 15:12-17a)*

*“I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you. **I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations FOR AN EVERLASTING COVENANT, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.** I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; **AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD!**” (Genesis 17:6-8 Emphasis added.)*

So God guaranteed that this first Covenant with Abraham would be eternally valid and fulfilled to Perfection. God did this entirely on His own initiative, centuries before what happened at Mt. Sinai. It had to be this way because Scripture repeatedly tells us that ‘*Men are but dust.*’ We are creatures. Creatures can’t create or initiate anything. Creatures must depend on the one and only Creator and Source for whatever they can ever be and have and do. Nothing can be more absolute and airtight in credibility and trustworthiness than this! This is Reality! And the same is true with the Sinai Covenant. Even when we resolve and promise to do our part, we can’t. And so, in both cases, God’s living Word, who eventually became flesh and lived on Earth as Israel’s Messiah, was sent by His Father to fulfill the part of Israel, His betrothed, since she remains so

terribly indisposed and unable to comply. He is covering her, the way He once covered Adam and Eve.

God is the Awesome Uncreated Being

The awesome Word of God created and redeemed everything that exists in Heaven and Earth. He sealed the fathers of our Faith (and their descendants) into this union with Himself... forever! This Perfect, Eternal Gift of union with God entitles the beneficiaries of this Covenant to be God's sons and heirs forever! It will restore each participant to God's level of Righteousness and Holiness... to the original birthright and inheritance that Adam and Eve forsook when they fell into Sin and became liable to physical death. It is a free gift. Men cannot earn it or pay for it. And it restores them to friendship and fellowship with God and entitles them to enjoy the Eternal Peace and Joy in which God eternally intends to abide with His human image and likeness. And all of this enables us to know God as He really is, in His infinite, eternal Perfection! It enables us to know what He eternally had in mind and how all-sufficient His Creation was BEFORE we fell into Sin and became horribly disfigured and mentally twisted and spiritually dead:

*“Thus the heavens and the earth were **completed, and all their hosts.** By the seventh day **God completed His work, which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work, which He had done.** Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it **He rested from all His work which God had created and made.**” (Genesis 2:1-3 Emphasis added.)*

The Sinai Covenant that took place centuries later did not in any way cancel, override, nullify or replace that original Covenant that God took upon Himself, as recorded in Genesis. The Sinai Covenant was an additional agreement that God made with people who, in His eternal mind and will, were already one with Him. So the Sinai Covenant was meant to fulfill another purpose. It coincided with and further explained what had already been done in Genesis. But God had to hold a mirror up to us in order to reveal the true state of the human race. The Torah unpacked more of the revelation contained in Genesis. It tells us what God must do to cover and supply us with all that is needed for God to restore us to His Standards of Perfection. We may want to comply and work as one with God; we may even promise and intend to do it. But, there's nothing in us that will enable us to back it up in a way that would meet our infinite God's Perfect Standards. His Word must do it all!

So now we learn another awesome Truth about God's living Word: whatever God originally revealed, He revealed through His Word and will fulfill it through His Word. Whatever He promised through His Word, He will make good... to Perfection... through His Word! When God, through His Word, bestows something on someone, such as a calling or a commission, He will not go back on His Word. The Fulfillment of such things is already contained within His Word... and the Word will bring the entire Fulfillment of these things with Him into this dimension of time and space. Once God gives His Word, He never takes back what He revealed, gave or promised. All will be done perfectly. Therefore, despite all the rebellion, Sin and Death introduced by the Serpent and his duped human slaves, God's Perfect Plan always remains in effect. What is needed in order for it to be fulfilled, is already contained in God's Perfect Word. And, depending on how we choose to respond to the Word, generation by generation, God can and will override and cancel out the effects of each deviation produced by our inherent imperfections.

“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.’” (Revelation 21:5-6 Emphasis added.)

Our ‘imperfection’ comes from our Sin-contamination that has warped and skewed our faculties and perceptions and thought processes. Now instead of always tending toward God, we keep wanting to move away from Him. Nevertheless, our freedom to choose remains intact because we are made to be God’s image and likeness! Therefore, we must always choose...whether we will believe, obey, and love and serve God’s Word, in Spirit and in Truth, or whether we will withhold our belief, trust, obedience and love from Him. So, although God has created and given everything necessary for us to be restored and to fulfill the identities, purposes and destinies He intended for us to enjoy, we must always make the choice to receive or reject His Word and what His Word reveals and offers. Yes, Sin has mortally wounded us, but God has seen to it that we retain our free will. So we always have the ability to choose to receive the Eternal Life He offers us and to allow His Spirit to change and transform us into brand new creations. If we choose to submit to God’s Word and Spirit, the Word will fulfill in us all that He originally revealed, commanded, and promised on our behalf:

*“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 (Word) made all these things, thus (through Him) 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 Amplification and emphasis added.)*

*“Then the Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, **but you must master it.**’” (Genesis 4:6-7 Emphasis added.)*

“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.” (2 Corinthians 5:17-19)

We Always Have A Choice, So – Whom Will We Serve?

Now we know that God always gives us the ability to choose... but we do not have the ability to reform or transform ourselves. We can only choose to believe and trust in God’s Word and allow Him to change, supply and equip us to meet God’s Perfect Standards. In our previous meditations on the Ten Commandments, we began to consider the true condition of the fallen, corrupted, Sin-loving human heart. We saw the horrendous extent of the damage that Sin did to our human DNA. We saw the incurable mortality and our ever-present, insatiable drive to covet and possess what does not belong to us according to God’s Truth and Reality. So we know that fallen flesh, including that of Israel, does not tremble at God’s Word simply because it is God’s Word. It only trembles at whatever it sees as a dire threat to its living death existence. The

primary knee-jerk instinct of our fallen flesh is no longer to worship and embody our Creator as His image and likeness. Now, our primary instinct is to maintain our deluded assumption that we have a radically independent life of our own. And so the primary instinct of our fallen flesh is *self-preservation*. We tremble at whatever we see as a dire threat to our Sin-twisted estimation of what will assure us of security and wellbeing. The God-erasing filter the Serpent placed over our perceptions causes us to tremble at any dangers presented by the created things we sense around us. We are limited to Wilderness perspectives and thought patterns because... we ARE part of the Wilderness! And so in our effort to save ourselves, we devise vain methods by which to try to control everything around us.

The Serpent's 'Sin-filter' blinds men to their Creator and His Reality and to the Authority and Grace offered by and through His awesome living Word. So we're not spiritually equipped to 'keep our end of the bargain' when it comes to being in Blood Covenant with our Infinitely Perfect, Eternal, Almighty God, and fulfilling the responsibilities that are ours under God's Law. **We just can't do it!** We may promise and want to do it with all our hearts...but we do not have anything within us – no human faculties or equipment or resources that could enable us to make it happen. So, unless God Himself pierces us with lightning bolts of His revelation, and sends His own Word and Spirit to live and work from within us, our fallen flesh remains totally ignorant and unaware of our true state of spiritual deadness and it is helpless to do anything about it.

*“Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘**But who do you say that I AM?**’ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because **flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven!**” (Matthew 16:13-17 Emphasis added. Emphasis added.)*

Flesh and blood does not perceive and understand spiritual realities, nor can it achieve spiritual results. We can't even change ourselves, much less one another! We cannot find anything that can take the place of God's living Word. Only He can pierce the stony human heart and effect its transformation. The demonic filter that blinds our natural eyes to God's Reality deceives and moves us to try to assume airs of self-righteousness. Thus, as long as we're deprived of God's heart-piercing revelation, we feel no sense of Sin or any need for a personal redeemer. Thus we keep refusing to admit and declare our state of Sin and the total helplessness and bankruptcy it inflicted on us. Decapitated men can't imagine that they could be as spiritually dead in Sin and as utterly bankrupt, helpless and useless as a corpse. Scripture says that we are that dead; but fallen flesh refuses to believe and admit it. Our self-adoring hearts scream in total rejection of such a thought. We remain convinced that we're 'okay,' that we're basically 'good' and that we possess a life of our own with 'inner beauty' and have limitless 'potential' within ourselves, apart from any other consideration, such as a transcendent Creator. That is what is expressed in Humanism's creed.

But as soon as we're pierced by God's 'lightning bolts' of revelation we begin to see that we were designed and created to be the image and likeness of God! And we see that since we are severed from Him and live as radically independent agents, we have no share in His Beauty,

Perfection, Righteousness and Eternal Life! Then it's obvious that we can't have any true integrity and worth and inner meaning as humans, not as long as we remain separated from the One whose image and likeness we were made to be! Then we can see what an absurd notion it is for the living dead to think and act as if they themselves were God! The absurdity of that decapitated rebellious position cannot be apprehended by anyone who has not yet been pierced by the lightning bolts of God's Truth. Only after the Truth hits home can we finally know God's Word and His awesome significance. And then we begin to grasp what His awesome Revelation is telling us!

So, Sin-blinded people remain convinced that even though we may be somewhat beat up by life and 'frayed around the edges,' essentially, in ourselves, we humans are 'pretty good' and admirable and salvageable. And so they never stop trying to improve and justify and redeem themselves by one form of human endeavor or other. They try to achieve more value and self-worth through various forms of false religion or philosophy and by inane human disciplines and traditions. They invent gods in their own image and likeness that will validate and endorse their self-devised philosophies and theologies. And they strive to better themselves and prolong their existences through various forms of soulish educational systems. Some try to achieve it by training their fallen minds and wills with vigorous endurance trials that are required by a variety of disciplines. Others try to attain it through scientific, or academic or athletic breakthroughs and achievements...or by amassing materialistic things...or through their esthetic creations...or by becoming famous...or by wielding the control that military might makes possible. But Death cannot stop itself from being dead. Everything men think they will do is self-centered. And self-centeredness oozes out of us as the primary symptom that we are in a state of living death!

Fallen flesh strives and strives, all the while refusing to acknowledge God's promptings. It just cannot admit that self-reliant human striving is futile, and that we have an absolute and utter need for anyone else to bring us back to life. We do not tremble at God's Word; we only tremble at what we think might be able to deprive, oppose, undermine, or end our existence.

Israel, God's Object Lesson for All of Humanity

So, in the midst of all this human carnage and Darkness, God chose little Israel to serve as His 'object lesson' for the rest of the world. He began the revelation and education process of the world, using Israel as His instrument and model. His intent was to reach all the other families of the earth through her. Through her bankruptcy He intended to expose the bankruptcy of the self-improvement efforts of the entire man-controlled world. Israel's history would serve to expose and discredit any achievement that the human race would esteem and consider to be the epitome of human excellence.

So God waited until Abraham's family was at its lowest point of degradation. The entire family was enslaved and without hope. It was as if God decided to enter into a Covenant with a corpse! He chose the weakest, most downtrodden and helpless, underprivileged and disenfranchised group of humans available, and then He proposed marriage to them:

"Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of

priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.”
(Exodus 19:5-6)

That is how it began. But, throughout the subsequent centuries, Israel’s human bankruptcy became unmistakably evident. God favored her with every spiritual advantage possible. And yet she failed miserably! And that failure was meant to be a dire warning to all the rest of the world. What was true of Israel is true of all the rest! No child of Adam is ‘special’ or ‘exempt’.

*“Then the Word of the Lord came to me, saying, ‘Son of Man, make known to Jerusalem her abominations and say, “Thus says the Lord God to Jerusalem, ‘Your origin and your birth are from the land of the Canaanite, your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. As for your birth, on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water for cleansing; you were not rubbed with salt or even wrapped in cloths. No eye looked with pity on you to do any of these things for you, to have compassion on you. Rather you were thrown out into the open field, for you were abhorred on the day you were born. When I passed by you and saw you squirming in your blood, I said to you while you were in your blood, ‘LIVE!’ Yes, I said to you while you were in your blood, ‘LIVE!’ I made you numerous like plants of the field. Then you grew up, became tall and reached the age for fine ornaments; your breasts were formed and your hair had grown. **Yet you were naked and bare.**” (Ezekiel 16:1-7 Emphasis added.)*

*“The hand of the Lord was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of the valley; and it was full of bones. He caused me to pass among them round about, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley; and lo, they were very dry. He said to me, “Son of man, **can these bones LIVE?**” And I answered, “O Lord God, You know.” (Ezekiel 37:1-3 Emphasis added.)*

*“‘Behold, days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My (Sinai) Covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,’ declares the Lord. But this is the Covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,’ declares the Lord, “I will put My Law (Torah) within them and on their heart I will write it; and **I will be their God, and they shall be My people!**” (Jeremiah 31:31-33, amplification and emphasis added)*

The message Scripture gives is simple, stark and heart piercing. If you want to know where you really stand with the Almighty living God, the Creator of all things, look at what has continually happened to His chosen people, Israel! Israel’s history has proven that she **IS** part of ‘The Wilderness!’ She represents you and me, and every other human being! The Wilderness is an expression of all of us! Regardless of our color, culture or religion, regardless of which portion or location in the Wilderness we may occupy, and no matter what we do or accomplish on our very best day... because of Adam’s Fall, as long as we’re separated from God’s Perfect living Word, we all remain DEAD in trespasses and sins. We cannot redeem or save ourselves.

This is the awesome bad news that the Scriptures reveal to the whole world. This is what God’s Word continued to hammer into Israel throughout all the days of the prophets in the Tanach. And

this is what Humanism and the world's false religions continue to deny and contradict. Nevertheless, once God speaks His Word, He never takes it back. What He said at first will not change later. He will continually reinforce, validate and fulfill what He has said. God Himself, through His living Word, took it upon Himself to cover Israel and all the rest. He did it by uniting Himself to them through His Perfect, Holy utterly Righteous Word! And the Word became human, so that He could legally represent us all in God's Covenants... and be what we could never be and do what we could never do before God, in our utter bankruptcy and deadness:

*“Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. **But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him!**”* (Isaiah 53:4-6 Emphasis added.)

And so, throughout the days following the Resurrection and Ascension of our Messiah, through the writings of Israel's New Covenant apostles, God told us once more:

“For the Word of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the Power of God. For it is written, ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will set aside.’

*“Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the Wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach **Christ crucified**, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, **Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom of God**. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but **God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God. But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us Wisdom from God, and Righteousness and Sanctification, and Redemption, so that, just as it is written, ‘Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord!’**” (1 Corinthians 1:18-31 Emphasis added.)*

*“And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. **For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the Power of God!**” (1 Corinthians 2:1-5 Emphasis added.)*

Resting in His Perfect, Finished Work

So, beloved, can you see why God keeps emphasizing this from generation to generation? Our value, merit and salvation and transformation do not lie in us. Nothing we will ever do will avail. Nor will it depend on how well or by what method we try to do it. God needs no help from things that are dead. So the Fulfillment will depend entirely on Almighty God, and what He has already done through the Perfect Finished Work of His living Word, who became flesh to represent us all in God's Eternal Blood Covenant. He has performed everything required of us...to Perfection... in our name!

Can you see why God has to keep repeating and repeating and repeating this from generation to generation? We are all born blind and deaf! We are helpless to help or save ourselves. We are... The Wilderness! Even on its best day, independent fallen human flesh cannot grasp heavenly Truth and Reality! No matter how learned or accomplished or religious we may try to become, apart from our Messiah, we remain decapitated and disconnected from God's Word and His Truth and Reality and Eternal Life!

So do you see what the awesome, infinite, transcendent almighty God had to begin to teach to poor, helpless, weak little Israel? Do you see why He had to take her out into the Wilderness? In seeing and experiencing the Wilderness, Israel was able to get to know herself as she really was and is. God's Covenant people had to learn it first, and then, through them, all the rest of us would be able to learn the same lesson... generation after generation after generation... again, ...and again... and again... and again... and again!

*“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!**” (John 3:9-15)*

*“...Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just exactly as the women also had said; but Him they did not see.’ And He said to them, ‘O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! **Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?**’ **Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.**” (Luke 24:24-27
Emphasis added.)*

What was really going on between God, and these people, and His living Word at Mt. Sinai is impossible for the naked natural, radically independent, self-reliant eyes of fallen flesh to perceive! Spiritual words conveying Heavenly things have no effect on the living dead! You can try to explain this to fallen flesh until you drop from exhaustion. But nothing you say will register within it. If you don't believe it, look at yourself. Are you a disciple? Do you now know the Lord and understand what I'm talking about? That's wonderful! But you're not a disciple because of what some other fallen human did or said. You're not a disciple because of anything

you did or said. You are a disciple because God spoke His living Word to you and He pierced your innermost being to the quick! You are a disciple because the living Word was sent to single you out and, when your time came, the Spirit of God enabled you to hear His Word say, **“FOLLOW ME!”**

But even after that awesome calling takes place, we must continue to diligently ‘remove all leaven’ that may still remain in our personal ‘abode.’ Check yourself, Beloved! Look under your own hood so that the Holy Spirit can show you how much of the residue of your former radical independence still remains and continues to work and spread and cause the yeast of the fallen flesh within you to keep ‘rising’ and spreading and trying to take over once more! Do you still expect wonderful things from yourself? Do you still assume that you are in charge of anything? Do you still feel disappointment and discouragement when you falter and fail and fall on your face? Why are you disappointed when you fail? Why are you downcast when you’re accused? Isn’t it because you still insist on putting faith in yourself and expecting wonderful things to come out of you?

And why do you look down on your neighbors when they misfire? Have you forgotten what you were like, and how you saw things, and what you assumed and did, before the Lord made Himself known to you? Are they not exactly the way you yourself once were? So take time to look closely at what was going on in you, before you ‘saw the Light.’ Then, instead of looking down on your neighbors, you will be prompted to intercede for them instead. You will plead with God to do for them what He did for you.

“Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,’ when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother’s eye. For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit, nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit.” (Luke 6:40-43)

Thanks to what you can now see, you know that in the past you were utterly blind and deaf. Is that not true? You thought you were really wonderful and special. And you thought you were better than most other people, didn’t you? YOU assumed that people who were just like you were somehow better, smarter and of much more value than people with whom you disagreed because they were not at all like you. You thought that people of certain colors or cultures or religions were worth more or less than others. And if you were religious, you assumed that you were ‘closer to God’ than other people, didn’t you? You thought that certain children of Adam and Eve were better and of more value and were more special than other children of Adam and Eve. Do you remember? Back then, you didn’t get it either, did you? You assumed that some dead people were better off than other dead people. And, if you still think that you or anyone else has it within you to approach God and do something to please and impress Him by what you originate and offer to Him, then... Think Again!

“... ‘Son of man, can these bones live?’ And I answered, ‘O Lord God, You know.’ Again He said to me, ‘Prophecy over these bones and say to them, ‘O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.’ Thus says the Lord God to these bones, ‘Behold, I will cause breath to enter you that you may

come to life. I will put sinews on you, make flesh grow back on you, cover you with skin and put breath in you that you may come alive; and you will know that I AM THE LORD!” (Ezekiel 37:3-6 Emphasis added.)

“And He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and viewed others with contempt: ‘Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and was praying this to himself: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’ But the tax collector, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to Heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, the sinner!’ ***I tell you, this man went to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted!***” (Luke 18:9-14 Emphasis added.)

“Then He said to me, “Son of man, ***these bones are the WHOLE house of Israel***; behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up and our hope has perished. We are completely cut off.’ Therefore prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “Behold, ***I will*** open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, My people; and ***I will*** bring you into the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord, ***when I have opened your graves and caused you to come up out of your graves***, My people. ***I will*** put My Spirit within you and you will come to life, and ***I will*** place you on your own land. ***Then you will know that I, the Lord, have spoken and done it.***” declares the Lord.’” (Ezekiel 37:11-14 Emphasis added.)

In that field of bones that God showed to Ezekiel, were there any bones that were better or more valuable or more capable than any of the others? Or were they all totally dead? If this is what God said was the whole House of Israel, then what must He see when He regards the rest of the world? In what sort of spiritual condition are the people who despise and reject Him and His living and written Word and hold His chosen people in contempt? Are any of those non-Jewish bones any less dead and corrupt, or better or worth more than any of the Jewish ones? And how can they all ‘see the Light’ of God’s Revelation, unless God’s living Word pierces them with His Reality and Truth?

God’s Covenant of Betrothal

So in light of the total spiritual bankruptcy and ineptitude of the living dead human race, let’s consider what God is revealing through the written Covenant agreement and the commandment terms that the proposed ‘Bride and Groom’ would be expected to honor and commit themselves to honor and observe...**under pain of death!**

“Now it shall be, ***if you diligently obey the Lord your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today***, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the Lord your God: Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country. Blessed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground and the offspring of your beasts, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock. Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out...” (Deuteronomy 28:1-6 Emphasis added.)

*“...But it shall come about, **if you do not obey the Lord your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today**, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country. Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Cursed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock. Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out. The Lord will send upon you curses, confusion, and rebuke, in all you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken Me. The Lord will make the pestilence cling to you until He has consumed you from the land where you are entering to possess it. The Lord will smite you with consumption and with fever and with inflammation and with fiery heat and with the sword and with blight and with mildew, and they will pursue you until you perish. The heaven which is over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you, iron. The Lord will make the rain of your land powder and dust; from heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.” (Deuteronomy 28:15-24 Emphasis added.)*

These are pretty awesome and stringent ‘*Marriage Contract Terms*,’ wouldn’t you agree? God was proposing Blood Covenant Marriage Union between Israel and His beloved Son, His living Word. We’ve already mentioned the self-confident, self-righteous viewpoint and attitude that this response on the part of God’s chosen people was displaying at that early point in the proceedings. If you observe what is all around us, you will see that not much has changed. Even after all this time and even after all of Israel’s bitter, bloody, frustrating grief-filled history, most of the human race shares and perpetuates that original self-reliant arrogance:

‘No problem Lord. We can and we will do this! You can count on us. We will hold up our end of the bargain. We’ve got what it takes. You chose the right people. We won’t let you down.’

“Then Jesus said to them, ‘You will ALL fall away because of Me this night, for it is written, ‘I will strike down the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered.’ But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.’

*“But Peter said to Him, ‘**Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away.**’ Jesus said to him, ‘Truly I say to you that this very night, before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.’ Peter said to Him, ‘**Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You.**’ **All the disciples said the same thing too.**” (Matthew 26:31-35)*

So, while Israel continued to entertain exalted and lofty assumptions concerning her abilities and strengths, God gave His Marriage proposal... and Israel considered it. And then, she said:

“YES!” But God was not only speaking to Israel; He was also addressing those words to His beloved Son, who was going to become ONE with Israel! Once they became one, then whatever pertained to one, would pertain to the other. And whatever Israel would be responsible for... HE would also be responsible for it. And so they entered into this Covenant and sealed it in blood, just as the first Covenant with Abraham had been sealed. And all this time, God’s Word contained within Himself, the Fulfillment of all that had been revealed and promised by both sides!

As most of us know, after this Covenant was made, Israel soon weakened, faltered and fell flat on her idolatrous face. And whenever that happens to us, most of us continue to be shocked, surprised, dismayed and disappointed in ourselves. But why? Why are we surprised, even to this day? It is because we still assume and believe that there remains something in us that is still alive, something good that has value that can accomplish things FOR God... independently OF God! And so we keep trying to get up out of our caskets... and strive to convince ourselves that we have a life of our own, and can operate autonomously as independent agents, while we ignore our Redeemer and try to find ways to bypass the Perfection of His Finished Work on our behalf.

“The words of the Preacher, the son of David, King in Jerusalem: ‘Vanity of vanities,’ says the Preacher, ‘Vanity of vanities! All is vanity.’ What advantage does man have in all his work which he does under the sun?” (Ecclesiastes 1:1-3)

When the Covenant was made, God spoke... and pledged Himself to the Covenant and promised to fulfill it. And He always acts out of His infinite, eternal Perfection. He has never, nor will He ever, go back on or betray His Word. But then Israel spoke... and she promised... and in her utterly bankrupt, Wilderness-level deadness, she betrayed God and fell back into idolatry with a golden calf... the product of her own hands. She did it almost immediately! And, of course, by doing so, she violated her Blood Covenant commitment and promise to God... thereby incurring the death penalty that always follows a violation of such an agreement.

But there was a problem with this scenario to begin with: Israel didn't have a chance of succeeding! Why? She didn't have a chance because she was already dead! She had died long ago, in her original parents!

*“...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 2:17 Emphasis added.)*

So, as we said, God was revealing us to ourselves. He used the fallen flesh of Israel as a backdrop for the infinite Perfection of His Word made flesh, His beloved Son. Israel was a glaringly obvious contrast to what God intended to reveal to us about Himself, and His living Word, who would one day become flesh, just like us. In His Perfect Nature, God is Perfection personified! So His living creative Word is also Perfect. And so is His Holy Spirit! The God of Israel is One! And because His Word is Perfect, and completely complete, when God speaks His Word, the Word contains within Himself everything that will be necessary to produce what is revealed, and He contains in Himself whatever it will take to fulfill what God promises. So the living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is the God who speaks and performs... and declares and establishes. So even as God's Word is spoken forth... He is sent to fulfill everything God intends. He contains within Himself the Perfect Fulfillment of all that His Father revealed and swore to accomplish. And so when God gives His Word, He doesn't rely on any created thing for help. He doesn't expect any of us to fulfill it for Him. His Word fulfills Himself. And this is what is being revealed in this flawed, man-violated Sinai Blood Covenant union. God, through His Word, will make it right on behalf of Israel and also on behalf of anyone who allows Him to graft them into the Root of Salvation that He created through Israel:

“Then (by His living Word) the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” (Genesis 2:7 Amplification added.)

“There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we (eyewitness Jewish apostles) saw His Glory, Glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of Grace and Truth. John (the Immerser) testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’

*“For of His Fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. **For the Law was given through Moses;** (however God’s) **Grace and Truth were realized** (fulfilled) **through Jesus Christ.** No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained (and fully satisfied) Him.” (John 1:9-18 Amplification and emphasis added.)*

*“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!**” (Matthew 5:17-18)*

And because little Israel, just like the rest of the fallen world, was dead in Sin and therefore helpless to do anything about this from the beginning, God’s living Word contained within Himself everything it would take to perfectly atone for Israel and cover her nakedness and fulfill her part of the Covenant as well... to Perfection!

As God’s living Word was relaying His Father’s commandments to Moses atop the mountain, He was sending a simultaneous message to the vast multitude of former slaves who were waiting and watching at the base of the mountain. God’s Word was revealing the awesome Reality of God’s awesome, Perfect, Holy, Righteousness in contrast to their fallen Sin-corrupted flesh. They felt the ground beneath them begin to heave and shake and tremble as God’s Holy Word rumbled and shouted at them amid terrifying lightning flashes and crashing thunder that shot across the heavens from the rocky crags above. And blasts of a Heavenly Shofar (ram’s horn) announced to the entire universe that the living God was calling His chosen people to gather before Him in holy convocation amid an overwhelming display of fire and smoke.

“All the people perceived the thunder and the lightning flashes and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood at a distance. Then they said to Moses, ‘Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we will die.’ Moses said to the people, ‘Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and in order that the fear of Him may remain with you, so that you may not sin.’ So the people stood at a distance, while Moses approached the thick cloud where God was.” (Exodus 20:18-21)

God was covering them with the Perfection of His Word even before they knew they were going to fall into idolatry and sin against God. He knew the awful penalties they and the entire human race would incur by their bankruptcy and inability to keep their part of the Covenants. And He knew that He would have to cover them by taking all of their guilt and curse and unworthiness upon Himself. He had already committed Himself to be their Passover Lamb, their Perfect atoning Sacrifice before God and their Eternal Blood Covenant Friend and Protector. And the Word of God anticipated taking upon Himself the full brunt – all of the horror of His Father’s Perfect Righteous Holiness, Purity, Justice and Wrath against the Sin, Death and Darkness that were in His beloved betrothed, Israel. As mankind’s Covenant Representative... He Himself would have to be the Target of all the Divine Wrath and Punishment that the rest of us had coming. He would have to absorb all that the human race would rightly and justly deserve. This is what a Perfect ‘Blood Brother’ does. He stands by His Covenant friends... He protects their interests and watches their backs and does whatever it takes to insure their well being... even if it kills Him! This is what the apostle Paul meant when He wrote the words, *‘...I determined to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ...and Him crucified!’*

“Then He said to them, ‘My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me.’

“And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, ‘My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.’ And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, ‘So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour?’” (Matthew 26:38-40)

The Perfection of the first unilateral Covenant that God made with Abraham was extending through time and space, from eternity to this particular moment at Sinai, and throughout all of human history. It was meant to do whatever it would take to cover our nakedness and to provide Life in the midst of our Sin-induced death. The invisible Perfection of God’s living Word and the absolute Authority of His Kingdom were descending from eternity into the time and space of the Wilderness that represented the living death of all human beings, past, present and future. Israel was representing all of the rest, at the base of that mountain. God was blessing Israel and cancelling out her self-inflicted condemnation, and enfolding her with His living Word. And the Word of God continues to come...to cover, protect, bless, heal, liberate and restore His beloved Betrothed, whenever and wherever she may have need of what only He can supply for her:

*“The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, to grant those who mourn in Zion, giving them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, **that He may be glorified.**” (Isaiah 61:1-4 Emphasis added.)*

Can We See Reality as God Sees It?

No Humanist has a clue of what the prophet Isaiah experienced when he finally ‘*saw the Lord, lofty and exalted*’ (Isaiah 6:1). Nor can such people imagine what happened when Saul of Tarsus was confronted by the risen Lord on the road to Damascus (Acts 9), and when the apostle John saw his beloved Master Yeshua in Revelation 1, in a way they had never before seen Him... what did they see? Only they know for sure what it was that threw them to the ground and nearly killed them. But I offer this for your consideration. Could it be that when they saw the Lord in His awesome Heavenly, Resurrected form, they saw in that instant, what the horror and the weight and the curse of Sin and Death and demonic Darkness had forced Him to suffer and undergo to the last drop of His precious Blood, as our Atonement? Did they see what all of that did to Almighty God, when, through His own Word, He committed Himself to suffer on our behalf, as our Blood Covenant Friend? Is the infinite, eternal Magnitude, Depth, Height and Width of the Love and Faithfulness and Loyalty of our God, as expressed through the Enormous Depths of the Suffering He underwent to shield and save us... what they were allowed to see? Did they see the infinite reach of God’s Self-giving that His Covenant Love for us forced Him to endure on our behalf... when God’s Resurrected Word revealed Himself to them?

*“And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?’ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it. Then I began to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it; and one of the elders said to me, **‘Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals!’**”*

*“And I saw between the Throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders **a Lamb standing, as if slain**, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying, **‘Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your Blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.** You have made them to be a Kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the Earth.’” (Revelation 5:2-10 Emphasis added.)*

“For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in Heaven and on Earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His Glory, to be strengthened with Power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the Love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the Fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the Glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.” (Ephesians 3:14-21)