

Ex. 62. God's Awesome Sacrificial System

*“The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ‘You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base of bronze, for washing; and you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it. Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet from it; **when they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, so that they will not die**; or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire sacrifice to the Lord. **So they shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they will not die**; and it shall be a perpetual statute for them, for Aaron and his descendants throughout their generations.’” (Exodus 30:17-21)*

*“Then the Lord called to Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting saying, “Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘When any man of you brings an offering to the Lord, you shall bring your offering of animals (that will serve as substitute representatives for your fallen flesh) from the herd or the flock. If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall offer it, a male without defect; **he shall offer it** (in its Sin-less perfection) **at the doorway of the tent of meeting, that he** (the Israelite that offers the pure substitute) **may be accepted before the Lord.** **He** (the Sin-corrupted Israelite) **shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering** (identifying himself with it), **that it may be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf.**”” (Leviticus 1:1-4 Amplification and emphasis added.)*

Beloved, be forewarned: This segment will be lengthy, due to the endless depths of the topic we will now consider. At this period of history, arrogant movements are self-righteously proclaiming themselves to be instruments of their god. So they behead, bomb, kidnap, steal and do whatever it takes to absorb and obliterate any society or individuals that stand in their way. Much of the world quakes in fear at the approach of their presence. But it is not fallen, Sin-corrupted men that the world should fear. These too will all die and be forgotten! No, it is the true Almighty God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob whose Presence and Judgment are now imminent, that should cause all men, including those that worship false gods and murder and steal in their name, to tremble in dread and fear! And this is the topic we'll discuss now. So, let's begin by taking serious notice of the intensely gripping, *life or death* stakes, being revealed in the texts above! This reveals the vast differences and incompatibility in our nature, and His.

Exodus now amplifies the Torah's prior revelation of God's Blood Covenant sacrificial system. It lists the demanding requirements He's showing to Israel, with overwhelmingly precise detail. And Leviticus (the book that follows Exodus) goes even deeper, showing the absolute need for the wisdom and understanding humans must have in obeying God's requirements in this regard. God is warning us! We must develop a healthy, Truth-based, respect and obedient awe of His awesome Majesty and Holiness! We must become very aware of the fallen, Sin-corrupted, unacceptable state of being that Sin has inflicted upon us all, regardless of what delusive airs and postures and false ideologies we devise for ourselves by which to try to hide what we really are. Our majestic holy God chose little Israel, from all the other peoples, to be His priestly nation. So in Exodus, He begins to train them to abide in His Presence, to minister to Him, on the whole

world's behalf! And God wants the rest of the world to watch and learn, through Israel's example: the way in which the Sin and wickedness of the entire human race must be dealt with!

God is Love. It is His nature to love whatever He creates... **TO THE DEATH!** That's why He can be believed and trusted with airtight faith. Through His dealings with Israel He *proved* how trustworthy He is! And the ultimate proof is that He sent His living Word to become one of us...to be our Blood Covenant Substitute Representative and make full Atonement for us. This makes it possible for God to regenerate and fully restore us to His favor and fellowship. And He did everything necessary – even while we were His Sin-loving enemies! So the true God really does love us, *wholeheartedly and eternally!* But...because He is, by nature, Perfect in Purity, Goodness, Justice and Righteousness, not one speck of our Sin-corruption can come before His Presence! This is why we must be properly protected. The Perfect Blood Covenant Covering that God's Word provides, must be insulating us, in Spirit and in Truth! And this is why Israel's calling, to stand between this awesome Holy God, and the rest of the human race, is so awesome! She too is Sin-corrupted and just as incompatible with God's Holy nature as all the rest! So that creates a huge difficulty! God must show us how Sin-corrupted condemned flesh can approach and abide and interact with Him, in total safety and protection! His Nature is totally incompatible with ours! For us, it is like facial tissues daring to approach an Infinitely Hot, Roaring Blast Furnace! How can the tissues survive, unless they are fully protected by a means that is Equal in Stature, Righteousness, Authority and Power, to the 'Blast Furnace' Judgment of Almighty God's Perfect Nature and Justice and Righteousness?

So this portion of Scripture gives instructions for building God's sanctuary where these Sinful, mortally corrupted people can safely connect with God and interact with Him on a daily basis. He also gives detailed specifications for the furnishings and utensils to be used. This helps us understand the vitally important, continuous Blood Covenant Sacrificial Substitute system that bonds us to God and insures mankind's day-to-day safety and survival! So, Israel, and the rest of men, despite all their imperfection, can be spiritually united to God's living Word who, with their obedient cooperation, has the Fullness of God's own Righteousness, Stature, Authority, Holiness and Power in Him. And thus He is able to cover, protect, redeem and fully restore Israel and the entire human race!

The Torah Revelation is Truly Mind-Shattering

There is no other source by which this wisdom, insight and instruction can be obtained! So please realize that the Torah is God's bedrock foundational revelation of Truth and Reality. The entire revelation in the Bible flows out of the first five books! The Torah that God entrusted to Israel, drives home the fact that fallen humanity must be insulated before we can have safe personal fellowship and interaction with the true, Living God. The substitute sacrifice system is at the heart of how God must deal with Sin-corrupted humans, as long as we remain in our current fallen state of being. The incompatibility is not merely in what we do or how we do it. It is in what we ARE, by nature, compared to the awesome Purity, Integrity and Sin-less Perfection of God's Nature. Sin degenerated us. We are no longer what God originally created. We are what the Serpent created! And that makes us totally incompatible with the Perfect Nature of our Creator and Sustainer!

So God reveals that He has supplied (through His eternal creative living Word) the essential protective, insulating Blood Covenant Substitute mechanism. He sent His own Word to be our Covering and High Priest Mediator! When Lie-spawned human nature dares to approach God, the Spirit of Truth, God's Word MUST be able to protect and keep the humans under the Covenant Covering and Perfect Fullness of His Finished Work of Redemption. There's no other way men can interact with God, except through this High Priesthood of God's Representative Word. So, if we want to interact with God in peace, rest and safety, we must first know, believe and obediently interact with His living and written Word... on God's terms! This is why Messiah Yeshua said:

*“All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. **Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you REST. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find REST for your souls!**” (Matthew 11:27-29 Emphasis added.)*

The revelation and training God imparted to the Tribe of Levi applies to anyone God summons into His Presence. It also reveals what our Messiah was sent to be and to do in our name, and on our behalf. The significance of His human life and death are revealed through this sacrificial system. There's nothing more important to us than this! This revelation reveals what is impossible for us and what only God's Word can do for us. It resembles the precise, strict, unforgiving level of training that nuclear technicians receive before they can enter an atomic reactor and begin to work with the hot nuclear material contained within. There are many ways to do it incorrectly; and they all prove to be disastrously fatal. But there's only one way in which hot nuclear material can be approached and handled properly and safely. Any human that approaches it MUST have the benefit of the proper, correct insulation! And that is why anyone with this responsibility must be thoroughly and properly trained and drilled in the correct way to be insulated and protected. This isn't a matter of speculation, or theology or religious opinions or personal preferences! It isn't a matter of the personalities or personal attainments or traits, qualities and aspirations of the technicians. It's a matter of life-or-death physics...a matter of how excellent and effective our protective covering must always be, and whether or not it is being used properly by anyone that would dare to approach the nuclear material.

So with this in mind, ponder the depth of the inner changes in attitude that each technician or Levite must undergo concerning 'radical independence'. How much correct 'updating' would have to take place in the personal wiring and programming within the souls, minds and wills of these people? The Levites were chosen to perform the actual physical functions God required Israel to do in His Holy Presence. So through this 'disciple-training', the Levites are receiving revelation, wisdom, dire warnings, personal inner attitude changes and effective Blood Covenant Protection all at once. But God is summoning the entire human race to repent of its Sin and of what Sin has made of us, so that ultimately, He can transform and prepare us all to abide in His Presence for all eternity, thanks to this protective insulation! He's showing all of us the only way through which we can be at peace and rest with God! Everything must be done by, through and in God's living Word, who actually became flesh in order to cover and represent us before God. Yeshua, as our risen Messiah, now rules over all of Creation as our Triumphant Champion. He is our True Righteousness Covering and Connection with God:

*“Jesus said to him (His disciple Thomas), ‘**I AM the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father but through Me!** If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. From now on you know Him, and have seen Him.’” (John 14:6-7 Amplification and emphasis added.)*

We’ve mentioned repeatedly what Yeshua told His earthly contemporaries: **“Moses wrote about Me!”** (John 5:46) So understand that this Torah material is the original, primary revelation of Yeshua. Acting as ‘The Lamb of God’ and ‘Eternal High Priest’ for the human race, He performed to Perfection everything God commanded and requires of Israel and of the whole human race! We couldn’t do it; but He did do it...Perfectly! Thus, the Word is our impeccable, unassailable Covering before God! Every generation of Israelites, like all sons of Adam, are bankrupt and helpless to lift a finger for their own salvation, sanctification and restoration. But God sent His Word, His Son, to do everything necessary. This was done in God’s Eternal Nature, before Creation took place! The human race must know, understand and learn that the Word is the only Truth and the only Way by which we can return to God and actually interact with Him in Covenant Love and Union. We can only approach God on His Holy, Righteous terms, according to the requirements of His Perfect Eternal Nature. And since God’s Nature requires Perfection, only God Himself can do the work and ‘Cover’ us from His own Perfect Justice and Infinite Holiness. Any deviation from this Covering will automatically prove to be fatal for us!

This is why we can compare the warnings God gave to the Levites, to the strict protective procedures medical people must follow when they deal with deadly virus epidemics, such as Ebola or Bubonic Plague, and how atomic technicians must conduct themselves when they deal with hot nuclear material. If such care is necessary in dealing with viruses and atomic material, how much more care must we take when we dare to approach the Pure Righteous and Holy Presence of our Almighty Perfect God? He requires us to repent of all Sin and, by faith, receive what His Word has done for us so that we can remain safely covered by the Perfection of what He has done in Eternity, to prepare and insulate us in space and time. This is how God redeems us and reconciles with us. And this is how He can transform us into His own perfect image and likeness for Eternity!

*“So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, **‘If you continue in My Word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the Truth, and the Truth will make you free!’**” (John 8:31-32 Emphasis added.)*

Chapters 24-31 of Exodus and the entire book of Leviticus amplify and further elucidate what Genesis previously revealed, concerning Sin and the spiritual Death it imposes...and what God will accept from Sinful, selfish, wicked men, and what He will not accept from them. It also amplifies what God revealed in the earlier Passover account of Exodus 12 by the Covering Sacrificial Blood of lambs that the Israelites were told to smear across their doorways. All of that is connected with this sacrificial system that God now explains in more depth in the latter parts of Exodus and throughout Leviticus. He is showing us that ultimately, none of what is being revealed actually concerns us, or anything we think we can, or must do, offer, or supply, to assist in our salvation, redemption, maintenance or full restoration. The part God expects us to play

requires us to do the opposite of work. We must learn to REST in Him and depend totally upon God to apply to us the Perfection of His Word's Eternal FINISHED WORK! He is telling us that there is NOTHING we can or should try to supply to contribute to this process! And this, I believe, is the hardest thing for the self-centered, hyper-controlling, self-righteous human race to comprehend, admit, accept and obey. The Truth is, that even when we take care of life's responsibilities and fulfill obligations, do our chores, and care for the 'gardens' of our lives, we must do it all from a viewpoint and stance of total REST in God's Finished Work.

There are two reasons why we can't do anything to help in this regard: God has revealed that His Works of Creation and Redemption are Perfect, Finished, and All Sufficient. That means He has done it all and nothing can or should be added. In addition, we are Sin-corrupted, so there's nothing our living death can do or offer to God that could worthily assist in achieving our full, eternal Life-giving Blood Covenant Atonement. Only God is Perfect; so only God can supply for us...the Perfection that His Nature must require of us, since we're to be His image and likeness!

Learning to Rest in the Word's Perfect Finished Work

God began to reveal this in Genesis 3:21, when He sent His Word to 'cover' the nakedness of the recently deceased flesh of Adam and Eve, with the skins of animals. God requires us to trust His Word, at all times, for all things, 100% of the time, because there's nothing else needed that isn't already done and given, and there's nothing we fallen humans can or should try to add. Thus, there are no other sources (false gods) in existence. There's nothing else to which we can or should look, to 'add to', or 'correct', or 'improve on', what God has already provided for whatever we may need. Everything Creation needs, now and in the future, regarding the provision of every creature and what it will need to fulfill its purpose, has already been created and exists in eternity and has been paid for in full... by the one and only Source, the only true God...by His Perfect, Eternal, Living Word!

So, because God has done everything for us through His Word, we must therefore humble our self-centered, controlling flesh and eliminate it, and all of its devices, from the picture on our viewing screens. We must learn to receive everything from our Creator at all times, just like infants, nursing at their mother's breast!

*"And He (God's Word made flesh) called a child to Himself and set him before them, and said, **Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.** Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven!" (Matthew 18:2-4 Amplification and emphasis added.)*

Now I ask you: what arrogant, strutting pharaoh, emperor, tyrant, warlord, religious terrorist, or crime boss would be willing to humble himself and admit, and repent of, his arrogant Sinful radical independence and abide by what the God of Israel is revealing? Must not God Himself take the initiative to pierce, penetrate and break such hardened hearts with the totally Selfless Love he showers upon us through His beloved Son and Holy Spirit? From all eternity, God promised to provide His creatures that live in time and space, with all the provision they would need. And throughout Israel's forty years in the wilderness, He **proved** that His promises are true! He provided everything necessary to supply an entire nation's needs! He maintained Israel without any recourse to worldly resources. This also helps us see that whatever *spiritual*

provision we Sinful fallen children of Adam need, to be cleansed, redeemed, reconciled, regenerated and restored to Humanity's original image and likeness of God perfection, has also been accomplished and given... to Perfection. So Torah reveals that Almighty God is matchless and incomparable. His living, creative Word is the one and only Source for whatever is real, true and good. There is no other god, no other way or source. We are to look to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and to no other... for everything! He alone is Supreme; and His Word must be acknowledged as our All in all, and obeyed and served accordingly. And we must get out of God's Way, and rest and receive everything from His awesome Word!

So, beloved, we are totally deluded when we crow and strut and boast about how self-sufficient and capable and 'good' we are! Our Creator, God's living Word, is our one and only Source for everything, including 'goodness' and true value! He created and redeemed us and He is here to restore us, to what He intended us to be from all eternity. This is the awesome revelation that is repeated and expressed so beautifully through Israel's prophet, Isaiah:

“Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is Good, and delight yourself in Abundance. Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen that you may live! And I will make an Everlasting Covenant with you, according to the faithful mercies shown to David, (through My Word, who was made flesh). Behold, I have made Him (My Word, a Son to David and) a Witness to the peoples, a Leader and Commander for the peoples.

“Behold, you will call a nation you do not know, and a nation which knows you not will run to you, because of the Lord your God, even the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified you. Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him, and (turn) to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

*“‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ declares the Lord. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. **For as the rain and the snow come down from Heaven** (Eternity), **and do not return there without watering the** (time and space) **Earth and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so will My Word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing** (by My Spirit's Power) **what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.**” (Isaiah 55:1-11 Amplification and emphasis added.)*

Isaiah repeats what Moses revealed centuries before in his Torah: Everything necessary has already been done through God's eternal living Word and Holy Spirit. The Word joined God and Israel to each other in God's Eternal Blood Covenant. And the sacrificial dynamics of this Covenant are able to graft the entire human race into Blood Covenant Union with God... through the Word's union with Israel. He has already done everything necessary to reclaim, redeem, regenerate and fully restore us all to His 'image and likeness.' Now perhaps you can see the awesome depths at which Genesis 3:21 so succinctly hinted:

“The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.”

The Blood Covenant Substitute Representative Structure

We’ve seen that God does everything through and by His living Word. And the above text is the first mention of how God actually sent His Word to cover the spiritual nakedness of the first two humans...and all their offspring. The garments of skin came from innocent, Sin-less animals that gave their lives so that Adam and Eve could be covered. This reveals the bare essence of how the Blood Covenant Representative Substitute structure works. Adam and Eve were spiritually dead and mortally wounded. The dead can do nothing to cover themselves. They can’t change their situation or deteriorating living death condition. Only God’s Word has the Perfect Authority, Wisdom, Ability and Power to rescue us from the free fall of Sin and Death. And this is what God’s Son has done. God did it because of His Perfect Eternal Love and Faithfulness to His beloved humans. This is what Genesis reveals. In the first eleven chapters, it sets the stage for the drama of full redemption that follows in the rest of the Bible. When God sent His Word to reveal Himself to Abram in Genesis 12, the Word began to reveal all of this through His Blood Covenant with Abraham, and through him, with Israel, the family of Abraham – Isaac and Jacob, and through them, with Ishmael, Esau and the rest of the human race.

Abel, the second son of Adam and Eve, followed the Covenant pattern God revealed to his parents when He sent His Word to cover their ‘nakedness.’ Adam and Eve had apparently taught this ‘*God has already covered us*’ pattern to Cain and Abel. So both sons knew that we are Sin-corrupted and have nothing to offer to God that He can accept. He wants us to offer to Him what He first gives to us to offer, through His living Word, His Son! God must supply us from the Perfect Eternal Treasury of His living Word’s completely finished work of Creation and substitutionary Redemption. This is the Good News of Salvation: God already had us covered, even before we were created!

And so this is the vitally important first principle we must follow in all of our dealings with God: We must receive everything from Him, because we, in ourselves, can originate nothing... nor do we, in our corrupted state, have anything that is worthy to be offered to God, or to anyone else. So, whatever the one and only God supplies, is what we must look to, and receive, from His Word. THEN... we can use it and share it in our daily activities and interactions, as God’s commandments direct. This is the obedience of faith God requires. And He regards and receives our obedient faith as our pleasing, acceptable response to Him. By following this pattern, we acknowledge that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob truly is not just God... but He is **OUR PERSONAL GOD**, our one and only true Source, for whatever is real and good. And we REST in His Perfection, in all things and at all times, on every level.

This pattern of wholehearted trust and reliance upon Israel’s God, protects us from falling into error, deception and idolatry! With this airtight God-centered pattern, no radically independent self-life can continue ooze up and take over within us. There is no, ‘*I have a better idea*’ and no, ‘*I’ll do it my way*’ impulses that are allowed to work in us to contaminate what takes place between us and our God. When we operate on this God-only basis, we enthrone Him in His

rightful place of Preeminence in our hearts, and we worship at His feet... and learn to serve (at last) as the one true God's pure, precisely reflected, image and likeness.

There is no other source, no other God, but the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (who was renamed, 'Israel'). This is the Truth that the Serpent always attacks. He tries to undermine the Supremacy of God's Word in the minds of us humans. He tries to convince us that it doesn't have to be this way. He led Eve and Adam to believe that if they learned to 'think for themselves,' they could come up with alternative plans and reject and disobey what God's Word had commanded them to do. And so the forbidden fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil compelled them, after they ate of it, to become independent humanists, taking matters into their own hands, rejecting God's Word and doing as they thought best. They did it because they believed the Serpent, when he told them that they could '*be like God!*' And this is how the Serpent managed to 'decapitate' and murder the entire human race. And this is why humans are genetically disposed to reject or ignore God's Word and the Good News that He is to all of us who have been victimized by the Serpent and his demonic hordes.

But Abel rejected the Serpent's Lie. He continued to believe and obey God's Word. He remained under the Substitute Covenant Blood covering, provided by the Word. Thus he offered the Sin-less life of a substitute sacrificial animal, instead of trying to offer a product of his own Sin-corrupted, dead flesh. This was in keeping with the revelation God revealed in Genesis 1, 2 and 3 concerning our Sin, and His Perfect Finished Work of Creation and Redemption.

"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)

Abel drew from what God's living Word had already done in his name and on his behalf! God's Finished Work was the sole source of his '*daily bread.*' And he offered back to God what God's Word had first provided and given him to offer. This Innocent, Sin-less Substitute Offering Pattern is what we must all learn and follow. And the Torah emphasizes this in a variety of ways. God's Word was, and forever will be, Humanity's Covering. He is the Perfect Substitute Sacrifice that gave Himself to His Father, in eternity past on behalf of Abel, and every other child of Adam. And that was what Abel believed and obeyed. Obedient faith in God's Word is what Abel offered back to God. And that was why God accepted his offering.

But Cain rebelled and insisted on acting as an independent agent, just like the Serpent. He offered what he thought was best, according to his independent views, opinions and efforts. He tried to usurp the Word's Authority and took it upon himself to decide what would be a good and fitting gift to offer God. So he invented his own skewed view of God, and a false religion to go with it, and he chose an offering of his own making, his produce, thinking it would equal or perhaps surpass what God's Word had already provided and revealed. And that is why God rejected him. If you reject His Word, you reject God! Thus Cain was not properly 'covered;' so God could not accept him and admit him into the Eternal Covenant Union. A dead man tried to offer a dead thing, to the Living God! And anyone that rejects God's living Word and puts faith in some rebellious living dead man, is, ultimately, putting his faith in Death!

“But for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. Then the Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, 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.’ Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.” (Genesis 4:5-8)

So Genesis began to reveal this most profound spiritual reality – God’s Blood Covenant representative, sacrificial, atonement structure. Centuries before Moses wrote this down in the Torah, God had already brought Abraham, Isaac and Jacob into His Eternal Blood Covenant Bond. And Abraham repented of what he now knew he was, in the sight of Almighty God. He believed God and began to obey His Word. And that’s why he waited for decades, trusting that God would make good on His promise to give him a son. And finally...when Abraham was 100 years old, Isaac was conceived... in a totally supernatural way. And Abraham and 90 year old Sarah rejoiced and reveled in the glory of knowing that their God was real, and all-powerful and utterly true to His Word. Now that they had Isaac, the multitude of descendants God promised to give to Abraham, was suddenly, miraculously, truly possible!

But there was still much more that Abraham had to learn about the fallen Sin-loving nature that he, and the rest of us, inherited from Adam. At Sarah’s suggestion, he had previously fallen back into radically independent behavior when, instead of resting on God’s spiritual promise to give him and Sarah a son, Abraham assumed he had to help God out in the fulfillment of His promise. Thus he conceived Ishmael (a son, not of God’s Promise, but of his own flesh) with Sarah’s maid, Hagar. So obviously, there was much more about God’s Perfection that Abraham and Sarah did not yet know and understand. Thus, in Genesis 22, God began to reveal more of what is always going on within our fallen, Sin-corrupted nature, even after we repent and actually begin to try to worship and obey Him according to His Word! Even then, there is still much that is wrong within us. The residue of Sin still lurks deep within and is always seeking to escape from the crucifixion that our repentance and return to the Lord inflict on our fallen flesh. This is what the Lord had revealed when He said to Cain: **“Sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but (instead of remaining unrepentant and allowing it to keep on mastering you) you must master it!”** (Amplification added.)

*“For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to Sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law (Torah), confessing that the Law (Torah) is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but Sin, which dwells in me. **For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but Sin which dwells in me.**”* (Romans 7:14-20 Amplification and emphasis added.)

The words above were written by one of the most loving, devotedly ‘sold out’ disciples the Lord has ever had! Paul (Shaul) was rightfully elevated to apostolic rank and entrusted with the task of

bringing the Gospel to the Gentiles, in fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, that through his family, Israel, all the nations of the earth would be blessed! But yet, even after Paul repented and brought himself entirely under the New Covenant Lordship of His risen Messiah, he was no better than Abraham. Even after being filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit, he too still had to struggle with the lingering effects of what Sin has done to us all. And this is why he wrote these awesome words to his fellow New Covenant disciples:

*“For I joyfully concur with the Law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God **THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD...**!”* (Romans 7:22-25a)

*“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.** And do not be conformed to (the radically independent ways of) *this world*, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is Good and Acceptable and Perfect! For through the grace given to me **I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think;** but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.”* (Romans 12:1-3 Amplification and emphasis added.)

*“Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, **TO KEEP ME FROM EXALTING MYSELF, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—TO KEEP ME FROM EXALTING MYSELF!** Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. And He has said to me, **“MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR YOU, for (MY) POWER is perfected in (your bankrupt) weakness.”** Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the Power of Christ may dwell in me.”* (2 Corinthians. 12:7-9 Amplification and emphasis added.)

Beloved, can you see it? By urging New Covenant believers to present themselves as a living and holy sacrifice which is acceptable to God, Paul was repeating what God had already revealed through Moses in the Torah! When we continually present ourselves as a living and holy sacrifice that is acceptable to God...we do not offer what we are in ourselves, to God directly, as Cain tried to do. Our fallen flesh must be completely removed from every equation. We must get it out of the way, just as Abel did. We must make way for the living Word of God, our Eternal Blood Covenant Representative Lamb, to come into our regenerated spirits and take over, so that, by God's Spirit, He can be our New Lord, our Eternal Life, and Acceptable Offering to God! His Love for His Father and His Obedience to Him must live and operate from within us. Only the Word can do what must be done! He must be our Covering at all times, **inside and out!** And, since He has already covered us... our fallen flesh must remain completely (and safely) out of the picture.

*“Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above (the Fullness that abides with God in Eternity), not on the (temporal passing) things that are on earth. **For you have died***

and your life is hidden with Christ in God!” (Colossians 3:1-3 Amplification and emphasis added.)

Because we all died in the first Adam, the Last Adam, Messiah Yeshua must cover our spiritual nakedness. And when He does, THEN God’s living Word, acting as our indwelling Life and our Eternal High Priest and our Perfect Lamb of God Sacrifice, presents Himself to the Father, in our place! And since He does this in our name, when we obey and follow this Pattern, God considers us to be offering Him the one and only Perfect Gift. He gladly and eagerly accepts from us what we offer back to Him, by our faith in, and reliance upon His Word. Thus our Death dies in Yeshua’s Death! And God can accept us, because we offer to Him, His own beloved Son...who covers us with His Perfect, Eternal Righteousness and Sin-less Purity, by doing what is impossible for us. This is what Torah reveals! This isn’t about how excellently God expects Israel, or the rest of the world to fulfill His commandments. It is about how excellently God’s Word has covered the entire human race with His Perfect Eternal Fulfillment of God’s commandments!

*“Do not think that I will accuse you (unbelieving Israelites) before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. **For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, FOR HE WROTE ABOUT ME! But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?**” (John 5:45-47 Amplification and emphasis added.)*

Israel, God’s Priestly Nation

So starting with Exodus 24, Israel (naively promising to obey everything God required) renews her Covenant with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And so in Exodus 25-31, and 34-40, precise instructions are given for how God’s priestly nation is to abide in God’s Presence and interact with Him in the fulfillment of her duties. The instructions for constructing God’s physical dwelling place in the midst of His people on Earth are given. God also gives detailed instructions for the creation of the furnishings and instruments of worship, and the commandments governing the behavior God requires of His redeemed people, and the formation and consecration of the Levitical priesthood and the list of their duties and functions as they minister in God’s Holy Presence. These commands describe physical objects and activities. But God is actually using those external objects to show us what has to take place in the depths of our minds, wills and affections. What is going on in our heart of hearts is what really counts with our All-Knowing Infinite, Almighty God! It’s not what we do externally, or the manner in which we do it; it’s what is actually going on...in our hearts...concerning the Lordship of His Word! That is what matters to our God.

We said that these instructions, in their no nonsense seriousness, resemble the instruction and training given to medical personnel that must work in isolation wards, treating patients suffering from deadly viruses, or, instructions to technicians that work in nuclear reactor facilities. In such cases, there are always *life or death* consequences! There is no room for error, mindless laxity or irresponsible carelessness. Everything must be done in proper order and sequence, according to the unchanging specifications of Creation’s objective Truth, and the physical laws that flow out of that Truth. That is why EVERYTHING must be done...only by God’s Perfect Word! Only He is able to achieve such Perfection! And that is why He must abide and do His work from within us, in our name. Only He can obey His Father PERFECTLY. And that is what must be done...or

else! That being the case, how could our Sin-corrupted miserably disfigured humanity meet such awesome standards? No...this is not about us. It is about the Perfect One, God's Word...our Covenant Representative and His Perfect Finished Performance, which He has done in our name.

So because the human race is still en route, still in the midst of an Exodus process of total transformation, and because we all started out as deformed, disfigured Sin-blasted creatures that devolved into the image and likeness of God's eternal enemy, the rebellious Serpent, God's Word has to cover us while we are en route from our horrid starting point, to God's Perfect Destination. The Word is sent to lead those of us who realize His Truth and believe His Revelation and begin to follow and obey Him in humble acknowledgement of His Preeminence...out of the Serpent's Darkness of Death...and into the Glorious Light of God's Eternal Life. We must be covered all the while we are undergoing this utterly profound, radical metamorphosis! We are moving from being the image and likeness of the Serpent, to becoming the image and likeness of Almighty God Himself! That is quite an Exodus, wouldn't you agree? So please understand: this is not theoretical religious 'talk!' We must undergo actual, radical, spiritual transformational regeneration of our very spiritual, mental, emotional and physical essence! And this is what the Torah and the rest of the Bible reveal.

So, think about it: After we realize what condition we are in...who but God Himself could cover us while He continues to repair all of the damage done to us and restore what was taken from us? The purification and reconciliation and regeneration and rewiring and reprogramming process we must undergo is profoundly beyond our ability to imagine, much less accomplish! Only God Almighty can see and know what must be done and how far He must take us in order to satisfy His own Perfect Standards and successfully complete this Journey. Only He understands every detail and step of the process that makes us into brand new creations that are able to abide in and interact with His Perfect Presence! None of us can even begin to imagine it. His ways and thoughts are truly not ours! None of us has ever seen the Eternal Land of Promise into which His Word is here to take us. Only God knows the Way... and only God can BE the Way that leads us into Perfect Eternal Peace and Rest with Him, in the New Heaven and the New Earth that await us!

We must finally realize that none of this is about us. It is all about God, working in us. He does everything that pertains to us through and by His living Word. And that is why God's Word, who became one of us in order to be our Covenant Representative and Eternal High Priest and Perfect Covering...is of the utmost, absolute importance to all of us, Jew and non-Jew alike! This is what Paul was trying, with everything that was in him, to express in human words:

"For He rescued us from the domain of Darkness, and transferred us to the Kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He (the living Word, the Son) is the Image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all Creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also Head of the Body, the Church; and He is the Beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the Fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the Blood of His

Cross; through Him, I say, whether things on Earth or things in Heaven. And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body THROUGH DEATH, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach— if indeed you continue in the Faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the Gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all Creation under Heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.”
(Colossians 1:13-23 Amplification and emphasis added.)

So, can you begin to see all that God had to teach to Abraham, even after Abraham began to believe and repent and was learning how to follow and obey God’s living Word? What more did Abraham have to see and learn? To what further discipline and training would he have to submit? **Well, as I said, this is the hardest lesson that any of us will ever have to learn!** And so, in many ways, and at many times, God repeats the same lesson, over and over and over again:

*“...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)

This fact, that we are the living dead, is, I believe, the greatest obstacle over which we continually stumble. The Truth is: we’re not really alive when we’re born and come into this world as cute, adorable, cuddly infants. Oh, our bodies are moving and kicking and making sounds... but spiritually, and physically... WE’RE DEAD! Not only that, but even after we think we have repented and believed God, and have begun to ‘serve’ Him, we still fall back into the delusion deep in our hearts, that now we do have a life of our own. We simply won’t accept the fact that we’re all born ‘dead in trespasses and sins’ and that, as long as we exist in this time and space dimension, this will always be the case! But we dare not enter eternity in that Dead state! Nevertheless, because humans can’t accept what God has revealed, we keep calling our state of living death ‘my life.’ And we keep trying to improve, and enhance, and exalt and spiritualize it. We try to make it acceptable and usable in the sight of God and other men. But Scripture continues to repeat the Truth:

“And you were (born) dead in your (Adamic) trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit (of self-centered radical independence) that is now working in the sons of disobedience.”
(Ephesians 2:1-2)

We keep making the terrible blunder of refusing to admit that we’re dead people, desperately in need of God’s Word to be our Life-giving Salvation. We refuse to think of our existence as being a long Exodus out of our original ‘living dead’ existence. We insist on believing and thinking and acting as if we are already ‘there,’ that we’ve arrived and are most certainly ‘alive’. Thus we assume we can slip back into trying to have an independent life of our own, a life we should be free to control, manage and direct. We refuse to admit that even from birth, Death was already at work within us, and that instead of living... all humans are already dying! This is the hardest lesson for any of us to learn and admit. So we call good, ‘evil’, and evil, we call ‘good’. We call Death ‘life’, and Life, ‘death!’ And this is why Abraham and Sarah and Isaac and Jacob continued to stumble and blunder time after time, even after God brought them into His Covenant! And this is why Israel (and the rest of the world) continues to stumble.

Because of that universally accepted, delusionary *'my life'* paradigm, we try to interact with God, on a compatible, 'friendly' basis, as equals. We insist on asking God, or Jesus, to *'come into MY life.'* We think of ourselves *'living for God,'* or *'living like God,'* or, *'helping God'*. We assume we're inherently valuable and that our flesh is able to improve and that we can educate it to attainable levels of excellence and success and remarkable achievement. Thus we keep insisting on doing, *'my thing'*. But beloved, only people that are already endowed by God with the same kind of Resurrection Life, that His beloved Son Yeshua already enjoys, can truly be said to be 'alive'. Only after God's Word has added His Resurrection Perfection to us, will we be truly 'excellent' and 'successful' and able to aspire to remarkable levels of achievement! But those that are still en route, like us, are still caught in the living death mode that was caused by Adam's radically independent state of Sin. We can't be and do what our risen Master can be and do in His Perfect Humanity, at this point of our Exodus. Only after we've finished, only when we can finally abide with God's living Word on the Resurrection side of the Infinite Chasm of Transcendence, will we truly be able to claim to be **ALIVE!**

And this is what our Exodus is all about. We're on our way to that Fulfillment. Yes, we most definitely are en route! But we haven't finished our Journey...yet. All of that Eternal Life Fulfillment is still ahead of us. One day we too will have resurrected, glorified bodies, just like our Messiah now has! But for now, Death is still at work in our flesh, and we are still en route to Eternal Resurrection Life! At present...there is only one Human Being that is truly ALIVE! Only one of us has risen from the dead. Our Master Yeshua is the One. He is God's *'First Fruits'* Prototype, the only One with true Resurrection Life. Our Head is already *'There'*...but the rest of us who are His members...are still on the way *'There'*.

"But now Christ has been raised from the dead, THE FIRST FRUITS of those who are asleep. For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all WILL BE made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, AFTER THAT those who are Christ's AT HIS COMING, then comes the end, when He hands over the Kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished ALL (of the Serpent's earthly) rule and all authority and power." (1 Corinthians 15:20-24 Amplification and emphasis added.)

So, as long as the rest of us are en route, we must continually abide with, and draw EVERYTHING from, our Head, Messiah Yeshua. The Gift of the Holy Spirit makes this possible...if we have the obedience of faith that is needed to cooperate with God's revelation:

"For God, who said, 'Light shall shine out of Darkness,' is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Christ. But we have this Treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the Power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the Life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body!" (2 Corinthians 4:6-10 Emphasis added.)

The Word is our True Vine, our one and only Source. And God has made it possible for us to embrace, believe, trust and become one with Him in His Eternal Blood Covenant. And from that faith-based, granite-solid, Messiah-centered Source...we receive and enjoy the Salvation that He is to us. By the Gift of the Holy Spirit, we can receive everything we need from our risen Messiah... from the riches of what He is and has provided in the eternal Treasury of His Perfect Finished Work. When we truly receive from Him, by faith in His Perfection, at the same time, we can offer back what He gives. This continually removes our impurity and continually cleanses and refreshes us with His Holiness, Righteousness and Purity. We offer what the Son gives to us... knowing it is the Pure Fruit, produced by His Son. And God will most certainly accept us... as the Fruit of His Son continues to appear within us.

*“Among them (the sons of disobedience) we (believers) too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, **even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places IN Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us IN Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that NOT OF YOURSELVES, IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD; not as a result of works, SO THAT NO ONE MAY BOAST!**”* (Ephesians 2:3-9 Amplification and emphasis added.)

God had to keep reminding Abel, Noah, and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and Joseph and Moses of this Truth, even after they began to believe and obey. And God has to keep reminding us too, because this is the hardest lesson for humans to absorb: *‘This is not about us. We have no part in this, apart from our total faith in God’s living Word. In ourselves, we’re still dead!’*

Living in Covenant with Almighty God

This is about our Messiah, and what He has done on our behalf... from start to finish! And Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy are the Treasury of Blood Covenant Instruction by which God reveals to us how He taught this most difficult of lessons to Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses. And this is what He had to teach to Israel through all that transpired during her Exodus from Egypt. This is what God must teach to every generation... under wilderness conditions. It’s always the same lesson because our Exodus is not over. So pay attention to how God began to drive this home to an astounding depth, first to Abraham...when He suddenly changed gears and shocked His Covenant friend, by asking him to do the unthinkable! After finally giving Abraham the promised, long awaited gift of Isaac, He suddenly required him (after Isaac had grown to be close to forty years of age) to give his son back to God, as a ‘burnt offering’...**willingly!**

“Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, ‘Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ He said, ‘Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you.’” (Genesis 22:1-2)

Can you imagine how shocking and gut-wrenching this would be for any of us? In a blood covenant society, once two individuals become one in this type of bond, it is expected that

whenever one of them needs something, all he has to do is ask his covenant friend for it. And each covenant friend is bound, by the covenant bond and the blood promises that sealed it, to provide what his friend needs. Abraham and Isaac were both ‘Blood brothers’ to Almighty God! That means God considered them to be one with Him, and Himself to be one with them! So these men were required to give to God, whatever He asked. And God was required to supply them with everything they would need in order to comply! This is why God can obligate us to love and serve Him wholeheartedly! But without knowing this, who could do what God required Abraham to do? Only One! The Word of God made flesh is the only Human that can obey God to Perfection! And that is why God’s living Word had to be free to live and operate from within both Abraham and Isaac. God had obligated Himself to do and supply everything for them in their Covenant, including this frightful thing that He was asking of them!

*“Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. **And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency** (from what He always provides for you) **in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed** (that God’s commandments require of you).” (2 Corinthians 9:6-8 Amplification and emphasis added.)*

How could Abraham’s poor fallen flesh agree to sacrifice his own beloved son? There are two ways: humans can be deceived by the Serpent into believing they should ‘kill’ themselves or others. In that case, they must actually do the deed. But in this Covenant with God, we must believe and trust God when He tells us that He has already done everything His commandments tell us to do! Naturally speaking, how could Isaac give **wholehearted, loving** consent to giving up his own existence and be burned on that altar...even if Almighty God Himself asked him to do it? Put yourself in their place! Can you see how this would put our fallen flesh, and the faith we claim to have, to the ultimate test? Isaac was asked to sacrifice his own radically independent flesh. But the same was true for Abraham! It wasn’t Isaac’s flesh he had to sacrifice. Even if they had gone through with Isaac’s sacrifice, it would have been as unacceptable as Cain’s offering had been!

No, it was ABRAHAM’S OWN RADICALLY INDEPENDENT FLESH that he had to place on the altar! God wasn’t asking them to do this because he needed Isaac to atone for our Sin! That would be ridiculous. Isaac too was a Sin-murdered child of Adam. What good would a Sin-contaminated sacrifice be, when the idea was to make PERFECT Atonement for Sin? No, this was not something God needed from those two men. It was something that their flesh needed to receive from God! And this is what we all need! No flesh is able to do something like this IN ITS OWN STRENGTH! Abraham and Isaac could not have done what they did, UNLESS the Life and Authority of God’s living Word and the Power of His Holy Spirit were actually doing it from within them! God is the one that has to offer His Perfect Son. And only He could have done it. And He gave those two men that grace that empowered them to believe and rest in Him.

So, the test was to see whether or not God’s living Word was finally free to obey His Father’s will... and give Himself as The Sacrifice from within the believing, trusting, obediently crucified heart of hearts of Abraham and Isaac. Were these two men still self-centered, radically independent agents, trying to live lives of their own? Or were they truly repentant and Spirit-

filled and equipped to believe, trust and allow God's living Word to do what had to be done from within them... in their name? This wasn't a test of the personal ability of Abraham or Isaac. This was crucifying and removing completely the residue of the disobedient, rebellious flesh that was still in them! God didn't expect anything from them **except for** their total trust, obedience and rest in His Word. He required their radical independence to be removed from the picture entirely. He tested their Covenant faith in the Ability of God's Word! Could they trust Almighty God's Credibility... with an airtight Blood Covenant-level faith?

Everything Abraham would ever need in space and time, was already given to Him by God, in Eternity, including Isaac, and including what this gut-wrenching test would require of them. All was contained in the Eternal Treasury of the Perfect Finished Work of God's Word. So as long as Abraham and Isaac could eliminate their fallen flesh from the equation... as long as they kept looking to God and resting in Him and drawing everything from His faultless Credibility and All Sufficient Provision, God could sustain them and work out His Plan and Purposes from within their faith in Him. And so God's living Word empowered Abraham and his believing, compliant son, to trust Him, **so that He could offer Himself to His Father, through them!** Thus the Word made the proper response to His Father, from within their obedient, trusting, resting hearts:

“So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.” (Genesis 22:3)

The revelation of what God requires of humans, who will truly be His image and likeness, exposes and disposes of, our radical independence like nothing else can. God's Torah commandments are an exposé! They expose what is impossible to our poor dead fallen flesh, while they reveal what God is ready to do from within us! His beautiful standards and requirements are absolutely Perfect! And we know that we are all absolutely dead and helpless! So, can you see that what is in the Torah is actually a revelation of the Glory and Significance and Perfection of God's Word, and His Perfect Finished Work? The Fruit of God's Word will appear progressively in our space and time dimension to the degree that we realize how Perfect and All Sufficient and Trustworthy, our one true God really is!

*“Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, ‘My father!’ And he said, ‘Here I am, my son.’ And he said, ‘Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?’ Abraham said, **‘GOD WILL PROVIDE FOR HIMSELF THE LAMB for the burnt offering, my son.’** So the two of them walked on together.” (Genesis 22:7-8 Emphasis added.)*

And remember what Abraham had said previously to his attendants just before he and Isaac left them behind to offer the sacrifice God required:

*“Abraham said to his young men, ‘Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go over there; **and WE WILL worship and RETURN to you.**’” (Genesis 22:5 Emphasis added.)*

God, in eternity past, had already given His own Son, His Perfect Righteous living Word, as *‘The Sacrifice of all sacrifices!’* So through their deep, Blood Covenant-level faith in God and His Word, Abraham and Isaac served as the ‘image and likeness’ of God. By their obedient self-

offering, these two awesome fathers of our Faith became the image and likeness of God and His beloved Son, the Word! Through Abraham God revealed His willingness to sacrifice His Son on our behalf; and through Isaac, God's Word revealed His perfect obedience to His Father and His infinite Love for us! Together, God and His Covenant friends, revealed God's beloved Word, Yeshua – our Perfect Passover Covering and Atoning Sacrifice...to the rest of the world!

If we read the Torah through natural, decapitated, Self-life lenses, we naturally assume that it is all about men, and about how much God requires them to improve and to strive and to scratch and claw their way up Mt. Sinai until they finally reach the top... by their own efforts! But when we remember that Genesis told us that Sin killed us and that we're dead and helpless, and no more capable than a pile of dust... we begin to see the Glory of God and the awesome Perfection of His Eternally Finished Work, by which He expresses His eternal, boundless Love for us... through His interactions with Israel! God's Word was already atop Mt. Sinai, waiting for Israel to allow Him to lift them up to where He was and catch up to what He has already done. He was there to announce that He had done everything to Perfection...in the name of all of His Jewish and non-Jewish Covenant friends!

The stringent requirements of God's sacrificial system give a basic underlying spiritual Principle and Truth that God has to reveal and teach to every generation of humans. The means He chose to do this was the sacrificial system He introduced to Israel in the first five books of the Bible. God is Perfect in every way. His Righteousness and Holiness and Self-less Love are utterly Pure and Faultless in every way. But thanks to the fall of our first parents, Sin decapitated us from our one and only Life Source, the Word of God, as He is revealed in the Torah! So He lets us know that we are dead and darkened in our understanding and helpless to do anything for ourselves. When God warned Adam and told him not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, He was protecting him from the Serpent, and his lies and what he would do to the human race if Adam fell for his deceptions. And, since Adam and Eve disobeyed and ate, they died! That is why God had to send His own living Word to reconnect with them so that He could cover and rescue us all from the Serpent. And He did it! Yeshua has destroyed all the works of the devil. And for the Serpent...it's too late. His head has been crushed. There's nothing he can do to stop the Glory of the Resurrection from running its full course! So we must stop believing his lies and embrace God's Truth...and persevere and overcome...and allow God's Word to take us to the end of our Blood Covenant Path so that He can lead us across the Finish Line of our Exodus!

Reconciled, Regenerated and Redeemed

The Word must reconcile us to Himself, *before* we will trust and allow Him to restore us to His Heavenly Father. He is here to regenerate us, to make us into brand new creations, so that we can be totally forgiven and redeemed from our bondage to the Serpent, and fully restored to our original, pristine human perfection. We start as the Sin-loving, Word-rejecting image and likeness of the Serpent; but God's Word is here, for each generation, to do whatever is necessary to liberate us and transform us progressively, until He can restore us to our original perfection. And this is what God has in mind when He sends His Word to pick personal disciples out of each generation, and say to them: ***“Follow Me!”***

*“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. **I am THE VINE, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.** If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much (of My) fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.” (John 15:4-8 Emphasis added.)*

So, although no human flesh wants to hear this, God reveals it nevertheless: Sin, and its spiritual Death, is the state into which the human race is conceived and born. And as long as that is the case, we can do nothing in ourselves, by ourselves, for ourselves, that God’s Perfect nature can approve, accept, and include in His Plan for restoring His beautiful Creation. God’s written Word reveals how the living Word is redeeming, restoring and fulfilling every speck and detail of what God has sent Him to be and to do, on behalf of God’s Sin-ruined Creation. Here are some physical analogies that will help us understand what the spiritual reality that underlies God’s Sacrificial System means, and why we must cooperate with Him:

- 1) Consider what happens to the food and drink we consume. Death and its corruption are always at work in our fallen human nature. The food God supplies for the maintenance of our bodies is fresh and good when He gives it to us.
- 2) But, after we consume it and derive the nutrition and strength it gives... then our system assimilates and changes it. The corruption in us takes over and turns what starts out as good food... into toxic waste. And that waste must be eliminated and disposed of, on a daily continuous basis.
- 3) And we bathe daily and clean our teeth and mouth continually for the same reason. If we don’t maintain continual, thorough hygienic practices, the corruption process that is always at work in us, takes over and quickly manifests itself in our bodies in the form of grime, foul odors, disease and rapid deterioration. So the death that is always at work within us must be held in check, by a constant dialysis-like process that cleanses us continually. This is how we delay and put off Death’s inevitable deteriorating progress.

This is similar to the Spiritual Reality that the Torah reveals about us:

We need the same kind of continual *spiritual* dialysis hygienic cleansing for our fallen Sin-loving souls, our minds, wills and natural urges and affections. This is what the continual morning and evening sacrifices were telling Israel. But it’s not enough to depend on the shallowness of mere external, physical ritualistic motions and activity to do this. The true cleansing has to take place at a much deeper level...in our heart of hearts...in our minds and wills and affections. At that level we must depend continually on what God’s living Word provides. He supplies our souls with blessings and benefits of all kinds to sustain our existence and give us time to know Him and His Truth. This is the wilderness living that enables us to repent of our decapitated status and condition so that God can continue to unite us to His living Word’s true, approved, Resurrection Humanity.

The Holy Spirit transmits to us what comes from the pure, clean, fresh and unblemished Humanity of Yeshua. But after we take Him into ourselves, and our daily experiences, the Death process in our nature and its corrupting action arouse the latent selfish, self-centered passions and desires for radical independence that still lurk deep within us. The lingering drive of Sin's residue within us, keeps trying to usurp and misuse what God gives us. We begin to see His blessings as 'our products,' our 'property' and 'our rightful possession.' And we tend to become proud and arrogant and hyper-controlling. We try to assume authorship, ownership and autonomy over what God supplies for our use. We become possessive of our churches, theologies, denominations and ministries. We become territorial, self-protective, stubborn, domineering and over-possessive with all that God is always freely providing for our use and benefit. And we tend to stop following Him into the Unknown. Instead we try to 'settle down' where we are, and keep what we already have, instead of continuing travel light and proceed to the end of our journey to our Eternal Finish Line.

So even when God blesses us, as He blessed Abraham with Isaac, our fallen flesh keeps pulling us back toward our original radically independent behavior. The pull to be selfish, self-centered, rebellious, manipulative, predatory and destructive of ourselves and of others, must be held in check continually, as God continues the progressive work of restoring us! If we repent and obey, the day is coming when we will no longer be hobbled or tainted by what is in our flesh at this time. But until then, God must continue to take us further and deeper! The Exodus Transition needed to span the distance that exists between what we are at conception, and what God intends for us to be in the end, is enormous. Only our Perfect, Infinite God can make it happen. So He sends His living Word to do whatever it takes to continually purify us...to continually exchange what is in us...for the Perfection that is in Him...moment by moment, step by step. In this way He keeps us clean and pure and able to continue the Journey that will finish the transition and actually bring us into His true, eternal image and likeness of God Perfection!

*“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there without watering the earth and making it bear and sprout, and furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; so will **MY WORD** be, which goes forth from My mouth; **It will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.**” (Isaiah 55:10-11 Emphasis added.)*

Not even Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob could fulfill the Word's tasks. Only God's Perfect living Word can do it. And He HAS done it... since before the foundation of this world! So the sacrificial system is a major teaching instrument that God uses to expand on the revelation He gave previously in Genesis and in the Passover section of Exodus.

“The (living Word of the) Lord God made garments of skin (from sacrificial animals) for Adam and his wife, and clothed (covered) them” (with His own Righteousness). (Genesis 3:21 Amplification and emphasis added.)

*“For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; **and against all the (false, non-existent) gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I AM THE LORD!** The blood (of My designated Lamb) shall be a (Covenant protection) sign for you on the houses where you live; **and when I see the blood** (that*

I have ordained and commissioned to be your Covering) ***I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.***” (Exodus 12:12-13 Amplification and emphasis added.)

By means of the continuous sacrificial exchange system, Israel is taught to remember that all Sin-corrupted fallen flesh, and everything it does, must be offered up continuously to God on His designated altar of sacrifice.

*“I affirm, brethren, by the boasting in you which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, **I die daily!**”* (1 Corinthians 15:31)

So, through this substitute recycling, pre-Yeshua system, Israel could be blessed with the Word’s continuous, spiritual washing and cleansing, while she and the rest of the human race continue their long process of being fully restored. The animal sacrifices God taught to Adam, Eve and Abel, were like a spiritually hygienic dialysis mechanism, by which God could keep His chosen people in right standing before Him, before the time and space arrival of His Word in human form. It enabled His people to have a way to offer themselves, and everything God provided for their use, back to God. They could thus participate in the Word’s Eternal Sacrifice, even before the time came for Yeshua’s Humanity to be revealed and consummated on the Cross, in the future. Everything could be done to God’s total satisfaction, through Israel’s faith and reliance upon her perfectly worthy, holy and righteous Eternal Substitute Representative, her Messiah.

Yeshua was the one that had to be sacrificed on Mt. Moriah, not Isaac. God’s Word is the one that must fulfill God’s Eternal Covenant. Thus He was mandated to take on our human flesh, to legally and justly represent us. As God’s living creative Word, He is qualified to represent God. But, at the same time, in His Perfect Humanity, He is able to represent the entire human race! So, like everything else in the Torah, and the rest of the Bible, this sacrificial system reveals Messiah Yeshua, and His awesome Life-restoring significance to God’s Sin-murdered Creation.

Yeshua, Our Passover Lamb

God is teaching us that there is no such thing as a self-improving or self-redeeming mechanism to which fallen human flesh can resort. There is nothing in us, or about us, and nothing that originates from our death state that has value or merit before God’s Perfect Justice and Righteousness. We MUST have a perfectly acceptable Living Substitute who will sacrifice His Perfect, Sin-less Life as a full Atonement Covering on our behalf. Nothing short of God Himself will do! Everything that comes from us will have the taint and the smell of Death within it. Only the Blood of the True Passover Lamb contains the Life that is acceptable to God, because it is the Life that comes to us from God:

*“And any man from the house of Israel, or from the aliens who sojourn among them, who eats any blood, I will set My face against that person who eats blood and will cut him off from among his people. **For the Life of the flesh is in the Blood, and I have given it to you on the altar TO MAKE ATONEMENT FOR YOUR SOULS; for it is The Blood by reason of the** (Perfect Substitute) **Life** (of God’s Word, our Messiah) **that makes Atonement.**”* (Leviticus 17:10-11 Amplification and emphasis added.)

Israel was forbidden to rely on the wrong ‘life blood’. God is the only Source of Life! So Israel was to abide by this Reality and teach it to the rest of the world. And this sacrificial system was the ‘primer’ that would teach men the elementary truths and facts that prevail in the Kingdom of Heaven. This prevents us from slipping back into our original radical independence, back into idolatry, which drives us to rebel against the revelation and commands God’s Word gives us, and makes us to be radically independent of Him, trying to be *like God* in our own right. This rebellious drive, injected into us by the Serpent, compels us to try to amass, hoard and ‘own’ whatever God provides for our use. And each time we do that, our death contamination invades and degenerates and spoils everything we touch.

So when God provides something for our use, instead of allowing us to trap the flow of His provision and cause it to degenerate into a foul, stagnant pool of unusable self-adoring toxic refuse, God requires us to place ourselves continually – all that we are and have and do – on the ‘altar of sacrifice’ the way Abraham was required to give his beloved son Isaac. We must give it all back to God, morning and evening, acknowledging that it is His property. It comes from God and returns to God. This is the continual ‘dialysis-like’ recycling cleansing and purification process that God instituted for the eternal, spiritual wellbeing and rest and benefit of our souls. This is to be our daily, regular, spiritually hygienic, ‘Daily Manna’ or ‘Daily Bread’ regimen.

“This is what the Lord has commanded, ‘Gather of it every man as much (Manna) as he should eat; you shall take an omer apiece according to the number of persons each of you has in his tent.’ The sons of Israel did so, and some gathered much and some little. When they measured it with an omer, he who had gathered much had no excess, and he who had gathered little had no lack; every man gathered as much as he should eat.

*“Moses said to them, ‘Let no man leave any of it until morning.’ **But they did not listen to Moses, and some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and became foul; and Moses was angry with them.** They gathered it morning by morning, every man as much as he should eat; but when the sun grew hot, it would melt.” (Exodus 16:16-21 Amplification and emphasis added.)*

We stop contaminating what God gives us, by ceasing to obsess over it and depend on our ability to hoard and control it, in our mistrust of God’s Word. God’s daily ‘dialysis exchange system’ prevents us from usurping God’s provision for self-serving purposes. Instead of being driven to possess and cling to those things as false gods, we learn to exchange yesterday’s blessings for the fresh new ones our real God always provides today. By this exchange, the true God continually gives us a fresh, clean, ‘daily bread’ provision. This is our daily manna supply, or ‘Daily Bread.’ By these continuous acts of ‘sacrifice,’ God’s people learn to interact continually with Him, by faith, in each present moment, enjoying the benefits of the spiritual hygiene and maintenance provided by the ‘dialysis cleansing’ system He provides. We learn to ‘let go of and give back’ whatever He first gives to us, knowing He will not forsake us. We exchange continually with Him so that our souls can remain ‘flushed out’ and thoroughly cleansed of all *‘I shall be as God’* corruption residue that would otherwise naturally begin to collect within us.

Beware of Fallen Human Flesh!

Flesh always lusts after supremacy. It always wants to usurp and possess and idolize created things. It strives to regain control and ‘own’ whatever God provides for its independent uses. But when we follow the pattern God taught us, and keep offering ourselves, and what we have, back to Him, He continues to supply us with His fresh, clean, pure flow of provision. To do this, we must know God, as He really is... Infinitely Perfect, Reliable and Trustworthy, instead of obsessing over things He makes. Then we trust Him implicitly and can afford to use what He provides according to the guidelines provided by His commandments. And we can enjoy the cleansing, health-maintaining flow of exchange... receiving from Him continually... and giving it back to Him continually, in total trust and outrageous, otherworldly confidence in His Covenant Love and Faithfulness. This is how fallen human nature remains ‘crucified’ and out of the way, while God’s Word offers Himself to God in our place, and provides whatever we need. We can enjoy what God provides and still reflect back to Him the Perfection that only comes to us from His beloved Son. This is to be our supernatural testimony in the Arena of Testimony... to the Serpent... and to the God-less, greedy, insatiable and hyper-controlling world he dominates.

Continuous interchanging with God, is, to our fallen souls (minds and wills and affections), what daily flossing and brushing are to our teeth, and what daily elimination and bathing are to our bodies, and what dialysis treatments are to disease-damaged human kidneys. This keeps our fallen flesh nailed to our Redeemer’s Cross. And Sin cannot rise up and take over within us.

“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.” (Romans 12:1-3 Emphasis added.)

*“So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all **HIS OWN** possessions.”* (Luke 14:33 Emphasis added.)

*“And He was saying to them all, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross **DAILY** and follow Me.’”* (Luke 9:23 Emphasis added.)

Beloved...we don’t have to wallow in our many Sinful failures, deficiencies, lapses and blunders! God is here to exchange, continuously, all that is in us, for all that is in His Perfect Living Word! We can abide with and in our risen Messiah...totally clean and pure and fresh...at all times! This is what the altar of sacrifice was meant to do for ancient Israel, and this is what the Cross does for us. At that blessed ‘altar’, we exchange what is wrong with us...for what is Right with God! Then by the Holy Spirit, we can walk before Almighty God, blamelessly!

“The steps of a man are established by the Lord, and He delights in his way. When he falls, he will not be hurled headlong, because the Lord is the One who holds his hand. I have been young and now I am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his descendants begging bread. All day long he is gracious and lends, and his descendants are a blessing.” (Psalm 37:23-26 Emphasis added.)