

## 64. A Question for This Dying World

When you see the wrath with which Moses reacted to Israel's idolatry with the golden calf, and read what God said about His people afterward, it's easy to assume that God was finished with them for good. Moses smashed the tablets upon which God had written His commandments and forced a bloody confrontation between the Levites and those who had worshipped that false god and chose to remain in their state of rebellion. And so, people of later centuries believe that God did away with Jacob's descendants and the Torah that they violated. And that is what gives rise to these questions:

*Were all of God's efforts on Israel's behalf in vain? Did the Covenant He made with them at Mt. Sinai... the Covenant they violated so blatantly... and which He said they broke... accomplish anything of lasting value and significance?*

On the surface, the Sinai Covenant and the Torah might seem to be a total disaster. That is why the widely held Replacement Theology in Christendom claims that God cancelled the Sinai Covenant, and rejected and replaced His chosen Jewish people with the non-Jewish Christian Church. Thus those that 'replaced' the Jews are God's 'Plan B – His substitute 'spiritual Israel.' This view also leads many to entertain a radically negative attitude toward the Torah God entrusted to His chosen people, and to the people themselves. It is widely believed that Torah and its commandments were meant only for the Jews; and, since God is done with them, He's also done with their Torah. So many now believe that Torah is a thing of the past and is no longer relevant for today. But that sad error has severed many from the roots of the revealed Faith that God originally gave to the world through His servant, Israel.

Yes, God did call His chosen people to account for their blatant mistrust, treachery and rebellion; but He did that to show the rest of the world His ways and what they could expect for themselves! And the Torah reveals that centuries before Sinai, God had already committed Himself to cover their spiritual bankruptcy and nakedness, unconditionally, that is, without any 'strings attached.' He promised this in the prior, unilateral, unconditional Blood Covenant He had already made with Himself, on behalf of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their physical and spiritual descendants! And He revealed repeatedly, in many Bible texts, that once He makes a Covenant, it stands forever!

So we must interpret what God says in Exodus 33, and in other places, in the context of what He had already previously promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Then we will not forget that God remains committed to cover Israel and all of her needs, regardless of what has happened or what may still take place in the future:

*"Then the Lord spoke to Moses, 'Depart, go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up from the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'To your descendants I will give it.' I will send an angel before you and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite. Go up to a land*

*flowing with milk and honey; **for I will not go up in your midst, because you are an obstinate people, and I might destroy you on the way.***

*“When the people heard this sad word, they went into mourning, and none of them put on his ornaments. For the Lord had said to Moses, **“Say to the sons of Israel, ‘You are an obstinate people; should I go up in your midst for one moment, I would destroy you. Now therefore, put off your ornaments from you, that I may know what I shall do with you.’”**” So the sons of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments, from Mount Horeb onward...” (Exodus 33:1-6)*

## **Context is Crucial to Clear Biblical Understanding**

This brings out an important point that governs all proper, valid Scriptural interpretation. Here is a basic hermeneutical principle: each passage must be understood in the light of its full Biblical context. In other words, we must allow the Bible to interpret itself. When we see texts like the one above, we must interpret it in light of what God said and did before the golden calf incident. Many Western, Hellenistic minds tend to isolate texts. They take them out of context and interpret them literally. They also often indulge in the practice of anachronism... by which they unwittingly inject their modern day mindsets, realities and circumstances into the texts. But those things did not even exist at the time that the ancient texts were written! Thus the Scriptural understanding of such people becomes skewed and grossly inaccurate. God’s written revelations were not given to us in a vacuum. He placed them within a definite cultural and historical matrix that differs greatly from the way in which our modern Western eras and cultures have formed our minds and viewpoints.

God was speaking to, and dealing with, people who thought and interpreted things much differently than the way Hellenized modern Westerners see and think. In the Semitic world, words were not meant to convey abstract concepts. So the texts do not contain finely reasoned, theoretical, theological structures and precise dated sequences that modern historians require. Many Biblical expressions are not to be taken literally. They are meant to be figurative tools that express deep meanings and strong emotions and drive home important points. So, for example, imagine two Jewish yeshiva students engaged in a heated discussion. One says to his fellow student: *“You have destroyed the Torah!”* What would he mean by that? Well, it would be an exaggeration, meant to emphasize this point: *“I really disagree with your interpretation. By my reckoning, you have completely missed the point!”* These students are not deadly enemies attacking each other’s faith. They are brothers and colleagues! This is how they grope and make their way through God’s mysteries. They are processing God’s Truth and deepening their understanding of His ways. So, although they debate, argue and sometimes raise their voices with great emotion, they do it for emphasis. But all the while, they remain fellow students and Blood Covenant brothers. We see this type of interplay repeatedly between Yeshua and some of the Pharisees. Despite their differences, Yeshua was much closer to the Pharisees in his Scripture interpretations than He was to the other contemporary groups that existed at that time.

In Exodus 33, Israel had just violated the Blood Bond she had with her God, and a terribly painful scene followed. A precedent was being set between God and Israel, for the instruction and salvation of the rest of the world! The stakes were enormously high, so Moses had to confront Israel’s rebellion. That’s why he separated those who took God’s Word seriously, from

those who remained unrepentant. God was continuing the Exodus process He had begun with Abraham. *“Go forth from your country, your relatives, and your father’s house... to a land I will show you.”* This Exodus promise forever separated Abraham and his family for God’s personal service and set them apart from worldly hearts that are alien to this living God and remain determined to rebel against His Word and reject His ways. This relationship was to be eternal. Thus this falling out at Sinai was not only painful for Israel, it was also intensely hurtful to God! This was a serious Family problem... painful precisely because the Covenant had made them to be one... and they were linked very closely and permanently to one another!

Have you ever heard a father or mother, who is about to administer punishment to a wayward child, say: *“This is going to hurt me a lot more than it will hurt you!”* The impending spanking will sting the child’s bottom and prick his or her feelings. But having to administer such discipline is agonizing to the heart of any true parent. The parent loves the child and passionately desires his or her wellbeing! True parents do not reject and abandon disobedient children; they fulfill the responsibility for disciplining, correcting and training them. They assume responsibility for highlighting and clearly indicating the direction into mature growth their child’s behavior should take.

Whenever children become destructive, hurtful or counter-productive to the family wellbeing, parents or caregivers must impart wise, true and changeless values, priorities and consciences to them and teach them how to live with others responsibly and fruitfully. So they train them with diligent firmness. At times, forcibly; but even then... forsaking and abandoning them is the farthest thing from a true parent’s mind. To be properly prepared for mature adulthood in the real world, children must be taught the difference between right and wrong, good and bad, and true and false. With proper training, they outgrow their natural ignorance and slavery to the selfish, self-destructive urges and tendencies with which we are all born. But if training is withheld, they grow to be crippled and stunted emotionally, relationally and socially! In that case, they remain childish, selfish, egotistical, and become relationally destructive adults... to the great detriment of their children and grandchildren!

When Israel reverted to worldly idolatrous ways, God, the Ultimate Parent of all humans, had to deal with her ignorant willfulness and sinful betrayal. Always remember: God’s Eternal Nature is utterly Perfect and transcendent and will never change! He is eternally beyond us in every way imaginable. No other being in existence comes close to being like Him. All others are created and sustained by Him. But He is the Perfect Uncreated First Cause. He originates the existence of all other causes. So there’s no equality or parity between Him and anything He creates. He is totally beyond His Creation, and yet... He is our Heavenly Father, the Ultimate Parent! And He designed and created us to be His own image and likeness – His eternal sons and heirs!

Because there is such a gap between us, in nature and activity, God takes the initiative to bridge the infinite gap of transcendence that separates us from Him. He reveals Himself in ways similar to the way mathematicians reduce whole numbers into their fractional or decimal equivalents, or musicians ‘transpose’ music, from one key to another, putting music into a range we can manage when we try to sing or play what is written. In His infinite Wisdom and Compassion, God knows we desperately need to know Him and connect with Him, at very personal human levels. So He reveals Himself in terms we understand and to which we can relate. He created us for Himself...

to be His own image and likeness! And so, we must know Him and be familiar with His ways! Each of us has an inborn hunger to know God, and a natural ‘homesickness’ that causes us to miss and yearn for what we were truly meant and created to be and to do with Him. We were made to know and interact with Him very intimately in order to reflect and embody His nearness to us, accurately, precisely, and fruitfully.

But we’re born in a state of Sin that separates us from Him. Thus, at first, we cannot know or understand Him. Nevertheless, that desperate corresponding need for Him gnaws at the heart of every human being... an aching homesick yearning to know and understand His ways and connect with Him so that we can be what He truly created us to be! So, for modern people to be able to arrive at a true understanding of what took place at Sinai, and how God began to radically transform human societies through His chosen instrument, Israel, we need to gain an awareness and understanding of the wretched, dismal, dark conditions that existed throughout the ancient world before God chose Abraham and created the nation of Israel and began to inject His Torah revelation and commandments into human minds and hearts. And we must keep in mind that before humans fell into Sin and were so horribly damaged by it, we were originally created by God to be truly awesome Heavenly beings, even as we live in earthly space and time:

*“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”* (Genesis 1:26-27)

But now consider what the Torah reveals about Sin and the damage it did to us. See the depths of self-destruction into which radical independence from God pulled us. Look at how far beneath our exalted God-given status the Sin-corrupted human nature we inherit has dragged us:

*“Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that **every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually**. The Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart...*

*“...Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and **the earth was filled with violence**. God looked on the earth, and behold, **it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth**. Then God said to Noah, **‘The end of all flesh has come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence because of them;** and behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth.’”*  
(Genesis 6: 5-6; 11-13)

This describes the living death state that we all have inherited. Messiah Yeshua was, and remains, the only human exception. But we do not have it in ourselves to be God’s image and likeness. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their descendants were no different. God sovereignly selected them from among all other decapitated, spiritually dead fellow humans by His grace. And He revealed Himself and His ways and His Plan for Humanity’s Salvation and Restoration to them. But, in themselves, these ‘Fathers of the Faith’ were nothing special. Death was just as much at work in them as it is in everyone else. They were simple, inconsequential people of their time – products of their native Sumerian culture, customs and traditions. They were accustomed

to living in and enduring the cruelty, violent brutality and gross injustice that permeated the whole world!

At that time, *'might was right.'* The few powerful, capable, wily males who rose to prominence in each society always lorded it over the rest. They did whatever was necessary to make sure they and their class stayed atop all the others. They did whatever it took to maintain supremacy, regardless of how much blood had to be shed or how much destruction, desolation and misery it might inflict on their families and societies. In the ancient world, the physically stronger males dominated and debased their weaker rivals and competitors. And it was a normal, universally accepted fact of life that women were believed to be far inferior to men. Because they were defenseless, women and children, especially female children, were treated like chattel, universally subjugated and devalued in ways that would appall many people of today and be considered to be heartless, inhuman and outrageously abusive!

Today, many modern societies are vastly different in mentality and practice. They now judge human behavior in terms of morality vs. immorality, injustice vs. justice, and oppression vs. nurturing. But it was not that way in the ancient world. No such distinctions were possible. What we call brutality, injustice and abuse were utterly normal and acceptable at that time! Today we see movements arise in which *'feminists'* and *'civil rights advocates'* demand justice and equal opportunities. Now, we now judge injustices to be *'criminal'* and *'barbaric.'* Today, people are stunned and appalled genocidal atrocities that are committed, such as took place during The Holocaust. But they react that way because knowingly or unknowingly, they have been conditioned by the Torah's influence, even if they claim to be atheists! In ancient times such cruelties were universally expected and commonly practiced! And even today, there are societies in which many people remain trapped within those same ancient cruel mentalities, value systems and barbaric practices. And every one of those groups... serve alien gods and deliberately reject the Jewish people and the Torah God commissioned them to share with the whole world.

### ***Torah Revelation Changed the World***

So, what has caused such transformation in the world since those ancient times? What prodded human consciousness into changing so drastically and created such revolutionary changes over the centuries? Beloved... it was the Torah Revelation that God gave to Israel; that's what caused all this change! It was knowledge of Almighty God and His Nature and His ways that served the function of 'divine leaven' as it was inserted into the mass of human 'dough.' Torah influence changed human perspectives, attitudes and behaviors. Wherever Torah was embraced and absorbed, God's Light began to invade the demonic Darkness and the human soul and values and behaviors began to change. But wherever the Torah is rejected or abolished, we see the Light of God's Love diminish and wane... and the Darkness of selfishness and cruelty and gross injustice entraps people within its pall, just as it did in days of old!

Without a comprehensive historical perspective, we can't see or appreciate the tremendous impact that God's Torah had, even on those that remain idolatrous and Sin-corrupted and alien to Abraham's God! This shocking impact began to take place when God's living Word revealed Himself to Abram and his family. But when God's Revelation was actually written and entrusted to the nation of Israel at Sinai, the Exodus began to accelerate and spread... from Israel to the

other families of the world. More and more people began to move out of their slavery to self and to this fallen world's God-less systems. Thus the human race continued to split and separate into two distinct, vastly different groups. The ways God taught to Israel were utterly incompatible with the ways of this fallen world's selfish, violent predatory systems and its brutal, heartless self-serving agendas, religious or otherwise. The rest of the world remained as murderous as ever. But Israel's influence became like a verdant oasis in the center of a death-imparting wilderness... a Light in the Darkness... the Tree of Life, surrounded by toxic, death-dealing desolation. So today, despite the fact that, many continue to harbor a violent hatred and resentment against Israel, despite all that, the whole world has changed drastically because of the Torah influence that God brought into the world through little Israel. The Torah has invaded and lit up the world. And it continues to dispel more and more of the demonic Darkness that originally enshrouded the entire planet. And nothing will be able to stop it from running the complete course God has intended for it to fulfill.

The vast differences between Israel and the rest of the world's peoples are obvious. And so to this day, the radically independent decapitated world that benefits in so many ways from what Israel has contributed, continues to judge God's chosen people to be alien, suspicious and unacceptable. And even within Israel, there is separation between Israel's True Remnant, and those Israelites that do not belong to God or serve Him in their hearts. They choose to remain part of the fallen world. And so, those two incompatible groups of humans represent the ongoing conflict of: Light vs. Darkness, Love vs. Fear, Freedom vs. Slavery, and, Spirit vs. Flesh. God's Self-Revelation creates and intensifies this awesome difference. The difference abides within the minds and hearts and lives of human beings. And to this day, God's living Word and His Good News of Salvation, Reconciliation, Redemption and full Restoration continues spread, piercing and transfixing and cutting peoples' hearts to the core in any part of this fallen world wherever Father's call to Salvation is allowed to be heard:

*“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have Eternal Life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God. This is the Judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the Darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.” (John 3:16-21)*

*“For the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” (Hebrews 4:12-13)*

Israel's Living God is so transcendent, so totally 'Other,' so far beyond anything this fallen world has ever thought or seen or experienced, that when He first makes Himself known to us, the effect He has resembles the stunning numbness that our human faculties experience when the concussion of a powerful nearby explosion suddenly blows us over and throws us to the ground!

His appearance totally stuns and disorients us. We don't know where we are, or what our name is, or what is going on. We are blasted into an uncomprehending stupor. We are faced with a Reality that is totally beyond our ability to grasp or explain or control:

*“Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, ‘I am God Almighty; walk before Me, and be blameless. I will establish My Covenant between Me and you, and I will multiply you exceedingly.’”*

*“**Abram fell on his face...**” (Genesis 17:1-3a Emphasis added.)*

*“In the year of King Uzziah's death I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called out to another and said, ‘Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts,*

*The whole earth is full of His glory.’ And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke.*

*“Then I said, ‘**Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!**’” (Isaiah 6:1-5 Emphasis added.)*

*“As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and **suddenly a Light from Heaven flashed around him; and he fell to the ground** and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” And he said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do.’*

*“The men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one. **Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.**” (Acts 9:3-9 Emphasis added.)*

*“...I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters. In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength. **When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man.** And He placed His right hand on me, saying, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last, and The Living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am Alive Forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and of Hades!” (Revelation 1:13-18 Emphasis added.)*

Beloved, can you sense what gut-wrenching electrifying impact God's Presence must had on the people at Mt. Sinai... the depths of overwhelming, soul-chilling terror that must have pierced their hearts? The newly freed slaves were used to being brutalized, deprived and debased. Their

steady diet for centuries had been the ‘*Bread of Sorrow and Affliction*’ – abuse, injustice, brutal oppression and desolate hopelessness... since birth! And now, suddenly, God’s living Word appears and begins to work in their midst in tangible, audible, heart-stopping ways!

*“So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder. The Lord came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the Lord called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, ‘Go down, warn the people, so that they do not break through to the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish. Also let the priests who come near to the Lord consecrate themselves, or else the Lord will break out against them!’**” (Exodus 19:16-22 Emphasis added.)*

To save them (and the rest of us) from the Sin-corruption and mortality that is in us, God’s Love must overpower and remove the Serpent’s fear-based selfishness and the corruption that has enslaved and mortally wounded our fallen flesh. This is why God sends His living Word to us... to pierce, penetrate and impregnate our innermost being with His Living Truth and Eternal Life! As it begins, His Light stuns and exposes our true spiritual state of living death. Then gradually, God begins to bring His Word to life in our hearts, like a Parent training His children. And His Word draws us and guides our steps to a new, never experienced Destination. Then, for the first time, we begin to see spiritual realities. We begin to discern and make out all of the traps and pitfalls the powers of Darkness have been placing in our path. And that sets us free from our innate state of spiritual blindness and deception. God is **Truth**. And He **must** communicate and reveal Himself to the entire deceived human race, with sufficient thoroughness and integrity.

Israel is God’s instrument for this revelation – his chosen model or template for the entire world to follow. The initial impact God’s Self-Revelation had on the Israelites, as His Word penetrated and pierced them to the core, was stunning and devastating. It disoriented them completely. And the same will happen to the rest of men when they begin to see God’s Perfect Love Nature and how vastly different it is from our Sin-corrupted selfish, greedy, predatory ‘*me first*’ nature. When His awesome Presence invades our space, we are utterly shocked, stunned and devastated by the mind-boggling contrast. It has an unexpected blast-like effect that reminds me of what happens in messy, unclean kitchens in the middle of the night...when someone suddenly turns on a very bright light! Any cockroaches that may be cavorting on the counters or stovetops are totally stunned and shocked when that light goes on. The glaring brightness instantly exposes them and they feel utterly threatened. They immediately scurry to find the nearest hole into which they might run and hide... from that overpowering light. Is this not always the initial reaction of the fallen world at the approach of the Gospel of Salvation?

The True God is blinding Light, invading the Serpent-induced Darkness in which all Sin-corrupted flesh loves to lurk. And the shock of encountering such overwhelming Righteousness and Purity is utterly devastating! Nevertheless, despite the terrifying effect God’s living Presence



has on our fallen nature, we must, sooner or later, realize that being one with Him and abiding with Him in total Peace and Rest is precisely what He originally designed and created us to be! So, God MUST reveal Himself to us... in ways that are humanly recognizable and familiar. And when He does, because of our true Sin-loving natural state of heart... the revelation is shocking, devastating and overwhelming. God transposes His infinite, divine Personality into recognizable human terms or 'keys' that we are able to discern and understand. He does it to bring us back, to restore us and set us free from all the damage that was done to us. God has to do it, or we have no chance of being reconciled, regenerated, redeemed and restored to our rightful place.

God does all of this through His living Word who became flesh and appeared among us as Messiah Yeshiva of Nazareth. And the Power of God's Spirit makes His Word alive and dynamically real so that we can finally become aware of Him and understand what He has to do to redeem and restore us. This is what He began to do with Israel, starting with Abraham. He revealed His ways, and the changes that must take place within us. Despite the pain it first inflicts on our fallen souls, this revelation is all about God's eternal Love Nature and what only He can be and do for us. He reveals Himself in human, marital and familial terms that we can understand. But first He must reveal us to ourselves. Thus His blinding Self-Revelation exposes our wretched state. And, when we see how self-deluded we've been, it stuns and terrifies us. But after that initial shock, the Truth begins to sink in and we see and appreciate what God is really doing for us. We begin to see God through the lens of His eternal Blood Covenant. We see that He 'betrothed' Himself to Israel, through His living Word. And through His Word, He reveals that He is our Father in Heaven. And if we will hear and obey His voice and repent and follow His Word, Yeshua becomes our 'Eternal Blood Covenant Friend'... and He grafts us into His Covenant Root of Salvation and becomes our 'Kinsman Redeemer'... our 'Good Shepherd'... and our Eternal Covenant Champion who abides within us to defend and lead and save us from the clutches of the Serpent and Sin, and the powers of Darkness... and our own fallen, helpless, Sin-loving flesh.

So, despite anything that happens between God and His Covenant Family throughout history... now that He has established His everlasting Covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob... the Israelites and their awesome God are grafted and joined to each other. They are God's Family forever! Thus, even when He says things like the following, to the faithless, unfaithful, commandment-violating portion of Israel, it must be understood in this eternal Covenant light:

*"This is another thing you do: you cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and with groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. Yet you say, 'For what reason?' Because the Lord has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. But not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring? Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth. For I hate divorce," says the Lord, the God of Israel, "and him who covers his garment with wrong," says the Lord of hosts. "So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously." (Malachi 2:13-16)*

What does God reveal about Himself when He says He hates divorce? Divorce is a violation, a severing of the permanent bond created by a Blood Covenant. It is totally repugnant and alien to

the Eternal Nature of our perfectly faithful God. To God's Nature, divorce is impossible and inconceivable! And that is why, even after Israel broke the Sinai Covenant, God will always stand by her so that she might be united with Him in her heart, once again:

*“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 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.)*

So permanent divorce is not an option to God. Even when Israel violates her Covenant with Him, He continues to do whatever it takes to restore their union. Humans on the other hand, thanks to what Sin did to our nature, act treacherously and vengefully, out of self-interest. Changeability and betrayal are common among us. But such things will never be seen or found in our awesome God! So He must reveal His nature and His ways, so that we can understand Him when He deals with us. Despite what we, in our Sin-full, fallen state do, or fail to do, God will never be like that with us. He is... *The Other*... The Perfect One... Selfless Love. He will always deal with us in utter Righteousness, Purity, Integrity and Airtight Fidelity. In this sense, God is Eternal Light... advancing... invading... piercing and destroying the Serpent's realm of self-adoring, predatory Darkness. We can still reject Him, but His persistent Love for us makes that exceeding difficult to keep doing. He speaks His Word and the Word of the God who is Love, comes to set the human race free of slavery to demonic malice. The Word is here to reclaim what has always belonged to Him for He comes out from Almighty God Himself. He is God's Perfect, Eternal Image and Likeness! And this is why we must follow Him on this awesome Exodus out of our former Darkness... and into His Father's Eternal Light.

### ***Our Ever Faithful God***

God wants us to know that, despite our many weaknesses, disabilities and limitations, we must not judge or assess Him by comparing Him to the way we are. Our living God never, ever, leaves or forsakes anyone! So to help us understand what Perfect Sabbath Rest in Him means, He joined Himself in Blood Covenant to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob... and all their descendants! God views each of His Blood Covenant people as ‘His Family’. And He is telling us that He will always consider Himself to be one with His Covenant Family members, **no matter what!** His chosen Covenant people, in their abysmal Sin-corrupted weakness, waver and falter and choose to forsake Him and one another. But Almighty God, even if we reject and forsake Him, will **NEVER** forsake any one of us! If He were to do that, He would not be God! And so by our continual treacheries, we prove over and over that the Serpent is a liar and that we do not have it in us to be ‘like God.’ We prove conclusively that we are not God... but **GOD IS GOD!** And that is why we must repent of trying to control and manage everything. But He continues to woo and draw us to Himself, until we take our rightful place with Him and look to His Word for all things, trusting and submitting to His Authority at last. This is how His Word can lead us out of Darkness and into His Heavenly Light.

Because we were originally designed and created to be God's image and likeness, we can still find faint traces of our Creator's kind of loyalty remaining within us. We can see them in our natural family relationships. Despite our imperfections, traces of God's undying fidelity remain in our genes. Human marriage is, by nature, a temporary, *'until death parts us'* arrangement. And because of our human ignorance and gross limitations, our ability to have and nurture our relationships misfires. Many human spouses grow to despise and forsake and divorce each other, but still...there is a part of us that knows that we can't permanently divorce or forsake our own children. And neither can children completely divorce or remove themselves from their father, mother, siblings and blood relatives. They may despise and hurt each other. They may live apart and refuse to see each other for decades. Nevertheless... we all know in our heart of hearts that regardless of what may have happened, or failed to happen, there is something deep that remains within us... a bond of blood that unites us... a bond that nothing can break. We instinctively know that *'blood is thicker than water.'* Like it or not, Covenant Blood is thicker even than natural human blood. Blood connects us to our human relatives, for better or for worse, by the common inherited lifeblood flowing through our veins. We never truly sever ourselves from our parents or children, or siblings, no matter what happens, because they are our own flesh and blood! But the Blood of our Messiah Yeshua, reconnects every repentant human being to Almighty God Himself!

So, God reveals His Eternal Blood Covenant to let us know this is the way our Creator God is, toward us. He will always see us as His intended beloved image and likeness. That is what He designed and ordained for us to be. And He will do whatever it takes to bring us back to that perfect state! This is further revelation of the fact that He, in His Eternal Nature, is Perfect, Airtight, and Eternally Changeless, Self-less Love. And we are all made to abide and share in His Loving Fullness and embody Him – Eternally!

*"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it will be opened. Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? **If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?**" (Luke 11:9-13 Emphasis added.)*

This is the most wonderful news we could ever receive! The Covenant Faithfulness or Loyalty (*Chesed or Agape*) of God's Nature is utterly flawless... there can never be a speck of treachery, duplicity, selfishness, betrayal or unfaithfulness in Him! This is how He described and defined Himself **after** the golden calf incident took place:

*"The Lord descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the Name of the Lord. Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, Compassionate and Gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in Lovingkindness (unfailing Covenant Faithfulness) and (unchangeable) Truth; who keeps Lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations."*

*“Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship. He said, “If now I have found favor in Your sight, O Lord, I pray, let the Lord go along in our midst, even though the people are so obstinate, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your own possession.”*

*Then God said, **“Behold, I am going to make a Covenant. Before all your people I will perform miracles which have not been produced in all the earth nor among any of the nations (gentiles); and all the (gentile) people among whom you live will see the working of the Lord, for it is a fearful (Heavenly, supernatural) thing that I am going to perform with you (true children of Abraham).”** (Exodus 34:5-10 Amplification and emphasis added.)*

So, despite Israel’s abysmal performance at Mt. Sinai and her chronic unreliability throughout the generations, God shows us in very human, Middle Eastern, Semitic family cultural terms, that nothing can ever change the choices and decisions that His Perfect Heart and Will have made. Once God speaks and gives His Perfect Eternal Word... the Word stands forever! Once God establishes His Covenant and gives and promises something in it, nothing will ever be able to affect, influence or change God’s mind to the contrary. We can deliberately choose to reject God, but nothing we do, or fail to do, will be able to terminally repel Him, or cause Him to abandon or forsake anyone with whom He has made a Blood Covenant! His Nature and His ways depend on Him and on what He is... and not at all on us, or our circumstances, or our behavior! And this is the glory and significance of the New Covenant God has made with the same chosen people...for the benefit of the entire human race.

So those sins and betrayals recorded in Scripture are all about our fallen nature. But our frailties and limitations have nothing to do with God’s essential Infinite Love Nature. Israel’s bad performance cannot change God, nor can her good performance bribe Him. Nothing we do can cause God to deviate from the course He is intent on following. Our false gods are a revelation of us, and our self-serving ways! But the true God shows us the vast difference that exists between what He is and what we are, between what is True and what is False.

### ***Israel is God’s Blood Covenant Family, Now and Forever!***

God’s Eternal Covenant is established and sealed by the Blood of His Lamb! So it stands forever. Despite Israel’s failures, they are God’s Blood Covenant Family, now and forever. And this is what Paul the apostle of Yeshua (formerly known as Saul of Tarsus) was saying to non-Jewish New Covenant believers that had begun to assume that they, and their understanding of ‘the Church,’ had replaced Israel and the Torah that God had entrusted to her care:

*“I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them (the non-believing Jews) jealous. Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be! But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. For if their rejection (of God’s living Word made flesh) is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance (of the living Word) be but*

*Life from the Dead? If the first piece of dough is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too.” (Romans 11:11-16 Amplification added.)*

Because the Blood Bond between God and His chosen people is eternal, we have airtight cause to abide in hope, trust and confidence in Him... rather than in ourselves, or other created things. And when we consider our terrible starting point, the Sin-devastated disfiguration into which all children of Adam are born, we can understand Israel’s weakness and why God requires all of us to repent and move out of our Sin and living Death, over to His Salvation and Full Restoration.

And this is also why we need God’s ongoing child (disciple) training. If we can see and learn the Truth, we can continue to learn, grow, persevere and overcome... all the way to the end. Yes, human failure, dysfunction, terrible lapses and blunders are inevitable. But God will chastise and rebuke and do what is necessary to correct us. He does it precisely because He has bound Himself to us and is making us to be His own image and likeness and He is not going to give up on us until we are what He designed us to be! And this is why God will never leave or forsake those who are His own. He won’t take away our free will. So we can choose to reject Him. But He will never stop trying to reach out to us in this temporal life, before we enter the changelessness of eternity:

*“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus (Yeshua, God’s living creative Word made flesh. He is), the Author and Perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the Throne of God. For consider Him, who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

*“You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin; and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, **‘My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reproved by Him; For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives.’***

***“It is for (on account of Father’s) discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.***

*Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, **but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed!**” (Hebrews 12:1-13 Amplification and emphasis added.)*

Hopefully we can now accurately assess the golden calf incident and all of Israel's other blunders and lapses throughout history. What is true for Israel is true for the human race! So let's go back to our opening question: was anything positive and constructive and truly lasting accomplished by God's Covenant Bond and interactive history with Israel as revealed in the Torah? Did the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and His interactions with His chosen people Israel make any real difference? Has any of this had any lasting, positive effects on the rest of the world? And the answer is...an unequivocal, absolute eternal... **'YES!'**

The impact God had on the world sent tremendous shock waves that stunned and boggled the minds of the various pagan, idolatrous societies of those ancient times! And those shock waves continue to reverberate and make profound changes in human societies and hearts to this day. God's interactions with Israel have literally transformed human history! His Torah has deeply affected the worldviews and societies of the whole world! Even atheists and unbelievers, whether they know it, or admit it, or not, inhabit a world that has been vastly changed by Torah's influence. None of the false gods, religions or philosophies that the imaginations of Sin-corrupted, men have spawned over the centuries can come close to equaling what the Torah has revealed and done for the human race.

Nothing else can bestow the dignity, identity, purpose and destiny upon humans that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob has given to His Blood Covenant Family. No other god or religion can elevate humans or give them a purpose that can begin to approach that of Israel and of those who are grafted into her. The Torah's major commandment that requires Israel to observe the Shabbat (Sabbath) rest, injects unprecedented dignity and honor to each person that is included in God's Israelite Family. Rest imparts an identity and aura of freedom, dignity and peace into the human consciousness. Only free men have the luxury of having set times of rest, leisure and relaxation from every day responsibilities and the labor it takes to do all that must be done. And only slaves are deprived of the enjoyment of peace, rest and leisure.

In God's good time, His living Word, Messiah Yeshua, emerged from Israel's womb, to remove the Sin Curses from us and restore us to our original, Pre-Fall, image and likeness of God identity, purpose and destiny! Humans, even the most abject and deprived, can learn, from the Torah, that we were all created to be as one with God Himself! And so, regardless of their original background, culture, origin, religion, circumstances or station, people began to be seen as incalculably precious, valuable and important! Dignity, value and freedom are gifts from our Creator. They are our Birthright, given to us by the true God's Covenant Lovingkindness, Grace and Mercy.

I challenge you: as you see the barbaric cruelties and injustices that run rampant throughout the world of fallen men, try to find any other, man-made god, or religion, prophet, 'wise man' or philosophy that can equal the Love, Compassion and Tender Mercy of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Nothing can compare to the world-changing 'gardening' impact that God's written Torah and His Living Torah, Yeshua, have had on us. God's revelation and commandments put the debased people of the world back in touch with God's Reality and Truth. Because of what God made us to be, there is no place for slavery and abuse. Those abominations must be abolished. And criminal greed, brutality and unjust violence against the God-given dignity and purpose of any human being must also cease. God's Reality is what sets the victims

of Darkness free! He demands that the downtrodden and *have-not* people be protected, nurtured and restored. Women must be elevated and restored to their original God-intended position, dignity and status... as the equal of men:

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

Torah’s influence also required Israel to espouse universal literacy. All Israelite children were required to receive Torah education and training. That required males and females alike to become literate so they could study and learn God’s Word. But that was unheard of in the darkened, barbaric cultures and predatory societies that surrounded God’s Covenant people! Notice how, today, many societies strive to protect and spread education and literacy. Notice how greatly they differ from benighted shortsighted societies that are still driven by ancient attitudes and traditions that ban women and ‘lower classes’ from the right to education and economic advancement and the basic human rights the modern world espouses. These societies continue to try to stamp out freedom and dignity and education for women and for anyone else they discriminate against and consider to be undesirable, unacceptable or unworthy. The Torah opposes and contradicts such benighted practices, and restores freedom, peace and rest to all.

The compassion and selflessness of God’s Love as commanded by the Torah gave rise to the charitable institutions and public hospitals and outreaches to the poor and disadvantaged that we see today. Torah influence protects widows, orphans, refugees and the outcast underprivileged people of this world. It breaks the hopeless vicious cycles of despair that are inflicted by unjust, brutally repressive, rigid social caste systems. That was unheard of in the ancient world! Torah is what began to liberate the masses of downtrodden, deprived people. It teaches men that light, hope, peace and freedom are human birthrights and that God requires the misery of all enslaved victims of the Serpent to end! Torah protects us from false faiths and teachings and from the heartless greed of money-mongers, and the brutality of familial or governmental or religious tyrants. It ‘circumcises’ (crucifies) and strips away from our hearts the inbred selfishness and oppression imposed on all fallen flesh by twisted human lusts and abusive family systems and greed driven societies and their brutal, heartless false gods, blind prophets and insatiable practices.

### ***Evil Restrained by God’s Love and Truth***

After the Flood that purged the earth of the incurable selfishness and violence that nothing could control or stop from spreading, Noah and his seven family members began once more to fill the earth with offspring. But human nature was still Sin-prone and corrupted. So, to prevent the need to purge the Earth repeatedly, God curbed and restrained the evil desires of the human race. He kept us from becoming too powerful in our selfish, predatory, destructive pursuits, by dividing and separating us:

*“So the Lord scattered them abroad from there, over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused*

*the language of the whole earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth.” (Genesis 11:8-9)*

At Babel, God thwarted the powers of Darkness that continue to deceive and manipulate people for their own destruction. Thus fallen flesh was unable to stop God’s Plan of Salvation and Restoration from running its course. He beat the Serpent at his own game of divide and conquer, by using those very tactics to prevent us from going over the edge and falling into a bottomless pit. But as long as men continue to rely on their own devices, this is the only end we can expect to experience:

*“Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you will eat the plants of the field; by the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return!” (Genesis 3:17b-19)*

So God intervened again. In Genesis 12, He began to reveal Himself and His ways to Abram, a Sumerian, whom He later renamed ‘Abraham.’ And through him, God instituted His Eternal Blood Covenant Family on Earth:

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

By the time Abram appeared, the Sumerian worldview, culture, governmental structures and sciences and arts and social habits were highly developed and well established. Their Middle Eastern home was populated by a variety of city-states, led by an array of competing warlords who vied with one another for supremacy. Many false religions were spawned throughout that region. People worshipped created things, like the sun and the moon and the various natural human appetites, such as the human lust for sex, and its drive for material abundance. And they also made gods out of war, to justify and enhance their endless lust for economic power, material gain and territorial expansion. Thus humans embodied and served the Serpent. In their selfishness, they strove to climb all over each other, grabbing at the largest portions of the resources available, and trying to maintain a hold on the most influential and dominant positions.

Ancient peoples shared a common worldview that was fatalistic and therefore, hopeless. They saw life as a large, recurring cycle or circle or wheel. We might compare it to a giant Roulette Wheel within which all societies and families and individuals must live. This enormous ‘Wheel’ spins in endless life-death-life-death-life-death cycles. So people saw themselves as dependent on ‘fate’ or ‘kismet’ or ‘luck’ or ‘karma.’ They live in endless, unchangeable, inescapable circuits... orbits that trap all of mankind in a meaningless repetitive cosmic loop. So the human outlook from within that ‘Wheel’ was hopeless, meaningless existential emptiness and soul-murdering desolation.

In that view, everything depends on ‘fate’ or ‘luck’ or ‘the whims of mankind’s false ‘gods.’



Therefore, nothing ever really changes. So men can only try to make the best of their existence, as long as it lasts, by trying to appease and bribe their false gods with religious rituals and sacrifices. Meanwhile, the common view of ‘human significance’ or ‘history’ remains trapped and stunted by the revolutions of that Wheel and its never ending cycles. Abram and his family were trained to see themselves and each other and their future destinies accordingly. And since the ancients believed that they were at the mercy of the many ‘gods’ that interfered with their lives and manipulated their fortunes, they devised a variety of religions by which to interact with these gods. And when their rituals failed, they explained the failures as, ‘the will of god’. Thus they would try to manipulate or coax or curry favors from those gods by slavishly trying to ‘serve’ them. They did it in hopes of avoiding the full brunt of their wrath. In Abram’s region, the moon gods, ‘*Nanar*’ and ‘*Ningal*,’ were prominent. And they are most likely what he and his family were worshipping before the true, living God intervened.

Ancients worshipped their false gods to try to ‘get by’ in life, with as much favor and as little misfortune as possible. But at best, life was dismal, insecure, filled with paranoid strife and unspeakable selfishness, treachery and brutal cruelty. This is the only way open to fallen Sin-adoring flesh when it is left to its own devices. This is what the living dead people have to look forward to and what they must put up with at all times.

*“Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you will eat the plants of the field; by the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return!”* (Genesis 3b-19)

It was only after the Living God began to reveal Himself to Abram that things began to change. In Genesis 12, God’s Word invades his space. And in Genesis 15, He reveals God’s Blood Covenant and makes Abram and his wife Sarai and their household part of it. And later, through Abraham’s son, Isaac, and Isaac’s son Jacob, and Jacob’s son Judah, and Judah’s descendant, King David of Israel, God promised to give to this Blood Covenant Family, a promised Descendant, through whom Almighty God would completely rescue, redeem, cleanse and reconcile with the fallen human race. This Promised One came to be known as Israel’s ‘Messiah,’ ‘The Anointed One’ or ‘The Christ.’

So God separated Abram and his family from their Sumerian/Chaldean past, and from their natural family and neighbors and culture and customs and false gods. Then He introduced His ways and purposes to them... and, eventually, to the rest of the world. His Self-revelation and its implications were utterly shocking. It shook earthly institutions and structures like a violent earthquake in terms of its revolutionary moral and social and personal paradigms and implications. It cut right to the core of all human idolatry and social practices and vested self-serving interests and investments and traditions and comfort zones. The world had never seen anything like this bolt of unexpected, devastating Lightning! God injected His awesome Worldview into this fallen world’s Darkness and pierced and confronted everything that preexisted it. And so that hopeless, fatalistic ‘Roulette Wheel’ in which humanity was trapped, began to disintegrate and a completely different understanding of humanity and its purpose began to emerge and take its place.

The viewpoint God introduced gave a definite new direction, and a meaningful eternal purpose, dignity and status the human race never before imagined possible. It was a redemptive, restorative purpose and destiny that broke the vicious cycle of meaningless, hopeless existence and it blasted open a way for men to make their Exodus from the futility of this fallen world. For the first time since Adam's fall, humanity had a real future that did not in any way depend on this fallen world, or its self-serving, greed-driven brutal societies or demon-driven customs, cultures, circumstances, or false gods.

Love, Compassion, Grace and Eternal Faithfulness came to Earth in the Person of God's living Word. He was sent by His Father to reconcile God and Man, and to rescue us from our past. He came to take us out of slavery to this brutal, predatory dog-eat-dog world. Day replaced Night; and Death was overwhelmed by Life. God began to free the human race from its maddening, meaningless orbits of living death. God's Exodus made it possible for mankind to exchange its Slavery for God's Freedom and Rest! And gradually, over the centuries, God's living Word and Holy Spirit prepared Israel to bring the Incarnation of God's Word to fruition. And Almighty God, Love Himself, appeared in this world, as Yeshua... one of us. And in this way, He demonstrated in unmistakable terms, what we mean to God, and what He intends to be, to us:

*“One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, ‘Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?’ And He said to him, “‘You shall **LOVE** the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the great and foremost commandment. The second is like it, “You shall **LOVE** your neighbor as yourself.” On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.” (Matthew 22:35-40)*

Israel was not to be trapped within that endlessly spinning, fatalistic Wheel of Existence. He began to lead them on a Journey to a brand new Home and a new, Love-based Identity and Purpose and Destiny. He bestows Ultimate, Eternal Salvation and a Restoration that bestows God's beautiful, unimaginable Inheritance and Destiny on any human that will heed, believe His Word, and follow His Love-based ways:

*“Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I am teaching you to perform, so that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you. You shall not add to the Word, which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you.*

*“Your eyes have seen what the Lord has done in the case of Baal-peor, for all the men who followed Baal-peor, the Lord your God has destroyed them from among you. But you who held fast to the Lord your God are alive today, every one of you. See, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do thus in the land where you are entering to possess it. **So keep and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the Lord our God whenever we call on Him? Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law (Torah) which I am setting before you today?**” (Deuteronomy 4:1-8)*

Despite little Israel's lapses and daunting inabilities, the Revelation and Commandments that God entrusted to her have transformed and continue to revolutionize all of human history! Before Israel came to be, the world was filled with unbelievable selfishness, cruelty and sadness. The false gods men worshipped were a product of the imaginations of fallen, living-dead men. And because they were made in man's own image and likeness, they too were selfish, self-centered, rebellious, manipulative, predatory and extremely violent and murderously destructive.

Before Israel emerged, there was no such thing as selfless mercy, grace, generosity or charity in the world. And dignity was not available except for those males that proved to be the most powerful, violent and cunningly inventive. Only the upper crust classes had the power and wealth, and the 'good fortune' their privileged state afforded. Those 'lords' and 'kings' used their power and prestige to compete with each other. And they forced their underlings to do the actual fighting and dying on the behalf of their overlords. It was a '*survival of the fittest*' type of world. And it was that way until the true Living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob intervened, through the Torah, revealing and declaring Himself to be the true, one and only God... the God who is Eternal Righteousness and Selfless Love.

So an ever-increasing dawn began to light up the world. It brought significance and transforming change and hope and freedom to the world, through Israel. There is no other way to express the Reality of Israel's God, and His significance, except to view it as a radical Departure from the Wheel of endless cycles. It was an Exodus! God made it available to all Sin-trapped humans. The Torah's influence has made it possible for charitable, benevolent organizations and ministries and hospitals, homeless shelters and orphanages and care centers for the aged and infirm to come into being. Hope, joy, compassion, peace and deep, exciting anticipation for the future is now available for all men, thanks to the Spirit of God who makes God's living Word real, alive and effective within the people in whom He abides.

Yes the Covenant of Sinai was broken many times... but God never changes! So He promised to make and fulfill a New Covenant with the very same people! And this Covenant ushers in the fulfillment of what was instituted and promised in the past. Life will overcome Death... exactly as God has promised:

*"If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love (Chesed, Covenant Loyalty or selfless Agape-type Love) I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophesy and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have Love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have Love, it profits me nothing.*

*"Love is patient, Love is kind and is not jealous; Love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the Truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child,*

*reason like a child; when I became a man I did away with childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. But now Faith, Hope, Love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is Love!” (1 Corinthians 13 Amplification added.)*

Beloved... what God gave to Israel at Mt. Sinai continues to make an enormous difference! Despite human frailty and the pall of deception that covers the earth, despite the Serpent’s best efforts to keep mankind trapped in slavery to self and insecurity and paranoia and greed... Torah gives us God’s Life-giving Light. And the Light will continue to increase in intensity and God’s Love will bring more and more of the living dead back to the knowledge of and union with the True God and His Eternal Life... through the obedient faith of the disciples of His living Word:

*“You are the Light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your Light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in Heaven! Do not think that I came to abolish the Law (Torah) or the Prophets (Tanach); ***I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.*** (interpret properly and obey) For truly I say to you, until Heaven and Earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law (Torah) until all is accomplished!” (Matthew 5:14-18 Amplification and emphasis added.)*

Torah truly is God’s ‘Tree of Life’ amid the Serpent’s Realm of Death. It has transformed human society. Israel’s prophets and apostles proclaimed and demonstrated the difference between those that remain trapped in the Roulette Wheel of God-less existence, and those that follow God’s Word out of this world’s vicious cycle of Frustration and Despair!

*“How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the Law (Torah) of the Lord, and in His Law (Torah) he meditates day and night. ***He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in its season and its leaf does not wither; and in whatever he does, he prospers.****

*“The wicked are not so, but they are like chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish!” (Psalm 1 Amplification and emphasis added.)*