

Christ Tabernacling Among Us

(Day 4—Feast of Tabernacles)

Fred R. Coulter—September 24, 2002

Here we are already halfway through. Time flies, and what it does, it tells us that since there is a beginning, there is an ending. Christ says He is the ‘Beginning and the Ending.’ One of the whole themes of the Feast of Tabernacles is ***God dwelling with His people.***

Let’s go back to the beginning, and let’s just review a couple of things. God created and made man and woman in the image of God. Male and female made He them, after His likeness, and after His image. then right at first, right at the very beginning after Adam and Eve were created and the marriage took place, Adam and Eve were living in the paradise of God, the Garden of Eden, ***and God was living with them! God was dwelling with them!***

If you carry the whole theme of the Feast of Tabernacles and tabernacling, ***God has always wanted to dwell with His people, that they would know that He is their God, and they are His people.***

After Adam and Eve sinned, God couldn’t dwell with them any longer, because God cannot live where there is sin and unrighteousness. So, what God did is put them out of the Garden of Eden. You can read the sentencing and everything that took place.

He placed there two cherubim to guard the way of the Tree of Life, and they could not go in to the Garden of Eden. Apparently, God still lived in the Garden of Eden all the time from creation until the Flood of Noah.

But as we have seen with the sin that took place with Adam and Eve, and then later with Cain, and later on with all mankind, ***God could not dwell with human beings!*** So, after the Flood there was a change. Before the Flood, God was the One Who made the judgment; God was the One Who executed the unrighteous, and so forth.

Now let’s come to after the Flood, to that time in Gen. 9. Let’s see that God changed the administration to where He did not execute the judgment. He left it to man to judge other men according to the principles that God has given. After the Flood God withdrew a little further. He wasn’t dwelling with men as He did right after the creation. So, after the Flood, here’s what God did.

Genesis 9:1: “And God blessed Noah and his sons, and He said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.’ *That was the*

same thing that God told Adam and Eve when He first created them!

- there was a change in the nature of animals
- there was a change in the nature of the earth
- there was a change in the nature of man

That mankind now was on an accelerating scale downward, living a fewer and fewer number of years. No longer do they live into the hundreds and hundreds of years. So, there was a change in everything:

- climate
- the nature of man
- in administration of the earth

God was going to leave it more and more in the hands of mankind, because that’s what mankind wanted. *Sometimes God will give you what you want! But maybe it’s really not the best for you, but God will give it!* So here we find a change in administration:

Verse 2: “And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the air, upon all that moves on the earth, and upon all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you, even as the green herb I have given you all things” (vs 2-3).

This means that there was a restriction with the green herb that was the seed in it. I think today with many of the modern genetics that we have in plants that we are eating a lot of things that are not as nutritional for us, nor give us as much life as it should, simply because we are eating so many things that have no seeds in them, or we are eating things where the seeds have been genetically engineered to be modified to serve man’s purposes. That’s another thing Christ is going to have to do when He returns!

Now, there was a restriction on eating animal food. We saw in past time that there was a category of clean and unclean meats, because after the Flood Noah offered every clean beast, which shows that before the Flood they were also eating meat. Apparently, they were eating a lot of blood with it, because the earth was filled with wickedness and sin, and the imagination of man’s heart was evil from his youth. So, here again He reiterates about eating the flesh:

Verse 4: “But you shall not eat of flesh with

the life in it—*which is its blood.*”

That’s why we’re not to eat blood. Now blood transfusion is not eating blood. There are many risks with that, but we won’t get into that, but just simply to mention that if you have a transfusion, you are not eating blood.

Now then, here comes the change of administration; here comes *the administration of death* now that God takes out it of His hands and gives it into the hands of men. This also carried over into the covenant that God made with Israel. So, He says,

Verse 5: “And surely the blood of your lives will I require. At the hand of every animal will I require it, and at the hand of man. At the hand of every man’s brother will I require the life of man. Whoever sheds man’s blood, his blood shall be shed by man...” (vs 5-6).

That’s different than when we come back to Gen.4 when Cain murdered Abel, God was the one Who found out the crime. God was the one Who administered the penalty. And in this particular case, God chose not to execute the death penalty upon Cain. Sometimes that’s a worse penalty, to not have the death penalty executed on you. Now this change of administration was there.

“...for He made man in the image of God. And you, be fruitful and multiply. Bring forth abundantly in the earth, and increase in it” (vs 6-7).

Then God made a special covenant with the earth and all creation, which is the perpetual covenant of the rainbow in the clouds; an absolute promise and guarantee that God gave that He would never, never again flood the world or destroy it with a flood. ***What He’s going to do is destroy it with a fire.***

God was removed even further; God was more remote, because that’s what man wanted. So, ***man decided:*** ‘Now that God’s a little more remote, let’s go do our thing.’

So that happen with the Tower of Babel. They went and built the tower ***and defied God!*** What did God do? *He came down and He confounded their languages and scattered them into the earth; gave them their inheritance.*

Then we rapidly come down through the genealogies and we come down to Abraham. God is now dealing with *one man*, rather than dealing with all men; God left that administration to other men to take care of. Now what He was going to do is deal with one man, beginning with Abraham. He knew that He would have to start His work all over again.

He knew that in Abraham He would bless all the nations. Since men were looking to men! Then God said,

All right, I’m going to bless Abraham. I’m going to be with him. I am going to show him My way, and ***IF*** he loves Me and keeps My commandments I will bless his son, and his son’s son, and in them the whole world will be blessed.

Then we come down to the time of the children of Israel. God was going to do something a little bit differently. Here we find with Abraham that God talked with him and appeared to him; not to other people, just to Abraham. We know through Abraham’s life, when we come over here considering Sodom and Gomorrah, that God was able to talk with Abraham. Abraham also fed Christ and the two angels that came to destroy the city of Sodom, and Abraham was even able to bargain with God, and kept pleading clear down to ten men; ***just ten men!*** If there were ten righteous, God said, ‘Okay, Abraham, I will spare it.’ But there weren’t ten, so God had to destroy it. He saved Lot and his two daughters and his wife, ***but his wife loved the world and looked back,*** and turned into a pillar of salt!

We also find in this situation with Abraham, that Abraham had a special relationship with God, when God would appear to him as Melchizedek. He was the priest of the Most High. In the Old Testament when it talks about the Most High, it’s talking about God the Father. So, here on the earth at Salem, Melchizedek apparently had a place of worship. It was probably just an altar made of whole stones, as He commanded the children of Israel on how to make an altar.

Genesis 14:18: “And Melchisedec the King of Salem brought forth bread and wine. And He *was* the Priest of the Most High God.”

As we have covered in the book of Hebrews about the meaning of Abraham, so I’m not going to dwell on it. So, He blessed Abraham, and Abraham gave Him [Melchisedec] tithes of all that he had there, all of the spoil. It also shows a special relationship between God and Abraham, and this special relationship continued on, not quite as personal with Isaac as it was with Abraham, but nevertheless, it continued on down into Jacob.

Jacob wrestled with God and his name was changed to Israel, which means *prevailer with God!* Out of Israel, came the 12 sons of Jacob, who were the children of Israel.

Now let’s see something very important

concerning Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their relationship with God. They were strangers and sojourners in the land that God had promised for an inheritance to them. Though they dwelt there, they didn't own the land, because it was not yet time for them to possess the land, because God was going to give that to the children of Israel.

Let's see the theme of the Feast of Tabernacles concerning that. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob dwelt in tents or tabernacles, because they were looking for the coming Kingdom of God.

Hebrews 11:8: "By faith Abraham, being called *of God* to go out into the place, which he would later receive for an inheritance, obeyed and went, not knowing where he was going."

Much like us today when God calls us, and ***by faith***:

- we believe
- we repent
- we are baptized
- we begin walking in God's way

Walking with God, we don't know where we're going!

Just to prove a point: when you first came in the Church, are you today where you thought you would be when you first came into the Church? *No! Not a single one of us!* So, we didn't know where we were going. We had some general ideas, but we really didn't know. *Just like Abraham!*

Verse 9: "By faith he sojourned in the land of promise..."

We are called strangers and pilgrims, because though we live in the world today ***we are not of*** the world; we're not part of the world! ***We're just like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, dwelling in a strange land!***

"...like a foreigner, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, ***the joint heirs of the same promise***; for he was waiting for the city with *the* foundations of which God is *the* Architect and Builder" (vs 9-10).

Then it talks about how Sarah conceived and brought forth Isaac, and so forth.

Verse 13: "All these died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them from afar, and having been persuaded of *them*, and having embraced *them*, and having confessed that they were strangers and sojourners on the earth.... [just like we are today] ...For those who say such things make it manifest that they seek *their* own country, *as promised by God*. And if, on the one hand, they had

let their minds dwell *fondly* on the place where they came from, they might have had opportunity to return" (vs 13-15).

There again is another lesson for us. ***IF*** we go back into the world; we can have the opportunity to go back ***IF*** we want. God will work with us that we don't do it. But ***IF*** that is our desire, because we get our mind off the plan and goal of God, and we get our mind off the understanding of the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles that we are going to be dwelling with God, ***THEN*** we might/could have had an opportunity to return ***IF*** they desired.

Verse 16: "But now, on the other hand, they are aspiring to a more excellent *country*—that is, a heavenly *one*. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God because He has prepared a city for them"—***which is New Jerusalem***, which we'll talk about on the eighth day of the Feast.

Now let's understand the problem of *God dwelling with His people!* God always wanted to dwell with His people, and as we found concerning the tabernacle, one of the reasons that God wanted the tabernacle made was ***so that He could dwell with His people***, and ***have His presence with them***, that ***they would know He was God!***

But no, they didn't want that. They wanted God removed, so God removed Himself. Let's see something very interesting, because there's quite a lesson for us. *Quite a lesson!*

Deuteronomy 5:1: "And Moses called all Israel and said to them, 'Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day so that you may learn them and keep and do them.' *That's the whole thing that we need to do today:*

- we need to learn the way of Christ
- we need to keep the way of Christ
- we need to do the way of Christ in:
 - ✓ love
 - ✓ faith
 - ✓ hope
 - ✓ understanding.

Verse 2: "The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb."

God made a covenant with us at baptism, and that goes all the way back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!

Verse 3: "The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us..." *Israel had a different and a separate covenant that was given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!*

"...even us, all of us here, alive today. The

LORD talked with you face to face in the mountain out of the midst of the fire; (I stood between the LORD and you at that time to show you the Word of the LORD, for you were afraid because of the fire, and did not go up into the mountain,) saying” (vs 3-5).

Here’s what God told them. Now God reiterates Ten Commandments. I’m not going to go through all of this, but I’m just going to cover a couple of things here that are important for us to realize. Here’s how He starts:

Verse 6: “I *am* the LORD your God Who brought you out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage. You shall have no *other* gods before Me” (vs 6-7).

That, brethren, *is the most important commandment of all*, because everything else falls on that; everything else hinges on that! We’ll cover just a little bit concerning the Sabbath:

Verse 12: “Keep the Sabbath Day to sanctify it... [here’s a direct command to keep it] **...as the LORD your God has commanded you.** Six days you shall labor and do all your work. **But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God.** *In it* you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your livestock, nor your stranger within your gates, so that your manservant and your maidservant may rest as well as you. And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt...” (vs 12-15).

Isn’t that something? *The Sabbath Day not only is for fellowship with God, but also for us to remember that we were of the world!* We were part and parcel of the world, and God has called us out of the world. Not exactly *as the children of Israel*:

“...and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm...” (v 15).

But in order for God to intervene in our lives, *God had to work a miraculous thing for the Father to call us, and Christ to lead us, and to send the Holy Spirit!* Quite a thing!

“...Therefore, the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath Day” (v 15).

Also, when we cover about the Feast of Tabernacles, we are to understand that the children of Israel could have had God *dwelling with them in the tabernacle!* God was dwelling in a tabernacle. As we saw in following the way of the Ark and so forth, *God did not desire to live in a temple!* We’re going to see in the ultimate fulfillment of the Plan of

God, there’s not going to be a temple either, because God is going to dwell with His people.

So, the whole desire of God with the children of Israel was that He would dwell with them by putting His presence in the tabernacle, and later in the temple. God wanted them to understand how wonderful and what a tremendous thing this was. *But they didn’t have the heart to do it!* They told Moses:

You go near to God, and you tell us what He says, and you come and tell us

So again, *man wanted to push God out* when God said, ‘I want to dwell with them.’ After giving the Ten Commandments, and them telling God that, God said what they spoke. They were well intended, but what it really showed...

In order for God to dwell with His people, there’s a very important thing that has to happen. *You have to have the heart and mind that you desire that God do it!*

- God is not going to go where He is not wanted
- God is not going to force His way upon anyone

He’s going to judge everyone, one way or the other. But ***IF*** people don’t want God around, and they cast Him behind his back,

- *God is going to go*
- *God is going to leave them to their devices*

THEN men wonder why that is so? *Well, here’s the reason:* God said to them, because they didn’t want to hear the Word of God spoken by God:

Verse 29: “Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always... [a very powerful word: not some of the time; not part of the time, but ***all*** the time] ...That it might be well with them... [God wanted to bless them] ...and with their children forever!”

But they didn’t have the heart. They couldn’t do it. So, God says:

Okay. You keep My commandments, I’ll bless you that it goes well with you.

Deut. 6 is a very important section here. Even in spite of all that went on with Israel, God said:

All right, I’m still going to use you to reveal to the rest of the world that I’m God. I’m not going to reveal Myself to the rest of the world.

I'm going to dwell in Israel. I'm going to dwell there in the tabernacle.

He didn't dwell among the people like He did when He first created Adam and Eve. But you see, ultimately that is God's desire. So here's what He said. He said to Israel, 'Now you've got a special mission.'

I want you to see how very closely this mission related to what we do; only we carry it out spiritually. They were to carry it out in the letter of the Law.

Deuteronomy 6:1. "Now, these *are* the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD our God commanded to teach you so that you might do *them* in the land where you go to possess it, that you might fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you, and your son, and your son's son, all the days of your life, and so that your days may be prolonged. Hear therefore, O Israel, and be diligent to *observe* it, so that it may be well with you..." (vs 1-3).

I want you to understand all the way through here, God says that, '***IF*** you do these things it will be well with you:

- I will bless you
- I will prosper you
- I will be with you

Even though I can't directly dwell right in amongst you, I'm going to put My presence in the tabernacle, and I will place My angels about you, and over you, and bless you, and prosper you that way.'

"...and that you may greatly multiply, as the LORD God of our fathers has promised you, in the land that flows with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel.... [we can say this, too: *Hear, O Church of God*] ...**Our one God is the LORD, the LORD**" (vs 3-4).

Yes, Christ and the Father are one together, not numerically singular one, but are one, being united

Verse 5: "And you shall love the LORD your God... [this is the same requirement that Jesus told us in the New Testament] ...with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."

Brethren, that's what we need to do with every fiber of our being! God will hear us and will bless us. We're going to see tomorrow that God is dwelling in an entirely different place today. But let's look at Christ dwelling among His people.

Verse 6: "And these words, which I

command you this day, shall be in your heart. And you shall diligently teach them to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up" (vs 6-7).

That's why God's way is ***a way of life!*** It's not a 'religion' that you go to church on Sunday, or go to church on Sabbath and then you're out in the world the rest of the time. No! ***IF*** you're going to love God with all your heart, mind, soul and being, you're going to teach Them to your children, and you're going to talk about these things in your house, out of your house, wherever you are. It's a very part of your being. In the letter of the Law, that's what God wanted it to be with the children of Israel, ***so that He could bless them!***

Verse 8, "And you shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes."

The Jews today take little pieces of paper and they write down things and they have a little phylactery in which they put it, *on their right hand and on their forehead!* The Orthodox Jews literally do that. But God didn't want it that way. ***He wanted it in your heart and mind:***

- not just on the outside of your hand, *but in everything that you do with your hands*
- not
- just on the outside of your forehead, *but within your mind*

That's what we find that God does through the New Testament. *Here's where they were to write them:*

Verse 9: "And you shall write them upon the posts of your house and on your gates." *It's good to have the Ten Commandments posted in your house.*

Verse 10: "And it shall be when the LORD your God has brought you into the land which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob, to give you great and goodly cities which you did not build, and houses full of every good *thing* which you did not fill, and wells which are dug, which you did not dig; vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant, and you shall eat and be full; **then beware lest you forget the LORD Who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage**" (vs 10-12).

He gives this warning all the way through! But they really didn't listen to God in the way that they should have. They really didn't understand God at all. They got all puffed up in their own vanity; all the way of man is vain! He said:

You go in the land, you utterly destroy all of their altars, all of their images, and cut down the groves, and cut down their high places.

Deuteronomy 7:6: “For you *are* a Holy people...”

As we read this, I want you to think about how that applies to us today, because Deuteronomy is *the second giving of the Law*. A lot of the things that we find in the book of Deuteronomy are the very foundational things and purposes that we find in the New Testament.

We’re going to see why, *but I want you to notice how God was pleading with the children of Israel!* He wanted to remain living with them in the tabernacle. He couldn’t come and dwell among them as He did with Adam and Eve before they sinned. He’s not going to administer the commandments of God. He’s left that up to men now to do. So, the covenant with Israel, though it was a special covenant—not like the one He made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—they had *the administration of death* that God gave to all people beginning with Noah on this side of the Flood. So He says:

You tear them down, you burn them with fire.
We don’t want any of those things and idols around.

Well, you know what happened with the children of Israel. *They didn’t do it!*

Deuteronomy 7:6, “For you *are* a Holy people to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you to be a special people to Himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth.”

- Does that not apply to us? *We have much the same attitude, even with people within the Church of God!*
 - ✓ they don’t understand that they’re a special people
 - ✓ they don’t understand that they’re really called and chosen for a special purpose, for the first resurrection

They still have too much of the world in them, and they ‘practice a religion.’

But we are a special people above all people that are on the face of the earth. Let’s understand that that really applies to the Church. It applied to Israel here, but especially to the Church.

Here’s another principle that is true, too. This follows right along in the New Testament: ‘For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes on Him might

not perish but may have everlasting life’ Notice how that’s contained right here in

Deuteronomy 7:7: “The LORD did not set His love upon you nor choose you because you were more in number than any people, for you *were* the fewest of all people. But because the LORD loved you and because He would keep the oath, which He had sworn to **your fathers...**” (vs. 7-8)—*Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!*

Please understand, ***we are the spiritual seed today of Abraham!*** ‘For if you are Christ’s then are you Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise’

“...the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you out of the house of bondage from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.” *We’ve been redeemed from the hand of Satan the devil!*

Verse 9: “Therefore, know that the LORD your God, He *is* God, the faithful God Who keeps covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations.”

It’s such a shame that the religions of this world have made God into a mean, nasty and hateful individual. Or that God is some great glob in the sky, the inanimate god who is in everything and everywhere:

- God is in the table
- God is in the book
- God is in the tree
- God is in the rocks
- God is in the animals
- God is in you, if you find yourself

according to Deepak Chopra, the Hindu, ‘you’re going to find God, because you’re God.’

No! That’s not God’s way. God has intervened specially in our lives!

Verse 9: “Therefore, know that the LORD your God, He *is* God, the faithful God Who keeps covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations...” [then He says He wants you to learn a lesson] ... And he repays those who hate Him to their face, to destroy them. He will not be slow to repay him who hates Him. He will repay him to his face” (vs 9-10).

We need to understand that! We are not dealing with just fables and myths, ***we are dealing with the Truth of eternal life!*** So therefore, He said, because of this:

Verse 11: “You shall, therefore, keep the commandments and the statutes and the judgments which I command you today to do them.” *Then he reiterates again, over and over again!*

What I want you to do is take the whole book of Deuteronomy and just take that as a study project, and read it through and see how much God was telling them all the way through that:

- He loved them
- He called them
- He would bless them
- He would protect them
- He would watch over them
- ✓ ***IF*** they kept His commandments
- ✓ ***IF*** they kept His statutes
- ✓ ***IF*** they kept His judgments

Just like with us: ***IF*** we are faithful to the end, God will bless us!

Verse 14: “You shall be blessed above all people....”

Don’t people really want the blessings of God? *Yes, they do! **But they don’t want to do it God’s way!*** So, now we’re in a situation that men sort of challenge God, because:

- they have driven God away
- they have removed God from their lives
- they don’t want God around to talk to them or give them commandments
- they don’t want God to tell them what to do

So, they may say something like this:

IF God would talk to me as a man, not as God up in heaven talking down to me, but as a man, and I could hear what He would have to say ***THEN***, I could believe Him. I could follow Him, and I would do it.

Kind of the opposite of what the children of Israel said: ‘We don’t want God to talk to us.’

Let’s see that is exactly what God did, and that that is exactly what Christ did to dwell among men.

As we have seen off and on during the Feast of Tabernacles, God will give you what you want if you really insist upon it. That’s what happened with Balaam; he said, ‘O God! I know I can’t say beyond what You want me to say, but just let me have the money. Let me go with Balak.’

See, Balaam wanted the money. He didn’t care what he said. But Balaam knew he couldn’t go against the Word of God.

Balak thought, ‘Oh! He’s coming to curse Israel!’ So he set Balaam up on a mountain and said, ‘Go curse Israel.’ Then Balaam got up there and what did he do? *He blessed Israel, seven times!* So if God can make a false prophet preach the Truth,

- because He’s going to make him preach the Truth
- because He’s going to hold up His Word and not allow a curse to come upon Israel

It’s quite a thing!

Balak kept saying, ‘I hired you to curse! What are you doing blessing?’ And Balaam said, ‘I can’t do any more than what God allows.’

We know the final thing that Balaam did after he got done blessing Israel seven times. He told Balak, he said:

Now look, I know a way that the children of Israel can be cursed. Here’s what you do: you invite them to a feast with your gods, and have your women out there to entice them. Then get them involved in eating things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication, and God will have to punish them and curse them.

That’s the doctrine of Balaam!

Because the children of Israel ***were not willing to listen to the voice of God, they left themselves open and susceptible to this kind of thing.*** Today people may say, ‘Well, if God would talk to me I’ll listen to Him.’ ***We’re going to see that’s exactly what God did in the person of Jesus Christ!***

We will see that God is going to satisfy two things; He’s going to prophesy of it in Deut. 18:

1. He is going to speak to men as a man
2. He is going to dwell with men as a man

That is the ultimate of God tabernacling with men! Quite a thing to contemplate when we understand it.

- How much has God put Himself out for the sake of mankind?
- How much has God humbled Himself to show His love for mankind?

Here’s the prophecy of it:

Deuteronomy 18:15: “The LORD your God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren, One like me.... [in other

words, just a human being] **...To Him you shall hearken**” — ***listen to Him!***

Here’s why He said He’s going to do it. Again, God took them up on their proposition:

Verse 16: “According to all that you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, so that I do not die.’” *They were:*

- more concerned of self than they were that God loved them
- more concerned with their own flesh than they were how to live God’s way

Then when things come on people today because they have the same attitude, then they wonder:

- Why does God allow it?
- Why didn’t God stop it?
- Why didn’t God intervene?

because

- you didn’t want God to
- you didn’t want to do God’s way

Therefore, you pushed Him out even further from your life. Like we’ve said before, ***IF*** that’s what you want, that’s what God is going to let you do. He’s given free moral agency, hasn’t He? *Yes indeed!* So, when Moses went up and talked to God:

Verse 17: “And the LORD said to me, ‘They have spoken well what they have spoken.’” In other words, *they’re well-intentioned, but they really don’t want Me!*

Isn’t that something? God, Who made and created mankind after His own image, male and female, blessed them with the ability to reproduce themselves, multiply and replenish the earth, God provides everything that there is, ***all things necessary for life and living on this earth, and man says:***

God, I don’t want You. *or* God, I’m going to make my own god. I don’t like You as God. I want to have an idol. I want to see this big belly Buddha.

Or whatever the idol may be. Mankind has done this to God over and over and over again! So God said, ‘All right. I’m going to take them up on their proposition.’

Verse 18: “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, *One* like you, and will put My words in His mouth. And He shall speak to them all that I shall command Him.”

Now then, because God is going to do this, He is now going to hold every human being accountable in a special way that He hasn’t done in the past.

Verse 19: “And it shall come to pass, whatever man will not hearken to My words, which He shall speak in My name, I will require *it* of him. **But the prophet who shall presume to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak**, or who shall speak in the name of other gods, even **that prophet shall die**” (vs 19-20). *So, God says, ‘Okay. I’m going to do the ultimate, and I’m going to require the ultimate!’*

Now let’s see how this works out. How did God do that? Heb. 2 ties in with what we talked about yesterday about ‘What is man, that You are mindful of him?’ Now we’re talking about what God has done:

- to come to men
- to dwell among men
- to make the way of God known

Spoken to people by God Who became a man.

- After all, that’s what people wanted, didn’t they?
- Isn’t that why they told God?

Stay up in the mountain, but, Moses, you talk to Him and we’ll hear. We’ll listen to a man.

God said:

All right, I’m going to take you up on your proposition. I’m going to come as a man, and now you better listen to Him. Because I’m going to require it of you a special way.

The ultimate thing that God can do is going to require the ultimate responsibility upon the recipients of it!

Hebrews 2:6: “But in a certain place one fully testified, saying... [quoting Psa. 8] ... ‘What is man, that You are mindful of him, or *the* son of man, that You visit him? You did make him a little lower than *the* angels; You did crown him with glory and honor, and You did set him over the works of Your hands; You did put all things in subjection under his feet” (vs 6-8).

God hasn’t given the ultimate to man, yet. But that’s the destiny that all things will be put under man. So, what He did, He put it all under Christ! In order for God to fulfill His promise to mankind He did a great and a marvelous thing.

Verse 9: “But we see Jesus...”

We're going to see He was God, as we've gone through the series, "*Was Jesus God?* Yes, He was!

"...Who *was* made a little lower than the angels..." (v 9). *If He came as an angel, men would still say:*

You came as an angel. That's still greater than a man. Why don't You come as a man? Why don't You meet us on our terms?'

So, He was made a little lower than the angels:

"...crowned with glory and honor **on account of suffering the death...**" (v 9)—*to die!*

Because mankind says, 'God, why did You make us die?' *It was because of sin!* So, He came for the very purpose of suffering death, and because of that, and the death that He suffered:

"...crowned with glory and honor **on account of suffering the death** in order that by the grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone; because it was fitting for Him, for Whom all things *were created*, and by Whom all things *exist*, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (vs 9-10).

Even God was perfected by becoming a man to suffer the things of a man, and to die, and then be resurrected back to life by the power of the Father!

Let's see how God did this. Quite a phenomenal thing! As we read this, let's ask questions: *For God to do this:*

- Does He love us? *You bet He does!*
- Did He show and demonstrate His willingness? *Yes He did!*
- Does He also show that He, in doing this, is telling us that He wants us to live with Him? *Yes, He did!*

Let's see what He did:

Philippians 2:5: "Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus; Who, although He existed in *the* form of God..." (vs 5-6).

That actually means in the Greek, *existing as God*. The Greek 'huparchon,' means, *a state of being!* If He was in the *state of being in the form of God*, that means He was *existing as God!*

"...did not consider it robbery to be equal with God..." (v 6).

But all the religious leaders thought that that was a terrible thing, that He was the Son of God, and

made Himself equal with God, and sought to kill Him and to destroy Him! But here's what God did. Go back and you read all of the things of the praise of God:

- there's none like Him
- He's greatest in heaven
- greatest in earth
- none in the universe
- He controls and upholds all things by the Word of His power

Men say, 'Yes, all that power but, you know, You don't look upon us as little human beings squirming down here on this earth.' ***Yes, He did!***

Verse 7: "But emptied Himself... [the Greek means *He divested Himself*] ...and was made in *the* likeness of men, and took the form of a servant."

There are a lot of people who are still today incensed at slavery in the United States in the 19th century. But you know, there are still slaves today, and the greatest number of them are in Africa, by the way. So, no one is going to tell God, 'God, You never knew what it was like to be a slave.' ***Yes, He does!***

".....**and was made in the likeness of men**" (v 7). *That's why God created man in His own image and His own likeness, so that God could do this!*

That was the very prophesy that was given back in Gen. 3:16, after Adam and Eve had sinned, that God was going to send a Man to be the sacrifice for their sins and to destroy the works of Satan the devil.

Verse 8: "And being found in *the* manner of man..."—*every function of the human body that human beings had, **Christ had!***

He gave all, being God, gave that all up to become a human being to fulfill the desire of the children of Israel, that 'Oh, if a man would talk to us we would listen!' That's something!

"...He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even *the* death of *the* cross" (v 8).

There you have it! ***Did the ultimate***, didn't He? *No question about it!*

He was born of the virgin Mary, came into the world. Isn't it interesting that when we consider, after Jesus, being born of the virgin Mary, growing up as a child, being taught by special vision and revelation by God the Father (Isa. 50). He wasn't taught of any man. He didn't learn the Jewish myths and fables. No, He wasn't like an ordinary Jew. He

was like an ordinary man, **but taught of God, conceived of the Holy Spirit and filled with the Holy Spirit from conception!** And He had a special mission to do, and He was going to keep the promise that He gave back in Deut. 18.

John1:1—We know these, and we've covered these verses, But aren't these the same verses that Satan likes to come to and attack over and over again. And as we have seen, that men like to re-translate according to *their* interpretation of what God is, and what God should do, and what God should be. *Because:*

We don't believe that Jesus was God before He became human. We only believe that He was conceived at the time of His conception.

So, they have to come and change the words.

As I've mentioned before, this is the simplest Greek that could possibly be, and was written that way in a profound and direct way so that you know that Christ was God before He became human. **When He became human He was God manifest in the flesh!**

John1:1: "In the beginning was the Word..." [that's where we started] ...And the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

It's like Paul Harvey has said many times, because he believes in the Ten Commandments and he gets after people who say, 'You know, there are things hard in the Bible to understand.' So Harvey says:

When you read the Ten Commandments; what's hard to understand about those? It's not the hard things that get them down, it's their lack of desire to keep the simple things that they know are clear.

That's what we have here, this is clear!

Verse 2: "He was in *the* beginning with God. All things came into being through Him..." (vs 2-3).

If He made them, everything, how could He only exist in a moment of time thousands of years later? *It's incongruous!*

"...and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him. In Him was life, and the Life was the Light of men. And the Light shines in the darkness, but the darkness does not comprehend it" (vs 3-5).

Men have darkness in their minds and they don't want to let the light of God come in. No, they love the darkness, because it says that their deeds are

evil.

Verse 9: "The True Light was that which enlightens everyone who comes into the world." *In other words, every human being that comes into the world has life because of Him!*

Verse 10. "He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, but the world did not know Him."

So even when He came in the flesh the world didn't want it. Well, that's what they said they wanted. Amazing, isn't it? Is human nature and human desire fickle and carnal? *Yes, without a doubt!* The world knew Him not.

Verse 11: "He came to His own... [because He was of the brethren, as the prophecy was]...and His own did not receive Him"

To be received means to welcome Him like you would a long-lost family member. But they rejected Him. Because they rejected Him,

Verse 12: "But as many as received Him, to them He gave authority to become *the* children of God..."

You have the world over here that does all the rejecting and getting rid of God. God says:

All right, as many as receive Me, believe Me, repent of their sins, and love Me, you're going to be the sons of God.

We covered that how we're going to have a new body and a new mind!

"...even to those who believe in His name who were not begotten by bloodlines, nor by *the* will of the flesh, nor by *the* will of man, **but by the will of God**" (vs 12-13).

You are where you are today in the Church of God **because of the will of God!** Now, you have to provide your willingness to it. **IF** you do, **THEN** you can enter into a great and marvelous relationship with God, as we're going to see tomorrow. One greater than other people do not even know or understand.

Verse 14_[transcriber's correction]: "And the Word became flesh..."

He was spirit before, and He was God before. In order to become a man He had to be made flesh.

"...and tabernacled among us..." (v 14).

The *King James Version* in translating that 'dwelt,' kind of missed the mark a little bit. Because the meaning of the Greek here is, 'tabernacled,'

which means all the way through you have the Tabernacle of God. He wanted to dwell with men in the Garden of Eden, but they didn't want Him. They sinned, so God put them out.

God administered to them all during the time before the Flood, and they didn't want that. They went on their evil ways. God brought the Flood. He changed the administration; He gave man the jurisdiction of judging men who killed men, and instituted the administration of death. Then they went even further and rejected Him in building the Tower of Babel, and saying, 'we're going to go our own way.' So, God confused their languages.

What did God do? *Chose one man!* One man was willing: *Abraham!*

- then Isaac
- then Jacob
- then the children of Israel

The children of Israel said, 'Oh yes, we're willing,' *but they never really were!*

So, now God comes as a man and tabernacles among us! All the way the whole theme of the Feast of Tabernacles is *how is God going to dwell with His people?*

He "...tabernacled among us (and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth. John testified concerning Him, and proclaimed, saying, 'This was He of Whom I said, "He Who comes after me has precedence over me because He was before me."' And of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace" (vs 14-16).

Your whole relationship with God is based upon grace:

- the grace of the Holy Spirit of God
- the grace of the love of God
- the grace of Christ being in you
- the grace of the forgiveness of your sins
- the grace of being able to have direct contact and fellowship with God the Father through prayer and study
- the grace of the fellowship with each other

By grace are we saved! All of these are the graces and gifts of God which He gives to us, which he says, "...grace upon grace."

Verse 19: "And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?'.... [notice the questions that they asked him]: ...Then he *freely* admitted, and did not deny, but declared, 'I am not the Christ.' And they asked him, 'Then who *are*

you? Are you Elijah?' And he said, 'I am not.'.... (vs 19-21). ***But Jesus said he was!***

Isn't it interesting? That sometimes those whom God uses don't even know what they're doing as far as how God is using them? He knew he was to prepare the way, but he didn't consider himself Elijah. ***Jesus said he was!***

"Then they asked, 'Are you the Prophet?' And he answered, 'No.'" (v 21).

Meaning: going back to Deut. 18, they were looking for God to provide at that time ***the Prophet!***

A couple of years ago I heard a man—who is supposed to be a minister of God—say that he was 'that Prophet.' ***That's not so! That's a lie! And we can prove it right here by the Scriptures!***

Acts 3:22: "For Moses truly said to the fathers, "**A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up to you from among your brethren, like me; Him shall you hear in all things that He shall say to you.** And it shall be *that* every soul who will not hear **that Prophet** shall be destroyed from among the people." Now indeed, all the prophets from Samuel and those who followed, as many as prophesied, also proclaimed these days. You are *the* children of the prophets and of the covenant that God Himself appointed to our fathers, saying to Abraham, "And in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Unto you first has **God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you in turning each of you from your wickedness**" (vs. 22-26). *So, here he is saying that Christ was that Prophet!*

Let's come to the book of John, the Gospel of John, and let's see that after the feeding of the 5,000, there were many people who understood. They could see by what He was doing that He was ***that Prophet!*** {note our message: *That Prophet*}

Now everybody ate and was full. What was it that they fed them with? ***Five barley loaves and two small fishes to feed 5,000 people!***

John 6:12: "And when they were filled, He said to His disciples, 'Gather together the fragments that are left over, so that nothing may be lost.' Then they gathered *them* together, filling twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, which were left over by those who had eaten. Now, when the men saw the miracle that Jesus had done, they said, '**Of a truth, this is the Prophet Who was to come into the world.**'"

Jesus left and hid Himself, because, knowing that He was ***that Prophet*** they wanted to take and make Him king.

Verse 15: “Because Jesus perceived that they were about to come and seize Him, so that they might make Him king, He withdrew again to a mountain by Himself alone.” *It’s really quite something!*

Now let’s see how Jesus fulfilled *dwelling among men*, teaching the Word of God. Jesus went around proclaiming the Word of God. He had to meet—as we saw on the Day of Atonement—Satan the devil and conquer and overcome him. Now let’s see how He spoke the Word of God. It’s called the Gospel, the good news, which is then the good news of God, the Gospel of Christ; because God manifest in the flesh in the person of Jesus Christ, the One Who was Creator of everything, came to this earth to fulfill the promise that God gave: ***that God would come in the flesh and to tabernacle and dwell among His people***, and to teach them the Word of God as man to man, rather than God to man. Very profound. After He overcame Satan the devil and the temptations there:

Luke 4:14: “Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee; and word about Him went out into the entire country around. And He taught in their synagogues, *and* was glorified by all.” (vs 14-15). *So, He continued to preach and to teach and to go everywhere doing that.*

Let’s come see where Jesus went everywhere and preached.

- He taught the Word of God
- He spoke of God
- He showed them
 - ✓ the love of God
 - ✓ the mercy of God
 - ✓ the commandments of God
 - ✓ what God expected of them

Matthew 4:23: “And Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every disease and every bodily ailment among the people. Then His fame went out into all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were sick, oppressed by various diseases and torments, and possessed by demons, and lunatics, and paralytics; and He healed them. And great multitudes followed Him from Galilee, and Decapolis, and Jerusalem, and Judea, and beyond the Jordan” (vs 23-25) *The whole area of what we would call Palestine!*

Now then, ***remember the promise that that Prophet, Who was Christ, would teach them the words of God.*** God was going to hold them all accountable for this! So, what do we have in Matt. 5? *We have the Sermon on the Mount!* You want to

know the words of God unto eternal life? *Read the Sermon on the Mount: John 5-7!* When He got done speaking all of that, we find:

Matthew 7:28: “Now, it came to pass *that* when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were amazed at His teaching; for He taught them as One Who had authority... [which He did, from God the Father] ...and not as the scribes” (Matt. 7:28-29).

Even John the Baptist knew this; John 3:31: “He Who comes from above is above all. The one who is of the earth is earthly, and speaks of the earth. He Who comes from heaven is above all; and what He has seen and heard, this *is what* He testifies; but no one receives His testimony” (vs 31-32).

Even here people didn’t want to listen to Him. However, there are some few who do: ***those whom He calls!***

Verse 33: The one who has received His testimony has set his seal that God is true; for He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God; and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him.* **The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand.** The one who believes in the Son has everlasting life; but the one who does not obey the Son shall not see life, for the wrath of God remains on him” (vs 33-36).

Just like Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees over, and over, and over again.

John 5:17: “But Jesus answered them... [after He did a miracle on the Sabbath] ...‘My Father is working... until now, and I work.’ So then, on account of this *saying*, the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, not only because He had **loosed** the Sabbath...” [one of the traditional laws of Judaism] ... but also *because* He had called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God... [which He was] ...Therefore, Jesus answered and said to them, **‘Truly, truly I say to you, the Son has no power to do anything of Himself...’** (vs 17-19)

In other words, it’s not coming out from Himself. Because as a human being, doing that, if He took that of Himself, what would He be doing? *Exactly the same as every other human being, sinning against God!* Now notice this carefully.

“...but only what He sees the Father do. For whatever He does, these things the Son also does in the same manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him everything that He Himself is doing. And He will show Him greater works than these, so that you may be filled with wonder” (vs 19-20).

- Isn't it interesting that all of these things in this particular way are found in the Gospel of John?
- Who was the disciple that loved Jesus, and whom Jesus loved? *John!*

John 14:26: “But *when* the Comforter comes, even the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in My name, that One shall teach you all things, and shall bring to your remembrance everything that I have told you. Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives... [because it gives it and takes it back]... do I give *it* to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it fear. You have heard Me say to you that I am going away, and *that* I will come to you *again*. If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced that I said, ‘I am going to the Father’ because My Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it happens, so that when it comes to pass, you may believe. I will not speak with you much longer because the ruler of this world is coming; but he does not have a single thing in Me. Yet, *he comes so that the world may know that I love the Father, and that I do exactly as the Father has commanded Me*. Arise, let us go out” (vs 26-31).

Just like the prophecy of. When God would come and dwell in the flesh and tabernacle among His creation, He was to bring the words of God as a man *to men*. They were held accountable and responsible for it in a special, particular and profound way.

John 12:44: “Then Jesus called out and said, ‘**The one who believes in Me does not believe in Me, but in Him Who sent Me**.... [God the Father is also acting in this and concerned, too] ...And the one who sees Me sees Him Who sent Me. I have come *as* a light into the world so that everyone who believes in Me may not remain in darkness. But if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.... [He’s coming to judge the world when He returns] ...The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him... [What is it that judges him?] ...the Word, which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day” (vs 44-48).

To fulfill the prophecy that God in raising up this Prophet

- Who was God manifest in the flesh
- Christ tabernacling among us
- coming to His own
- teaching the way of God
- teaching the Word of God

Because they did not want to listen to God as He spoke to them from Mount Sinai, so God took them up on their proposition and came as a man and says, ‘**You are held responsible for what you hear, because God has dwelt among us.**’

Verse 49: “For I have not spoken from Myself... [He didn’t do it of Himself] ... but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore, whatever I speak, **I speak exactly as the Father has told Me**” (vs 49-50).

Now that Christ has come into the world, God manifest into the flesh, because God has tabernacled among men, and has left His Word for us to live by. We know the words of God that He would speak to us as a human being, contained right here in the Bible, ***we are held accountable for it!***

IF we accept it, believe in Christ, we receive eternal life and we can dwell with God. What a great meaning to the Feast of Tabernacles!

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, a Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 9:1-7
- 2) Genesis 14:18
- 3) Hebrews 11:8-10, 13-15
- 4) Deuteronomy 5:1-7, 12-15, 29
- 5) Deuteronomy 6:1-12
- 6) Deuteronomy 7:6-11, 14
- 7) Deuteronomy 18:15-20
- 8) Hebrews 2:6-10
- 9) Philippians 2:5-8
- 10) John 1:1-5, 9-16, 19-21
- 11) Acts 3:22-26
- 12) John 6:12-15
- 13) Luke 4:14-15
- 14) Matthew 4:23-25
- 15) Matthew 7:28-29
- 16) John 3:31-36
- 17) John 5:17-20
- 18) John 14:26-31
- 19) John 13:44-50

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Psalm 8
- Genesis 3:16
- Isaiah 50
- Matthew 5; 6

Also referenced: Message: *That Prophet*

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