

Love and Understanding

Our continuing premise has been our deep desire to serve as the immortal priests for the approaching restoration of the Kingdom of Heaven. We hope to teach and police Kingdom Law globally with spiritual and political authority. Our ambition is to serve as the vehicles of divine enlightenment as the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh Elohim progressively covers the earth as the waters cover the sea. Therefore we are considering the divine principles and lessons within the shadows of Kingdom Law as a vocational training exercise.

The next Kingdom Law ritual we will be addressing concerns the ritual cleansing from death by the ashes of the red heifer. This procedure defines how death, which is the power that sin has over us, will be defeated through death. This ritual is a pattern displaying how the connection between sin and death would be broken by the death of the antitypical red heifer sacrifice. The implications of this ritual and the divine principles portrayed are confirmed in many ways throughout scripture. Fathoming the depth of the heavenly thoughts in the shadows of this particular ritual will require a greater level of concentration and consideration, of mentally chewing and re-chewing the cud. Therefore, before we begin to examine these particular divine thoughts (in our next commentary) we should recognize and dispense with one particular illegitimate defense mechanism of the human thought process. This is the default subconscious presumption that increasing complexity actually decreases significance.

Complexity and Significance

We live in an age where convenience is the magical Pied Piper of humanity. Society's waste grows exponentially because we do not believe in the principle of sustaining. Our societies use, discard and replace. Comparing the communication skills of the average writer from 150 years ago to today exhibits an embarrassing descent in our accepted standards for reasoning. Those who pay to get our attention and win our minds pay huge sums for supposedly influential advertising to be effective in a matter of seconds. Can we truly be so easily convinced and so effortlessly exploited with some entertaining bells and whistles? Society has been reduced to thinking and acting instinctively instead of carefully and thoughtfully. A false equation now operates on a presumptive level suggesting that increasing complexity and difficulty is inversely related to decreasing significance and value. This inappropriate relationship is a byproduct of the acceleration of knowledge prophesied for the last days (Dan 12:4).

The Principle of Degeneration

Understanding the divine mind is never an easy process. Our Creator's principles are eternal and infinite. We are temporary and finite. Divine principles are counter-intuitive. Flesh based logic naturally disengages the capacity to understand divine principles. The beginning presumptions of fleshly logic are always self-promoting and God degrading, a pattern evident in all false doctrine. Every aspect of all false religion mutates the original emphasis of our Creator's expressions and patterns into self-worship, with images of eternal existence despite sinfulness and gods remanufactured into one's own image and likeness. Our heart centered thought process will trip us up if we do not continually recalibrate our minds to the divine principles in scripture. This is the inescapable feature of degeneration permeating our current natural order. Just as light, energy and life fade and degenerate, so spiritual wisdom will degenerate without constant replenishment and reinforcement of clean, pure divine expressions and understandings. This is not a simple process, as there cannot be any legitimate debate concerning the difficulty in understanding divine communication. The rituals, parables, visions, dark sayings, metaphoric miracles, symbolic prophecies, similies and shadows flooding scripture display a decidedly intentional complexity. The scripture oversimplification disciples embarrass themselves by professing the

inconsequence of 99% of God's word, hissing that we should only concern ourselves with whatever issue they are promoting. This principle of intentional complexity in divine communication has been addressed before in our commentaries. It has been demonstrated that unraveling that complexity has the capacity to break down the natural arrogance in fleshly reasoning, attacking the instinctive self-worshipping reasoning issuing naturally from the human heart. An arrogance drained, circumcised heart is the key to truly hearing that still small voice of our Heavenly Father. However, we need to address the danger of a possible presumption that can issue from this complexity challenge. Since our Heavenly Father purposely makes it difficult to unmistakably understand His expressions, can it really be that important? If understanding these expressions within Kingdom Law were so important, wouldn't they be expressed in simpler, unmistakable terms?

Mining the Value of Complexity

The amazing interdependent complexity of creation mirrors the same glorious interdependent complexity of scripture, both being authored by the same unchanging, omniscient Creator. The last hundred years have certainly emphasized the value of increasing understanding of the interdependent complexity of creation. Solomon had no indoor plumbing. Nebuchadnezzar could not adjust the thermostat for a little more warmth. David could not board a plane at Tel Aviv to escape King Saul. Ruth could not drive to the supermarket for her grain. Nicodemus could not run a computerized word search about what Jesus of Nazareth had meant about being *born again*. Our generation benefits greatly because more and more of the features of creation are understood, respected and harnessed. Sadly, humanity is oblivious to the divine principles, exhortations and prophecies trumpeted by the features of creation. Great benefits for mankind have resulted from just a slightly improved understanding of the interdependent complexity of creation. Creation is a result of Yahweh's **spoken** word (i.e. *Let there be... and it was so*; Genesis 1). Both divine expressions (creation and scripture) project the same divine messages. Jesus quotes creation as proof of his exhortation to love our enemies: *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust* (Matt 5:44-45). Mankind focuses their attention to unraveling the complexities of creation, which they irreverently call "nature." Far greater benefit could be realized by understanding the interdependent complexity of the Creator's **written** word. Simply because something is difficult to understand, this does not somehow insure any absence of value. Creation itself proves that point. We cannot presume that because the continuing path of enlightenment is not easier, that somehow it doesn't really matter all that much to our Creator if we don't truly understand His expressions or not. This is an important premise as we consider the initially confusing laws and rituals of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Understand and Appreciate

An absence of understanding erodes the breadth and depth of love. Those we love want us to understand them. We also want to be understood by those we love. If our greatest love does not understand us, this is always very emotionally painful. However, respecting that understanding is not exactly the same issue as embracing the philosophies and paradigms of those we understand and love. Our Heavenly Father wants both. He wants to be both understood as well as appreciated for His eternal principles. Once we understand our Heavenly Father, He wants us to choose His eternal principles over the briefly beneficial, self-promoting, heart generated principles of the serpent philosophy. Our Heavenly Father does not make it exceptionally easy to understand Him, but this offers no evidence whatsoever that pursuing a greater and deeper understanding of His thoughts and principles is not desired.

Great Value Does Not Come From Small Efforts

When teaching the truth to others we can frequently come across a variation of this equation between intentional complexity and reduced significance. The question lingers subconsciously in the minds of students as to why man would be created with the capacity for failure if the Creator didn't really want failure. The

answer is the same. The answer is love and understanding. Programmed machinery is not capable of love. Love is always voluntary, or it isn't love. Different categories of love define societal life. Love for our spouse, parents, children, friends, community and mankind in general is the paving upon which the societies of the world travel through life. Shared love, based on understanding and a common paradigm, drains stress by sharing the burdens and joys of life. A continuing absence of anyone to understand or appreciate us develops into the crushing weight of loneliness. The Creator constantly projects the significance of love and understanding to an oblivious, self-worshipping world. Our Heavenly Father's eternal principles are almost universally rejected as mankind grasps for the short term benefits of the serpent philosophy. Ever since Adam and Eve chose the serpent's testimony for their self-promotion and benefit over Yahweh's warning that disobedience will bring death, our Heavenly Father has been subtly offering the testimony of His principles to those He invites to love Him. The greatest of all commandments was to love Yahweh our Elohim with all our heart, strength and mind. Our Father in heaven wants to be understood as well as loved. He just doesn't make it easy. Great value does not come from small efforts. Ignoring this truth encourages the smoke and mirror delusion hypnotizing today's gamblers, the get-rich-quick disciples and the swelling crowds buying instant-guaranteed salvation with a single phrase about taking Jesus into their hearts. Great value does not come from small efforts

Why and Not Just How

The Jewish community misunderstood Yahweh. They danced through the Kingdom Law rituals thinking it was mere performance that awarded righteousness. Their misunderstanding of their God was so wide and deep they thought they were righteously serving the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by killing Jesus of Nazareth. We must not make the same mistake. Plodding through the few divine rituals of the Ecclesial Age is just as dishonorable as plodding through the divine rituals of the Mosaic Age. We are not baptized simply to fulfill a command, like a step in a computer program or following the directions to assembling a device. The forgiveness of our past sins through baptism is a side-benefit, due to the principles involved. It is not the focus. We are demonstrating love and understanding to our Heavenly Father. We are validating the divine principle that was rejected in Eden. As an act of love and devotion, we voluntarily descend into the watery grave of baptism to prove that, like our beloved Creator, we believe that death is the legitimate and morally correct answer to sin. We believe that sin should not be allowed to exist indefinitely without its destruction by death. The transgressionless son of God was certainly not baptized for the forgiveness of any sin. He demonstrated the righteousness of his Father, in ritually validating that the death of sin nature is absolutely right and that anything else would be wrong. A consistent feature of all false religion is that sin does not have to mean death, that men do not die because of sin. Immortal souls, fallen angels and evil immortal beings form the basis of religions around the planet, rejecting our Heavenly Father's principles. In rising again from beneath the Jordan waters Jesus demonstrated the further righteousness of his Father who offers renewed life despite being right in requiring death for sin. Both aspects of our Creator's righteousness must be displayed. From this baptismal point forward we are committed to demonstrating divine principles by our deeds, words and thoughts. We have to show that we understand the one we love, that we reject the serpent based presumption of deathless sin and eagerly embrace the values and definitions of our Heavenly Father and His son.

The Battle for Our Minds

When we set our minds to consider Kingdom Law and the divinely appointed rituals we should consciously and resolutely embrace the challenge of its intricacies and beware the dangers of instinctive conclusions. We should meditate on how these shadowed principles reflect on the righteousness of our Creator and the wickedness of the flesh. Our Father wants thinkers. Jesus asked the question constantly: *How think thee... What thinkest thou... What think ye of Christ... Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts.* If Jesus wanted to make things perfectly clear so that there could be no mistake in his teaching, then why did he allow disciples to walk away from him without explanation when they were appalled at the statement that they would have to eat his flesh and drink his

blood if they ever wanted eternal life (John 6:51-71). The unwillingness of these disciples to diligently consider a certainly difficult statement resulted in their rejection of the one who could save them. Yahweh and Christ want thinkers. *For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ* (2 Cor. 10:4-5). The true battle is in our minds.

Therefore, our next commentary will direct our meditations to the defeat of death. The red-fleshed, calfless female bovine, having never labored under a yoke, was burned to ashes along with red cedar, scarlet and hyssop. These ashes were combined with running water and spattered on the death defiled person as a purification for sin on the third and seventh days following their defilement by death. They had not transgressed any command but had to participate in these two sin purifications. The two stages of this death defeating procedure (the red heifer burning and the individual ashes spattering) both occurred outside the camp. This procedure offers great value in understanding divine principles. It prophesies of how the power of sin and death would be broken and we could personally benefit. The powerful theme within these instructions can be clearly demonstrated in two of our Ecclesial Age rituals. What thinkest **thou**?

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Defeating Death No.1

Death has no part in our Creator's ultimate plan, when creation enjoys true peace with its Creator (Rev 20:14-15; 1 Cor 15:25-28). A natural order based on endlessness is difficult to imagine with finite minds that cannot truly understand infinity. Everything in our current order is based on limitations. There are always beginnings and endings. There is new life and there is death. There is the continuous rotation of the death of winter followed by the rebirth of spring. We eat but we always get hungry again. We awaken refreshed only to grow weary again, eventually surrendering to sleep. **Unfulfillment** is the standard in everything we see and experience. Solomon sighs deeply the expression: *Vanity, vanity, all is vanity*. However, the worldly wise (in their own eyes) foolishly define life as a journey, instead of a destination. They worship the limitations of life that are scripturally defined as our curse. They spout foolishness such as *life has no purpose without death* and *laughter is meaningless without sorrow*. This venom of the serpent philosophy is a subtle seductive danger to those who truly love our Heavenly Father, appreciating His principles and yearning to think and act as He does.

Death's Spiral

Our hope is so vastly different from our current cursed environment. The principle of **degeneration** burdens our constant journey through these cycles of ending and re-beginning. That wonderful renewed energy each morning only fades (degenerates) while weariness increases throughout the day. Unsatisfied hunger accelerates to remind us of our dependence on renewed energies. Thirst also underlines this degeneration feature permeating our current natural order of renewal dependence. Our energies erode, metal rusts, food corrupts, wood rots, and our bodies grow old, inefficient and full of pain. Death overshadows every feature of this limitation theme gripping our current natural order. It is death that is the black abyss into which spirals all of this fading, this relentless erosion and corruption. Death defines our current order. Death originated because of sin and has no other justification for its existence. Sin cannot exist without death and death cannot continue with

the elimination of sin. This is why death is defiling under Kingdom Law. However that defilement is not a personally moral (transgressional) defilement. Mortality is simply a physical condition inherited from our parents. There is no personal guilt assigned to one's birth. The misunderstanding that any personal transgressional sin and guilt is inherited at birth is a feature of the serpent philosophy permeating apostate Christianity where babies are 'baptized' by sprinkling to supposedly resolve this imagined guilt.

Death is addressed repeatedly in divine laws and principles. One particular ritual spells the defeat of this unbroken cycle of death. Each stage of this Kingdom Law ritual was performed entirely outside the wilderness camp, indicating how the Law alone could not resolve this burden of death and degeneration. Those driven out from God's community and presence by the touch of death were redeemed from their unclean and defiled state in a seven day procedure marked by the ashes of the red heifer. This ritual centered on the physical reality of death and how the defilement of death that separated man from his Creator would be defeated after seven divine days of 1,000 years each (Ps 90:4; 2 Pet 3:8).

Every detailed feature of this ritual is highly significant. This procedure describes how death will be defeated by death. The ritual described in Numbers 19 presents two distinct stages: 1) the sacrifice of the red heifer and 2) the repeated and individual application of the ashes to redeem the faithful from the defilement of death. A heifer is a young female that has not calved. No yoke ever burdened this sacrificial animal. This heifer had to be complete, without any blemishes whatsoever, but also had to have entirely red flesh. The High Priest heir apparent, not the current High Priest, presided over the sacrifice of this animal. However, he could not personally kill or burn this animal sacrifice. Every step of this ritual takes place outside the Israelite encampment, from the conversion of the animal to ashes to the application of those ashes, cleansing believers from the defilement of death. The blood of the sacrifice is spattered seven times toward the door of the Tabernacle from outside the camp, employing the same unique spattering verb and procedure as the sin offerings for the High Priest and the nation (Lev 4:6,17). The identification of the animal to be burned is expressed in four components: skin, flesh, blood and dung. The flames consume a second identification of four components together that will constitute the ashes for this purification from sin: the red heifer, red cedar wood, hyssop (possibly red) and scarlet. These ashes are combined with 'running' water and then spattered on the death defiled believer on the third and then the seventh days of the procedure, again validating the two stage progression of the defeat of death by death. Each of these ash and water spatterings are defined as a purification from sin, yet the community was not commanded to abstain from touching dead bodies.

Guiltless Sin

Under Kingdom Law any physical contact with a dead body resulted in a defilement mandating a seven day expulsion from among the sons of God and the participation in these two sin purifications on the third and seventh days. Noncompliance demanded permanent ostracism without any possibility of appeal (Num 19:13 & 20). Despite the serious reality of this death defilement there was no command to abstain from touching a dead body, with the exception of three community categories. Except for the High Priest (Lev 21:10-11), a Nazarite (man or woman Num 6:6) or a priest (Lev 21:1-3) it was not a sin to touch the dead. In fact there was even one particular divine command requiring believers to touch the dead (Deut. 21:23). Therefore, outside the High Priest, Nazarite or priest, there was no **guilt** whatsoever associated with touching the dead. Yet divine law demanded two participations in the sin offering of the red heifer. This **guilt-free** sin offering requirement is a consistent feature in all three of the physically defiling conditions of 1. touching the dead (Num 19:9,17); 2. bodily issues (Lev 15:15) and 3. leprosy (Lev 14:31-32). Although these conditions did not constitute the sinful transgression of a divine command they each demanded the removal from the community and the participation in a sin offering before that defilement and separation could end. These guilt-free sin offerings testify to the

unclean flesh domain of sin production, validated by many other scriptural meditational avenues previously noted in this continuing commentary.

Our mortal nature, inherited at birth, is divinely defined as an unclean state. Opposing this understanding, the serpent philosophy maintains that life is sacred. This is the illegitimate mental platform for all the ultimately meaningless morality debates about stem cell research, abortion, assisted suicides, capital punishment and identifying when life actually begins following conception. Human life is not sacred. It is inherently unclean and serves as the primed engine for generating sin. This is why Bro Thomas wrote in Elpis Israel: “Sin, I say, is a synonym for human nature. Hence, the flesh is invariably regarded as *unclean*.” This is also why our worldwide statement of faith includes this issue in the doctrines that **must be rejected**... “that there is no sin in the flesh.” There is never any guilt associated with this separate aspect of sin. Human nature is the sin producer, but not the product. There are sin offerings under Kingdom Law that deal with each of these two separate issues of producer (sin in the flesh) and product (sinful behavior). The difference between the two sin offering categories is the absence or presence of guilt. There is no guilt assigned for simply being born, but that observation does not automatically repel any identification with sin. That instinctive conclusion would inappropriately spring from the false presumption that any reference to sin must always be bound to some degree of guilt. The sin offerings centering on the ashes of the red heifer have no associations with guilt. This ritual is all about defeating the physical principle of death. It is about breaking and eliminating the defiling power of the sin producer: human nature.

The Inescapable Significance of Christ’s Death

The red heifer ashes ritual is all about the reconciling capacity of the death of our Messiah. This particular red heifer ritual does not address the saving power of our Messiah’s resurrection. Rom 5:10 *...we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life*. It is the violent death of the transgressionless Messiah that actually facilitated his resurrection. Without his sacrificial death, Jesus would never have been immortalized. Naturally, one cannot be raised from the dead unless they are first dead. However, the basic logic of that understanding cannot brush aside the overwhelming emphasis throughout scripture highlighting the significance of the Messiah’s death. Every animal altar offering representing our Messiah involved **death**. The annual Day of Atonement involved the **death** of a bullock and a goat. The divinely appointed atonement icon of blood (Lev 17:11) was never drained from a living animal for any divine ritual whatsoever. Without exception that blood always came from an **executed** animal under Kingdom Law. Two of our Ecclesial Age rituals promote the significance of the **death** of the Messiah. Baptism exhorts us to join Christ in his **death** through a water grave. Memorial service presents both the reconciliation through **death** in the broken bread as well as the salvation through resurrection seen in the wine... just as the baker of **bread** died after three days and the presenter of **wine** rose after three days to glory at the right hand of power (Gen 40). Significant divine principles must be exhibited in the **death** of the Messiah due to the constant emphasis on that **death** throughout the divinely mandated rituals spanning the ages. This emphasis on the **death** of the Messiah does not eclipse or diminish the significance of his resurrection in any way. This is not a one-or-the-other choice. However, the red heifer ritual focuses on the significance and value of our Messiah’s **death** and not his resurrection.

Destroying Sin’s Power Through Death

The book of Hebrews, in its Kingdom Law examinations, comments on the great necessity and importance of our Messiah’s death. Heb 2:14-15 *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that **through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil**; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage*. It was through death specifically that the power of death was broken... just like the broken memorial bread representing the body of Jesus... just like the veil representing the flesh of Christ (Heb 10:19-20) that was torn

from heaven to earth upon the death of the Messiah... just like the first of the two wilderness fountain rocks (at Rephidim) representing Christ, which was broken so that it might yield the water of life(1 Cor 10:4)... and just as the first of the two sets of covenant stones were broken at the base of Sinai. The breaking of the power of sin (death) by the death of the Messiah is a constantly repeated theme throughout scripture. This defeat of death through the weapon of death is what will be demonstrated in the red heifer ritual when the ashes of four components are combined with running water to reverse the defiling and separating effects of death.

Hebrews goes on to emphasize this great victory through Christ's death. Heb 9: 15-17 *And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that **by means of death**, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also **of necessity be the death** of the testator. For a testament is of force **after men are dead**: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.* The powerful reasoning culminates at the end of this chapter where we read in verses 26-28: *For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath **he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself**. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.* The Messiah's assignment was to put away sin. He did this through the sacrifice of himself. The defeat of sin was not through his resurrection, but through his death. Death was defeated by death, as demonstrated in the red heifer procedure. When he comes again, the second time, he will come without sin (as the record clearly states) ... for the purpose of salvation. Christ's first appearance was for the purpose of reconciliation through death. This is shadowed in the execution and burning of the red heifer, cedar, scarlet and hyssop. His second appearance at the beginning of the seventh millennium will be to facilitate his family's salvation, shadowed in the application of the ashes of the red heifer and the running water, eliminating the defilement of death on the seventh day. This past and future image is why Paul carefully says: *we **were reconciled to God by the death of his Son**, much more, being reconciled, we **shall be saved by his life*** (Rom 5:10). The reconciliation of the faithful is expressed in the **past** tense but the salvation of the faithful is expressed in the **future** tense. Our reconciliation **was** achieved through the death of Jesus Christ. Our salvation **shall be** achieved on the basis of his resurrection when he returns.

Paul emphasizes the understanding of the reconciling authority of Christ's death to the Colossians. *And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight* (Col 1:20-22). The reconciliation was achieved through the death of our Messiah. Paul shows the Galatians how peace (harmony) is achieved between the circumcised and uncircumcised by the slain body of Christ: *For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby* (Eph 2:14-16). Jesus slew that separating enmity in his flesh at Golgotha. Reconciliation was achieved by the death of Christ. Our salvation will be achieved on the basis of his resurrection.

Hebrews nine makes it very clear that Jesus put away sin by the sacrifice of himself and that he will come the second time without sin (verses 26-28). We must legitimately ask what 'sin' Jesus came with the first time that facilitated his victory over the power of sin and death. This could never have been the 'pretend' procedure under the law where sins were ritually placed on the heads of the sacrificial animals offered on the altar. These were

shadow lessons that Hebrews tells us were ineffectual in truly forgiving sins. The defeat of sin in the death of Jesus was not simply a shadow. The victory was real. The sin was real. That sin was what Bro Thomas identified as the synonym of human nature, that guiltless category of sin exhibited in so many patterns throughout Kingdom Law. Jesus was born of a woman, inheriting the same unclean sinful tendencies and proclivities that are common to all of us. However, that particular flesh manufacturing plant for sin that was born of Mary never produced any transgressional sin, the kind of sin that brings guilt. The guilty-sin producing potential was never exercised in the flesh of the Messiah. This is what qualified him as the perfect weapon to break the connection between sin and death, to break sin's power in his own death (*he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*). Jesus executed the root cause of sin in his body on the stake, unshielded by any personal guilt. This too is powerfully demonstrated in the red heifer ritual.

The Calfless Female

Let's begin to examine the components of this two stage procedure. The animal Yahweh specified to shadow His son's defeat of death though death was a heifer. This is a calfless female bovine. We can understand why this Messiah shadow had to be a female, as this was the avenue by which the Messiah would actually bear sin. He was born of a woman. Jesus inherited the same sin producing humanity as we did at birth. This is why Mary offered the required burnt and sin offerings for her atonement for having given birth to the Creator's son (Lk 2:22-24; Lev 12). Through a woman the Messiah inherited that *other law in his members* that Paul dejectedly recognizes as the sin that was *working death in him* (Romans 7). Paul explained that *no good thing dwelt in him* and that sin took advantage of the restricting commandments of the law, working all manner of concupiscence in the Apostle. This sin, spotlighted through the law, worked death in Paul. Unlike Paul, Jesus did not have to face the sinful impulses within him and then relent, *how to perform that which is good I find not*. Paul desperately asks: *O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Then he offers the very comforting answer to our shared dilemma: *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord* (Rom 7:24). The red heifer ritual shadows the procedure for Paul's victorious answer to the overwhelming and depressing challenge of sin and death.

Paul continues the same line of reasoning into chapter eight where he proclaims: *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh*. The sin that Jesus condemned in his flesh was what Bro Thomas defined as a synonym for human nature. This guiltless category of sin, identified by its production capacity and inclination, is shadowed repeatedly in Kingdom law by the guiltless sin offerings (birth, leprosy, bodily issues, death contact and the holy things of the Tabernacle). The '*likeness*' of sinful flesh Paul references qualified the fact that Jesus never exercised those sinful impulses. This sin category is shadowed repeatedly in Kingdom law by the sin offerings signifying the guilt of transgressional sin. The presence of the guiltless sin of the human nature condition, along with the absence of the guilty sin of ungodly behavior (as it was only a likeness), qualified Christ as the weapon to break the power of sin and death. Jesus executed the producer of sin, inherited from his mother, upon his death... just as the red heifer burned in the flames consuming four red components together (interestingly paralleling the four points of his hands and feet by which Christ was nailed to the stake).

Christ the Everlasting Father

This sacrificial animal was a heifer, indicating not simply its female status but also the absence of having birthed any offspring. This also perfectly reflects another aspect of the Messiah's death. It is by the terms of his sin sacrifice by which the Messiah produces children. Isaiah's very moving prophecy of Christ's sacrifice puts it in these terms: *Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand*. It was on the basis of Christ's self-offering for sin that the days of Jesus would be prolonged. He would be resurrected. We use this reference when we teach the truth about the nature and relationship of

Yahweh and Christ to indicate that Christ was not an immortal prior to his resurrection. There is no possible way to ever *prolong the days* of an immortal. That is a mathematical impossibility. This is one of the scriptures that confirm that Christ's resurrection was qualified by his sacrifice in death. An additional benefit to Christ's sacrificial death would be his fatherhood. He would *see his seed*.

Jesus became the everlasting father and the prince of peace (Is. 9:6) on the basis of his death and resurrection (the *prolonging* of his days following his sacrificial death). Paul expresses the same thought in this way: *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming* (1 Cor 15:22-23). Christ is the firstfruits from the grave, having broken the power of sin in death and then rising from the grave to live forever. Those that "*are Christ's*," those that belong to Christ, will experience this rebirth, this born again experience, at his coming. These are the two stages of the red heifer ritual. The first is the burning to ashes of the red heifer, the red cedar, the scarlet and the hyssop; indicating the sacrificial death of our Messiah. The second stage is the spattering of the ashes with running water onto the individuals defiled by death. This reflects those that belong to Christ (his seed) that will be born again (into Spirit nature, like the wind Jn 3:3-8) at his coming. Therefore the sacrificial animal that would defeat the defilement of death would have to be a heifer, a female that had not yet given birth before it died as a sin offering to eliminate the defilement of death.

Every divinely required detail of this ritual validates the true gospel with which we have been entrusted. The pinpoint precision of the shadow lessons of this Kingdom Law ritual comfort the enlightened with confirmation that we have been invested with the accurate principles and truths that define the Creator of the universe, the Giver of all life and the richness of life. Understanding our Heavenly Father encourages a deeper, more powerful and growing love. We will pursue that pinpoint precision exhibited by this ritual in our next commentary.

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Defeating Death No. 2

Death is the great power that sin exercises over creation, underlined by the principle of degeneration (fading energies, corruption, rotting, decay). Renewal and replenishment serve as the temporary answer for this degeneration, repeatedly emphasized by our hunger, thirst and weariness while we suffer under the curse of sin and death. Our cherished hope is to escape that dependence upon renewal that punctuates our descent toward death. The life of an immortal is not dependent on consumption. There will be no weakening, corruption or fading when the faithful are born again into the Spirit nature. *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint* (Is 40:31). Creation's parable of sleeping in the darkness and awakening to the light is contradictory to an immortal, which is why there will be no night after sin and death are eliminated (Rev 22:5) at the conclusion of the Millennial Kingdom.

Breaking Sin's Power

Sin and death cannot reign forever. That would violate the righteousness of the Creator. Once initiated in Eden, that bond between sin and death would have to be eventually broken. They would have to be separated, cleaved

through. The divinely appointed weapon, the sharp sword that would cut off the flesh, would be our Heavenly Father's own son. He would cleave between sin and death, breaking sin's power. We break the memorial bread to remember his victory over sin and death, creating a platform for our deeply cherished hope of joining him. It is Christ's victory over sin and death and how we also might be freed from sin's death-grip that is portrayed in the ritual of cleansing from the defilement of death by the ashes of the red heifer, the red cedar, the red fabric and the hyssop.

In our last commentary we addressed scripture's repeated emphasis on the reconciling authority of our Messiah's death. Paul explains ... *we were reconciled* (past tense) *to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be* (future tense) *saved by his life* (Rom 5:10). It is this divine reconciliation through the death of the Messiah that is portrayed in the red heifer ritual that cleanses from the defilement of death through sacrificial death. We noted the significance of the heifer being a calfless female. Let's pursue this ritual's shadow lessons which frame divine principles, exhortations and promise.

Spattering the Blood

We have noted the identification of this ritual as a purification for sin, despite the fact that it was not a transgression of divine law to touch the dead (with the limited exceptions previously noted). This is one of the **guiltless** sin offerings peppering Kingdom Law (i.e. leprosy recovery, bodily issues recovery, giving birth, bronze altar and Tabernacle sin offerings). There certainly were also sin offerings required for transgressions against divine commandments where the guilty petitioned for forgiveness. Forgiveness was not necessary or being sought through the application of the red heifer ashes. This was the removal of a state of defilement pursued over seven days away from the divine presence that was in the center of the Israelite camp. The removal of that state of defilement is defined as a purification for sin: *And a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation: it is a purification for sin... And for an unclean person they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel* (Num 19:9,17). This guiltless sin offering points to the sin production capacity of cursed and unclean human life ever since the necessarily external temptation source of the serpent was internalized into cursed human nature upon Adam & Eve's failure. The identification of this two stage ritual as a sin offering is also subtly emphasized several times throughout these detailed instructions, so that there can be no mistake for those with seeing eyes and hearing ears. Although Eleazar, the heir to the High Priest's office, did not execute the animal he did spatter the blood seven times toward the door of the tabernacle from outside the camp. This mirrors how the High Priest would spatter the blood of the sin offering for himself or the nation at the veil in the Tabernacle seven times in pursuit of forgiveness for transgressional sin. In both cases, the Hebrew verb *nazah* is translated sprinkle. This verb is exclusive to the sin offering, indicating a more violent spattering as opposed to a more gentle sprinkling. The Hebrew verb *zaraq* is translated sprinkle in the context of all the other altar offerings where the blood is less violently sprinkled. The red heifer offering employs the specific blood handling verb always and exclusively identified with a sin offering.

Whole, Blemishless and Red

The required red flesh of this sacrificial animal is a powerful statement concerning the unique sin category applied to this offering representing our Messiah. The physical conditions divinely mandated for this heifer was that she be (1) whole and complete with nothing missing; as well as (2) blemishless; and also to be (3) red-fleshed. These three physical conditions border the category of sin purification we are expected to understand with perfect pin-point precision. (1) Our antitypical red heifer sin offering (our Messiah) would be tempted in **all** points as we are, yet without failure (Heb 4:15). (2) At the point of his violent sacrificial death he would be blemishless, bearing absolutely **no guilt** for any transgressional sin whatsoever. (3) Jesus would suffer, as we do, with sin producing flesh. However, our Messiah would be exclusively able to separate the two categories of

sin in his life. It is the absence of transgressional sin upon Christ's violent death that qualified the breaking of the power of sin and death. Jesus clave between the two in his death. He broke sin's power as he reconciled us to his Father by condemning sin in his body at his death. Immediately, the massive veil of the temple representing the flesh of Christ (Heb 10:19-20) was violently ripped from heaven to earth. Sin production, part of man's nature since Eden's failure, had been condemned to death in the body of a perfectly righteous man. *We are sanctified through the offering of the **body** of Jesus Christ once* (Heb. 10:10).

The Red Skin

The required red flesh of the heifer invalidates the defining doctrine of the antichrist system (as well as any variation of that doctrine). Just as the color blue is associated with our Creator throughout scripture and creation, so the color red is associated with sin. *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool* (Is 1:18). The shadowed principle of the heifer's red flesh is adamantly denied by over a billion 'Christians' today. John prophesies twice that the identifying doctrine of the apostacy would be the denial of the flesh of Christ (1 Jn 4:3; 2 Jn 7). All of 'Christianity' maintains that Christ's nature was not flesh. The flesh was just his disguise as he pretended to be human, pretended to have the capacity to sin, pretended to die and pretended to come back to life. They deny the flesh of Christ and most maintain that the Creator had to lower himself to our standards, deceiving everyone about his true nature, just to save his wrecked creation.... what blasphemy! If the sin Christ bore on the cross was added superficially at his death then that red heifer would had to have been an albino that was artificially coated red before its sacrifice in order to properly reflect the image of an immortal being painted with the transgressional sins of others. Our Messiah's Father demanded the flesh of the calfless female to be naturally red to properly reflect the conditions by which His son would defeat death through his own death. He would be born of a childless woman, made and tempted like us with nothing missing. He would inherit that sin producing body of flesh (red) with all of its self-generated bias to ungodly behavior and self-worshipping instincts. Unlike every one of us, Jesus would live without generating a single blemish. Then his body would be consumed in the flames of Calvary along with the scarlet, cedar and hyssop reflected in the four nails mounting him by his hands and feet upon the stake.

Red, Red and More Red

Red is a dominant theme in this ritual. The animal offering is described by four categories. *And one shall burn the heifer in his sight; her (1) skin, and her (2) flesh, and her (3) blood, with her (4) dung, shall he burn* (Num 19:5). The skin, flesh and blood of the heifer were all red, unlike the dung. In the following verse we read of the four items that burn together. *And the priest shall take cedar wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast it into the midst of the burning of the heifer* (vs 6). The heifer was red. Cedar is red. Scarlet fabric is certainly red. Hyssop could be red but was not color identified. Any conclusions based upon presumption should be inappropriate. Just as we saw three of the four animal components in the previous verse, we once again we see that same pattern repeated in the following verse. Scriptural repetition indicates emphasis and therefore significance. There are six red items evident out of the eight identified components of verses 5 and 6. We also see the doubled four pattern surfacing once again in relation to our Messiah's mission, as we have so many times before. Examples of this divine pattern include: the four men and four women on the gopher wood ark that saved mankind; the five animals made into two rows of four halves and wholes when Yahweh made a covenant with Abram (Gen 15); the outer, political, foursquare, tribal configuration and the inner, spiritual, Levite-Priestly foursquare configuration in the wilderness when the Kingdom was initiated at Sinai (Num 2&3); the four equal components in the two handfuls of aromatic dust (incense) that were tossed into the fire in the Most Holy on the Day of Atonement to become a cloud, so that the High Priest would not die (Ex 30:34 & Lev 16:13); the two sets of four stone surfaces upon which Yahweh's testimony was written (Ex 32:15); the four cherubim with four faces with their four wheels within four wheels (Ezek 1); the two foursquare altars with their four horns, etc, etc. This doubled four theme was examined more extensively in our ninth commentary in

this series concerning The Divine Prayer Pattern. This pattern speaks to the two primary behavior standards mandated for the faithful: denying sin and practicing righteousness. Kingdom Law emphasized the horribleness of sin and commanded avoidance. Ecclesial Age law emphasizes the benefits of grace in the practicing of righteousness. Both behavior standards are required. Neither emphasis eclipses or invalidates the other.

The strong red emphasis in this ritual is another confirmation of its relationship with sin, despite the absence of any transgressional sin or guilt. The red heifer offering is a very unique offering, very different from all the animal offerings bound to the altar of burnt offering. With the exception of this one animal offering, a man would be ostracized permanently from the community if he killed a sacrificial animal during the wilderness wanderings without bringing it to the door of the Tabernacle and offering it on the bronze altar (Lev 17:3-4). Yet the red heifer was burned away from the altar. With the exception of this one offering the blood was always drained from the animal before its body parts were divinely accepted in the flames of the altar. Yet the blood was not separated from the flesh but burned with it in the red heifer offering. With the exception of this one offering the 'skin' of a bullock, sheep or goat was never offered in flaming sacrifice. Even the skin of the "whole" burnt offering was removed and awarded to the officiating priest (Lev 7:8). Yet the skin was burned with the flesh and blood of the red heifer. Dung was certainly never offered in the altar's fire, although dung was burned outside the camp along with all the animal components of the sin offering for the High Priest and nation that did not go on the altar or into the Tabernacle (Lev 4:11-12,21). This sacrificial refuse (remaining flesh, skin and dung) of these two sin offering categories (High Priest and nation) was certainly consumed in flames, but not as part of a sacrifice to Yahweh. The red heifer offering was unique in a variety of ways. Everything was burned in this sacrifice without any animal parts being removed prior to incineration.

Dust and Ashes

Every part of that red heifer was converted to dust in the consuming flames. This sacrifice is all about defeating death. Bro Roberts taught this well over 100 years ago when he wrote The Law of Moses: "The ashes of a slain heifer applied to a man defiled by death, was **a curing of death by death**. This is precisely what has happened in the antitype: Christ, *through death, destroyed that having the power of death, that is, the devil.*" Dust is the defining scriptural symbol of death, licensed by the terms of the original curse: *dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return*. Dust is used consistently throughout scripture in this context. The two handfuls of the aromatic dust of the incense passes through the flames to become a sweet smelling cloud embracing the Mercy Seat in the Most Holy on the Day of Atonement in order to save the life of the High Priest (Lev 16:13). This portrays the immortalization of the ultimate High Priest when he progresses from dust to cloud, from mortal to immortal nature. The wife accused of adultery had to drink the combination of holy water and dust from the Tabernacle floor to test her wifely virtue (Num 5). This ritual employs the same combination pattern as the red heifer cleansing ritual where the ashes (dust) are combined with the running water to cleanse those defiled by death. The water is a symbol of God's word (Eph 5:26). The dust/ashes are a symbol of the curse of sin and death. Continuing this pattern, the disciples were instructed to wipe the dust from their feet upon departing a city rejecting the gospel as a testimony against those foolish people who preferred the curse of the dust above the water of the word (Matt 10:14). Dust and ashes poured upon one's head indicated mourning due to the consuming sorrow resulting from the consuming effects of the curse of sin and death.

Only dusty ashes remain after flames consume the life of a human body. There is no continuing eternal consciousness as the serpent validating delusions of the world's religions suggest... there is only the ashes. It is these representative ashes of the red heifer, red cedar, red fabric and hyssop that are mixed with running water, constituting the reversal formula for the defilement of death in the second stage of this ritual. The first stage is the death of the sacrificial animal. The second stage is the beneficial application to the faithful. The first stage depicts the procedure where the antitypical red heifer will defeat death in himself, establishing the foundation

for all creation's divine reconciliation. The second stage depicts the principles and exhortations related to how we might personally benefit from the victory achieved in the first stage.

Running Water

Water flows through scripture with a very consistent relationship to the word of God. This relationship is seamlessly presented throughout a variety of applications including clouds, rain, snow, ice and bodies of water. Paul tells us Christ loved and offered himself for his ecclesial bride, thereby cleansing her with the washing of water by the word (Eph 5:26). We are invited to think of divine expressions being like the rain and snow (Deut 32:2; Is 55:9-11). Just as the Creator's words issue from Himself, so rain and snow issue from the clouds. These bodies of mist in the heavens are always identified with the presence, power and glory of Yahweh (Ex 19:9; Ex 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Matt 17:5; Acts 1:9; etc. etc). Within this framework of divine expression we see the appearance of the word of God made flesh (John 1:14) paralleled to the early and latter rains (James 5:7; Ps 72:6; Hos 6:1-3). Extending this theme we see bodies of water representing the word of God in judgment. The Red Sea opened to the sons of God for life extension and closed on the sons of men to end their lives. The flood waters saved the four men and four women on the ark but destroyed those outside that ark (1 Pet 3:20-21). The first plague in Egypt turned the Nile to blood but the first wilderness miracle turned the poisonous waters of Marah into life giving water, reversing the progression. There are two seas in the promised land. The Sea of Galilee is a sea of life. The Dead Sea is exactly what its name implies. These dead waters will reverse their condition to being a sea of life when the 'running' clean waters issuing from the Millennial Kingdom temple make their way east through the newly split Mt of Olives and down to this lowest point on the surface of the earth (Ezek 47:8-10). This image of the waters of death becoming the waters of life due to the running water issuing from the divine presence at Jerusalem in the seventh millennium projects the same shadow image of how the running waters are mixed with the ashes of the red heifer and then spattered on the death defiled on the final seventh day to reverse the defilement of death.

Yahweh veils his glory now as the days of his prophetic silence draw to a close just as He veils the true glory of His word in the deep shadows of scripture. These subtle shadow lessons of scripture and creation (the written as well as the spoken word of God) offer the thin, difficult but successful avenue for those who achingly yearn to witness a greater measure of divine glory now. In this sense, of seeking the light of the glory of Yahweh in the shadow lessons of scripture, we have the opportunity to emulate our Heavenly Father who commanded the light to shine out of darkness (1 Cor 4:6-7). We will continue our pursuit of that glory within this particular shadow lesson within Kingdom Law in our next commentary.

Bro Jim Dillingham

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Defeating Death part 3

It is truly amazing to witness the power of the human mind in creating societal paradigms and common understandings where the flesh is invariably exalted and the Creator is universally degraded while still maintaining a strong self-righteous confidence. The human mind's ability to ignore overwhelming evidence for uncomfortable and humbling conclusions is absolutely staggering. We are challenged to find any greater validation of the common ungodly imaginations of self-worshipping mankind than the way death is glorified. With pontifical wisdom, the grieving are falsely comforted by religious leaders claiming the beloved deceased have moved on to a 'better' place. Invalidating their expression is their personal unwillingness to join the deceased any time soon in that supposedly 'better' place. Suicide bombers are seduced with promises of the

certain glory and righteousness for their malevolent embrace of death. Thrill seekers claim they never feel so alive as when they ‘brush’ death. Philosophers spout the nonsense of fleshly wisdom that without death life would have no meaning, as if immortality would be a demotion. Statues of the dead litter every society, glorifying the dead. Mankind validates the original serpent’s lie by separating death from any kind of association with sin. Virtually all of the world’s most popular religions for thousands of years have maintained that death is only an illusion, with the independent consciousness continuing for eternity.

We know the truth. Death is the necessary and morally correct answer for sin. We testify our acceptance of this truth when we voluntarily descend into the watery grave of baptism. We choose to destroy our sins in this death simulation and then testify of our hope for an eternal sinless life after resurrection by ascending from that baptismal grave. Sin cannot continue forever. Sin must end. Our Creator cannot fail. His will shall definitely be completely fulfilled. Therefore, any contradictions to His principles must end. Sin and sin’s power (death) must cease to exist. Sin and death already have been defeated. Sin’s power was broken by our Messiah, the antitypical red heifer. We groan with all of creation, awaiting our anticipated cleansing from the defilement of sin and death... when the antitypical ashes of that red heifer will be spattered upon us with the running water by the hyssop applicator. The defilement of death will be removed. We will be welcomed into divine acceptance with the eternal embrace of an immortal covering (our atonement). Sin, and therefore death also, will never have the capacity to defile us with their touch ever again.

Mapping Death’s Defeat

The Kingdom Law ritual detailing the incineration of the red heifer and the handling of its ashes portrays the mandated procedure for defeating death. This detailed ritual spotlights significant divine principles serving as borders of the gospel truth and powerfully expels apostate error. Brother Roberts references some of these principles in his commentary concerning this ritual in The Law of Moses: “We cannot in their presence shut our eyes to the revelation that so far as man is concerned, death is *the result of sin*, and not the necessary quality of the nature with which he was endowed in the first instance. This truth enables us to understand the peculiar detestation of death expressed by the ordinances we are considering. The presence of death—the touch of death—means the presence of sin, and sin is the awful thing that fools make a mock at: the crime of insubordination against the wish, will, or law of the Eternal Author and Possessor of Creation.” Gospel truth demands that we understand that death is not a “better place” than life. Death’s purpose is to eliminate sin, both performance (transgressional sin) and capacity (sin producing, cursed human nature). The ritual of the red heifer cleansed from the defilement of death under Kingdom Law, thereby mapping the procedure for defeating death.

Once the power of death was initially broken in our Messiah another procedure would be available for eliminating sin. It is the very opposite of death. It is immortality. The atonement achieved through immortalization, the covering of mortal with immortal, eliminates sin and therefore death. Reflecting this twofold progression was the initial incineration of the red heifer, red cedar, red fabric and hyssop and then the subsequent spattering of those ashes in a mixture with running water by a hyssop applicator upon the death defiled on the third and seventh days. The application on the third day shadows the defeat of death in the first man, Jesus Christ, having spent three days under the power of death in the tomb. The application on the seventh day shadows the defeat of death in all others, at both the very beginning and the very end of the seventh divine day (1,000 years) from the time when the introduction of death defiled a previously *very good* creation.

Despising Sin Along With Loving Righteousness

The two stages in this death defeating ritual are emphasized in two of the four Ecclesial Age rituals also. Baptism stresses both the death and the resurrection of Christ in the submersion and the re-emergence from the water. Memorial service stresses these two stages in partaking first of the broken bread and then the wine. Both death defeating avenues are exhibited. The defiling power of death is defeated by the death of the perfectly

righteous man and then death is **permanently** defeated in his resurrection to immortality. This image invites our participation. In our pursuit of divine principles, in our dedicated commitment to reshape ourselves into the image and likeness of our Creator we must practice both principles. We must deny sin and we must practice righteousness. Any singularly exclusive focus on either avoiding sin or practicing righteousness will be self-defeating. This notion that one can simply avoid hurting others, doing no harm and avoiding lies and thereby ensure some eternal reward is a hollow and incomplete self-delusion. Equally true is the fact that no amount of righteous behavior erases the absence of a despising of sin or joyful indulgence in sin's fleeting pleasures. Forgiveness is not a matter of assigned labors or satisfying technicalities, as taught by the apostate harlot system. Faithful children of the Heavenly Father must understand, embrace and pursue both disciplines: rejecting and despising sin and pursuing and loving righteousness.

These are the separate educational themes emphasized by the current and previous divinely appointed priesthood ages (as presented in our very first commentary in this series). The vileness of sin and the consequences of sinful behavior were powerfully emphasized during the previous age through the divine law established at Sinai. There was another change in divine law and a change in the priesthood, confirmed by powerful divine manifestations, as the Ecclesial Age began. It is grace and righteousness that are being emphasized in this current dispensation. The danger is in presuming that this divine emphasis shift somehow eliminates the legitimacy of the previous divine educational focus from the previous age, instead of simply balancing it. The Law certainly schoolmastered us to Christ as it emphasized the complete impossibility of self-justification. The Law proved we needed a savior. It would be a great mistake to presume the **sole purpose** of the Law was to deliver us to Christ. The law is not all about Christ. It is ultimately about his Father.

Our Creator's principles and attitude concerning sin are stressed under Kingdom Law. Divine principles never change. Divine educational procedures certainly change, but His principles are eternal. If we ignore the value of the educational emphasis provided by Kingdom Law then our service is incomplete. We certainly do need to love righteousness. However we also have to hate sin. We must actively pursue grace and righteousness. We also must actively avoid sin. The law of the nazirite emphasized divine unity. In order to be united with Yahweh the nazirite would have to separate **to** as well as separate **from**. Separating **to** Yahweh meant separating **from** alcohol, grape products, dead bodies and hair removal (presented in commentaries 10 and 11 in this series).

Standards of Judgment

This balance in our service will be examined by our judge. Have we labored to avoid sin as well as pursue righteousness. Have we rejected the ways of man as well as embraced the lonely difficult path of projecting divine understandings and behavior by the things we say, do and think? We will be measured by both of these issues to determine if we will be invited to become a sanctuary (a resting place) for the divine presence. In this sense the gleaming brass man measured the temple in front of Ezekiel with both the six cubit reed as well as the flax line (Ezek 40). The measurement of the temple was intended to humble the Israelites. *Thou son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities: and let them measure the pattern* (Ezek 43:10). The measurement of the pattern for this divine house was intended to encourage shame among the enlightened, the "house" of Israel. The gleaming brass man (Jesus Christ) will also measure us with two measuring devices to determine if we will be part of the eternal "house" of divine residence. These are sin avoidance and righteousness performance... a separation from and a separation to. How will we measure up?

The fact that we need to respect both the divine educational focus of Kingdom Law as well as the educational focus of Ecclesial Age Law is demonstrated in the fact that this defeat of death was required to be performed outside the camp. God's presence was between the cherubim above the mercy seat in the center of the camp. The testimony was below the mercy seat in the center of the camp. The body of believers squared up around this

divine point of convergence. Yet the defeat of death's defilement had to be performed outside that camp structure. Despite the fact that virtually all sacrificial animals had to be burned on the bronze altar (Lev 17:3-4), this singular exception was burned outside the camp. The death-defiled were expelled from the camp and could not return until they participated in this death defeating ritual outside that camp. We are not free to presume this requirement invalidated Kingdom Law's participation in the defeat of sin, as some suggest. This is a Kingdom Law ritual. That alone establishes the relevance of the Law to the principles involved. However, since this ritual had to be completely removed from the camp structure we are invited to understand that the Law **alone** could not achieve the necessary end result shadowed in this procedure. Something outside Kingdom Law's camp (environment) would be needed to truly and permanently defeat death.

The Law Was Only Part of the Answer

Kingdom Law is primarily about defining and condemning sin (Rom 3:20; 5:20; 7:7-13). We participate in the personal destruction of sin when we die. This was not the original intention. Creation was not about death. It was about life. Death entered as a direct result of sin (as the quote from Bro Roberts notes). In order for our Creator to be successful, creation must exhibit the exclusive focus of life without death. The Law could not do this. The Law could only identify and condemn. The Law could not save. When immortality envelops mortality and corruptible puts on incorruptibility, then death will be swallowed up in victory (1 Cor 15:54-55). The sting of death is sin, like a serpent's venom. The strength of sin is the law. In order for death to be completely defeated (eternally), the Law would not be enough. Something outside the law had to be added to the equation... **along with the law**. Simply because the Law was not enough, does not eliminate its necessary participation in the defeat of death. The problem with the Jewish people is that they thought Kingdom Law (Mosaic law) was an end in itself. The problem with Christianity is that it disposes of Kingdom Law as if completely inconsequential. Both conclusions are patently wrong. Just as a maturing child should not forget their foundational youthful lessons, so the maturing bride of the Creator's son should remember the divine lessons of past years as she matures to the point of forever joining her intended groom in the singularity of marriage.

Dust and Running Water

This dual lesson of condemning sin (Mosaic Age divine focus) and exalting righteousness (Ecclesial Age divine focus) in order to defeat death forever is also validated in the two compounds that are spattered upon the death defiled on the third and seventh days. These are the ashes and running water (Num 19:17-19). Dust and ashes signify death all through scripture, beginning with the curse of death when Adam was told that he was made from dust and would return to dust (Gen 3:19). 'Running' water is different from still water in that running water is self-cleansing. Once still water is contaminated it must be filtered to sustain life. Running water cleanses itself as long as contamination is not independently and endlessly supplied. This feature of creation, along with all creation features right down to the molecular structure, validates divine principles. Just as the ashes alone could not cleanse the Israelite from the defilement of touching the dead, so the condemnation of sin in the death of our Messiah would be insufficient to forever defeat death in all of creation. His resurrection would extend the defeat of death permanently. Just as running water had to be mixed with the ashes and then applied to the death defiled so the cleansing word of God, as the true source of life, must be added to the condemnation of sin and death. Neither component could be effective without the other. Ashes alone would be ineffective. Running water alone would be ineffective. Sin and death must be condemned, as evidenced in the Kingdom Law of the Mosaic Age. Righteousness must be exalted through grace, as evidenced in the laws of the Ecclesial Age. Neither is effective without the other. We have no desire nor are we permitted to enter the baptismal waters without exiting. We cannot partake of the broken bread without partaking of the wine. The defeat of death should never be understood as a single stage. Oversimplification is the mental tripwire of self-absorbed, instinct reliant mankind. The divine mind is consistently underestimated and the fleshly mind is consistently overestimated.

Adding the Running Water

The significant distinction between the dust and the combination of dust and running water is emphasized by the fact that the initially clean priests who incinerate the heifer and handle the ashes thereby become unclean and are required to cleanse themselves (Num 19:7-10). However, the clean person who spatters the ashes and running water mixture onto the death defiled on the third and the seventh days is not commanded to participate in any cleansing procedure (vs 19). They did not handle the ashes exclusively, but the ashes combined with the running water. This death-dust (ashes) of the red heifer loses its capacity to convert the clean into unclean when it is mixed with the running water. The contagious feature of the ashes, making a clean person 'unclean,' is eliminated by the running water. It is the combination of the two components that eliminates the defilement of death completely. The shadowed lesson is that combining both the condemnation of sin in the death of the Messiah along with his resurrection forever defeats death. The condemnation of sin exclusively would not have resolved the problem, as the handling of the ashes still converted the clean into unclean. Running water alone could not cleanse the death defiled. Jesus could not have been resurrected without first condemning sin in his death, thereby breaking sin's power. Just as the ashes combined with the running water created a powerful cleansing effect, so both principles are necessary to effectively eliminate the power of death forever.

Only A Measure of the Glory

The principles displayed in this two-fold mixture of ashes and running water are also shadowed in the two altar offerings that are performed for the purpose of atonement. These are the burnt offering and the sin offering. The two-fold covering (inside and outside) of the two salvation arks shadow this same foundational issue. Noah's ark was sealed (*kaphar*/atoned) inside and outside with pitch by divine command. The ark of the covenant was required to be sealed in gold both inside and outside. The defeat of death was performed outside the camp but within the terms of divine Law. The ashes and the running water that defeat the defilement of death project this same underlying lesson presented subtly but powerfully throughout Kingdom Law, history and the features of creation. This perfect symmetry, this rapturous symphonic harmony of divine principles throughout all forms of divine expression is overwhelmingly beautiful. We are limited now to witnessing just a tiny measure of the divine glory. We glimpse it through a glass, darkly. Imagine how incredible that glory will be when we are face to face (1 Cor 13:12).

Mankind's natural homogenous tendencies and our emotional need for approval create constant challenges to those who diligently pursue the counter-intuitive principles of our Creator. Divine thoughts and understandings are not natural to us and they fade quickly without constant renewal. God-despising presumptions flood our daily lives through general conversation, employment, entertainment, advertising and social interaction. Without careful and diligent attention these flesh-exalting presumptions even begin to leak into the Ecclesial environment. A surprisingly great distance from an original point can be achieved through many unconscious and individually indistinguishable baby-steps. When the great distance from our original point is glimpsed the first instinct is to defend the journey and recalibrate our home position, suggesting we had never moved at all. We have to respect the danger of straying from divine principles, from oversimplifying divine communication. As originally stated, the human mind's ability to ignore overwhelming evidence for uncomfortable and humbling conclusions is absolutely staggering. There is no glory in death. Death is a far worse place than life. We wish to be freed from death's grip. That freedom process is meticulously portrayed in the ritual of the red heifer.

Jim Dillingham

Our Messiah Altar

Our continuing premise has been that our greatest goal is to serve our Heavenly Father as immortal priests exercising religious, political and military authority throughout the Millennial Kingdom Age. The Kingdom of Heaven will be restored, beginning from Jerusalem and expanding out across the entire planet. There will be yet another change in the priesthood accompanying the change in divine law with miraculous divine validations completing this consistent threefold pattern for the third time. These validations will be far more powerful than the previous two transitions. The restoration of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth will be accompanied by a restoration of Kingdom law and worship patterns. The presence of the divine sanctuary at Jerusalem will serve as proof to the Heathen that the Creator sanctifies Israel once again (Ezek. 37:26-28). That architectural pattern for that monumental sanctuary is detailed through the final chapters of Ezekiel, following the prophecy of the resurrection of the national first born son of God (chapter 37) and the invasion and miraculous defeat of the Gogian host (chapters 38-39). Nations will flow to Yahweh's house at Jerusalem to learn His ways and walk in His paths, for the law will go forth from Zion. It is this house, this sanctuary, this temple where men will learn the ways of the Creator and how to walk in His paths.

The House of the God of Jacob

When the Kingdom was initiated at Sinai with national structure and laws the divine sanctuary centered the doubled foursquare national configuration. The Kingdom will soon be restored, at Zion, with a theocratic national structure. Along with the restoration of divine law a great temple will be constructed upon an elevated Jerusalem. The great earthquakes will have raised up Jerusalem and prostrated the Judaen hills for miles around (Zech. 14:4-5,10). This geographic sculpting shadows the political earthquakes that will eventually prostrate the mountain-nations across the globe before the power and authority centered at Zion (Ps 72:8). The wealth of the nations will flow to Jerusalem (Is. 60). The great temple will be constructed according to the pattern provided which was measured by the brass man (Ezek 40:3). The law will go forth from Jerusalem and men will learn the ways of the Creator and how to walk in His paths at this very temple. *And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. ³ And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to **the house of the God of Jacob**; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem (Is 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-2).*

This will be the fourth divine sanctuary (Wilderness Tabernacle, Solomon's Temple, Post-captivity Temple and the Millennial Kingdom Temple). A great deal of detail is scripturally provided concerning the first and the last sanctuary, when the Kingdom was initiated and when it will be restored. Even though we are told Solomon constructed the temple according to the pattern God provided David, the architectural details and accompanying rituals scripturally offered are not nearly so extensive (1 Chron. 28:12). Very few architectural details or measurements are offered concerning the Post-captivity Temple. For example: The required animal sacrifices for the dedications of the first and last altars are detailed, but there are no sacrifices recorded that were divinely mandated for the initiation of the second and third altars. Recognizing the perfect economy of our Creator's inspired record licenses our curiosity in this matter. A further validation of the significance of this observation is that the dedication for both the first and last altar extend over an eight day period. Interestingly, the sacrificial order for these altar dedications is inverted. The first altar dedication demands three offerings on the initial day followed by seven days of a single offering. The last altar demands a single offering on the initial day followed by the same three offerings on each of seven days to complete its eight day dedication procedure.

The Altar of the Ecclesial Age

The value of the implications of these distinctions is powerfully emphasized by exactly how this altar's intended shadow lesson is interpreted by the divine record. Instinctive conclusions are simply meaningless chaff. We don't have to guess at what these altars are framing. Hebrews 13 makes this perfectly clear. *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. **We have an altar**, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle* (Heb 13:8-10). This progression of thought presumes our definition of both the Tabernacle and Temple altars as representing our Messiah. The text goes on to highlight how the priests of the previous age were forbidden to eat of any sin offering where that offering's blood entered the sanctuary (Lev 6:30). It was only the sin offerings for the High Priest and the nation where the blood was actually brought inside the Tabernacle or Temple. However, the faithful of the Ecclesial Age are required to eat from that same altar offering forbidden to the priests of the previous age. We eat of the body as well as the blood of our sin offering for the High Priest and nation on the first day of every week. Each of the four altars in the courtyards of the four divine sanctuaries all shadow our Messiah. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. However, the heavenly light generating each altar 'shadow' radiates from a different heavenly position for its unique educational purpose concerning our Messiah. These are all shadows of the same object but at different stages in the divine plan, just as a moving light source creates varying shadows for the same object as the day progresses. The three dimensional object is the same, but the two dimensional shadow changes to define the object from different positions due to the changing radiating direction of the light source. All four altars define our Messiah, but emphasize separate and progressive understandings of our Messiah. This is why each of the altars have constructive similarities as well as differences. The similarities anchor this shadow to our Messiah. The differences highlight distinctive lessons concerning our Messiah and how our Heavenly Father works through him at varying stages in the development of the Messiah's intended bride.

This is not some indistinguishable murky shadow that cannot be differentiated from all the other scriptural shadows. Heavenly light radiates brightly to form the crisp, well defined outline of the Messiah/altar shadows throughout scripture. As long as our eyes have adjusted to the light... as long as we are not blinded by the light... as long as we begin with a basic understanding of the divine light of truth, then we can see the defining points of the shadow. If we approach the subject of the altar with some distorted Creator-despising image of the Messiah being immortal prior to his birth (or any variation of that understanding) then it will be impossible to define how the altar shadows the Messiah. It is the basic divine truths demanded by our Heavenly Father (John 4:24; 1 Cor 15:1-2) that engage our capacity to understand the shadows of Kingdom Law where a greater measure of divine glory can be seen and experienced. Seeing, we will see and hearing, we will hear. It is the understanding of the gospel truth that invites us to see the light of the glory of Yahweh within the shadows He creates. This glory will eventually cover the earth. We hope to be part of the light radiating that glory and illuminating what were previously shadow lessons.

The Eight Day Altar Dedications

There are several Messiah identifying points of this altar shadow. These will serve to reinforce the clear testimony in Hebrews focusing out attention on Christ being visible in the altar. One of these shadow points is the consistent eight day completion of the dedication procedures for the altars. It was the eighth and final day of the dedication of the Aaronic priesthood, the altar and all the related divinely appointed components when Aaron's sons were consumed by heavenly fire (Lev.9:1; 10:1-2). It was on the eighth day of the dedication of the temple Solomon constructed that the people departed upon the completion of the dedication procedure (1Kings 8:66). It will be on the eighth day that the Millennial Kingdom Temple altar will be fully dedicated and

ready for the sacrifices of the people (Ezek 43:27). We have noted several times in this continuing commentary that eight is the number of our Messiah, as demonstrated in his name. When the six letters of his Greek name are added the total comes to 888. We can confirm this scriptural application of the number eight as it identifies various features of his Messiah office. Christ's kingship is identified as inheriting the throne of David, the 8th son of Jesse (1 Sam 17:12-14). Noah (meaning rest), the God appointed savior of the world, was oddly identified by Peter as the 8th person (2 Peter 2:5). The first day a sacrificial animal qualified to be an altar offering was its eighth day of life (Ex 22:30). Circumcision required the cutting off of the flesh on the eighth day of a boy's life. We also have the consistent doubled four pattern providing greater scope and measure to this scriptural shadow. There were four men and four women within the gopher wood ark of salvation. The second ark of salvation was golden and it was within the doubled four configuration of the Heavenly Father's children (foursquare tribal configuration on the outside and foursquare Levite and Priestly configuration on the inside). The heaven and earth covenant of faith required two rows of four sacrificial animals and birds (Gen 15). The divine covenant was personally inscribed by Elohim's finger in two sets of four stone surfaces (Ex 32:15-16; Ex 34:1). The four cherubim of Ezekiel had four faces (Ezek 1). Under the cherubim were four wheels within four wheels. The four incense ingredients were burned morning and evening on the foursquare golden altar (Ex 30). The four blood offering categories were offered on the foursquare bronze altar (burnt, peace, sin & trespass). The two handfuls of the four incense ingredients were tossed into the fire within the Most Holy on the Day of Atonement to preserve the life of the High Priest (Lev 16:12-13). The point of this partial string of pattern validations is to strongly identify the number eight with our Messiah. He is the embodiment of the divine covenant. He is our King. He is our saviour. He is the ultimate sacrifice. He is our exclusive venue for cutting off the flesh and inheriting the divine nature. He is our altar. These altars had to be dedicated over an eight day period, further cementing the identification of this four-stage sacrificial platform (four altars outside the four progressive divine sanctuaries) as our Messiah altar.

The undeniable conclusions we are being drawn towards as a result of this relationship between Christ and the altar will confirm our traditional understanding of the most contentious issue our community has faced (and continues to face) over the last 150 years. Therefore we must be very careful to solidify and quantify this divinely appointed relationship between the altar and our Messiah. There is a divinely mandated feature of this altar that is only shared by the sin offering and our Messiah. This has been noted before in our continuing commentary. The altar, the flesh of the sin offering and our Messiah each had the capacity to reverse an unclean condition and assign holiness through physical contact. *Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar, and sanctify it; and it shall be an altar most holy: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy* (Ex 29:37). *Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof [sin offering] shall be holy* (Lev. 6:27). This issue was addressed in our twelfth commentary concerning Holiness by Touch. All three ritually unclean conditions were reversed when the antitypical bronze altar and sin offering (Jesus Christ) touched those suffering under the accompanying effects of that physical defilement. The leprous, the dead and those suffering with bodily issues were cleansed by Christ's touch (Matt 8:2-3; Lk 8:54-55; 8:43-48). With our Messiah's touch their unclean conditions were reversed along with their capacity to convert anyone and anything they touched into a state of automatic uncleanness. This procedure was not simply an elimination of uncleanness. This procedure went much further, actually awarding the condition of holiness. Just as whatever touched the bronze altar or the sin offering became automatically holy, so the debilitating effects of physical uncleanness (death, leprosy, bodily issues) could be eliminated by Christ through his touch alone. This capacity to eliminate physical uncleanness and award holiness was exclusive to the bronze altar, the sin offering and our Messiah. Therefore we should be able to confirm or correct our understandings concerning our Messiah and his purpose by contemplating the divinely appointed features and laws concerning this bronze altar.

The Exclusive Platform for Life Offerings

This identification of the altar with our Messiah is further solidified by the fact that this altar served as the platform for all life sacrifices (with the singular exception of the red heifer). In addition to the four categories of life offerings (burnt, peace, sin and trespass) we also have the only two offerings that continued into the Ecclesial Age: the bread and wine offerings. In the same sense our Messiah is the exclusive platform from which we may offer our lives to our Heavenly Father. Kingdom Law required that anyone who did not bring their animal offering to the bronze altar in the wilderness had to be driven from the community with no possibility to ever return. *What man soever there be of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat, in the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp, And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD; blood shall be imputed unto that man; he hath shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people: To the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer in the open field, even that they may bring them unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest, and offer them for peace offerings unto the LORD* (Lev 17:3-5). If we do not approach the antitypical door of the Tabernacle (Christ), accept the understanding that death is the righteous answer for sin (the execution of each animal offering at that door) and then offer our lives upon the antitypical bronze altar (Christ) in the flames of our daily struggles... then we have no place in our Heavenly Father's community. Our Messiah is the exclusive platform upon which we must offer our lives in daily service to our beloved Creator. This shared purpose further anchors this bronze altar's divine shadow exclusively to our Messiah, thereby inviting us to confirm divine principles concerning our Messiah in the dedication of this altar.

The altar could not be used on behalf of the children of God until the altar experienced its own atonement. This was achieved through eight days of sin offerings for the Tabernacle altar. Similarly, this will be achieved by eight days of sin offerings for the altar in the Millennial Kingdom Temple. Although three categories of blood offerings have been required for these altar dedications (sin, burnt, peace) it is only the sin offering that is demanded every single day for each set of the eight day altar dedications. The powerful shadow lesson cast before us for this extreme repetition addresses the Messiah and sin relationship in the offering of his life to his Heavenly Father at Golgotha, becoming the exclusive official platform for the offering of any life to the Creator. *And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin offering for atonement: and thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it, to sanctify it. Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar, and sanctify it; and it shall be an altar most holy: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy* (Ex. 29:36-37).

Footnote below: It should be noted that the first day of the dedication procedure is described throughout the earlier verses of Ex. 29. Following the bullock sin offering, ram burnt offering and ram peace offering on that first day there were seven additional days of the single bullock sin offering for the atonement of the altar. The fact that it was a full eight day procedure is addressed in Leviticus 8-10. In chapter 9:1 we read of the dramatic events unfolding on that eighth and final day of the procedure when fire from heaven consumed the offerings and how more fire from heaven executed two of the four sons of Aaron.

The Atonement of the Altar

This dedication of this bronze altar, with its exclusive shadow application to our Messiah, was intended to achieve an atonement for this Messiah altar. This reflects the atonement our Messiah would have to experience for himself, so that he might extend that benefit to his bride. This dedication of the Messiah altar for atonement eliminates the ever-surfacing distortions our community has historically faced concerning our Savior's nature, his sacrifice for sin, his atonement and the basis for our potential atonement through Christ. Literally every variation of Christian doctrine accepts the understanding that Jesus never transgressed any divine commandment or principle. No possible guilt can be ever assigned to our Messiah, either literal or figurative.

That would eliminate his capacity as a savior. Therefore, this altar dedicating sin offering and atonement cannot be understood on the basis of any sinful guilt of the Messiah. Divine principles are violated in favor of personal exaltation when the principle of sin is limited to exclusively behavioral sin (transgressional sin). A necessary extension of this significant error is the impossible limitation of atonement to simply forgiveness. There is no escaping the divine requirement of the Christ altar to experience its own atonement (through sin offerings) separate from the Israelite community. Yet a bronze altar is not capable of transgressing divine principles and the Messiah never transgressed any divine commandments. There has to be more to our understanding of sin than simply a transgression of divine law. There has to be more to atonement than simply forgiveness.

Atonement by Immortalization

These conclusions are not new to our continuing commentary. We are simply displaying the many different ways our Heavenly Father confirms our understanding of His true principles in the shadows and dark sayings and visions and dreams and rituals and laws where He veils His glory. Atonement is about salvation, not simply forgiveness. Atonement is about covering mortality with immortality. Just as the Christ altar needed atonement, Jesus of Nazareth needed salvation. The sin offering for the dedication of the Christ altar is just one of the parade of guiltless sin offerings within Kingdom Law shadowing the unclean state of cursed mortal nature, which generates transgressional sin. Jesus of Nazareth was born with that same sin producing human nature, requiring his mother to offer the atonement sacrifices of sin and burnt offerings thirty days after giving birth (Lk 2:22-24. Lev 12). Our Messiah was the only person who never exercised that inherent sin capacity and inclination. This absence (and therefore only a likeness) of sin qualified him as the perfect sacrifice to condemn sin in the flesh (Rom 8:3), thereby dedicating the antitypical Christ altar to be the exclusive platform for all acceptable life sacrifices offered to the Creator of heaven and earth. Christ's personal atonement was complete upon his resurrection to immortality. We saw how this was reflected in the first entry into the Most Holy on the very Day of Atonement. In order to extend the life of the High Priest, two handfuls of specially prepared aromatic dust were tossed into the fire brought from the bronze altar to create a cloud of incense for embracing the divine glory above the mercy seat. The subsequent two Most Holy enterings on the Day of Atonement continued this atonement theme by reflecting the subsequent two immortalization events planned for the beginning and the end of the millennium kingdom (as presented in the 6th installment of this series).

We continually and eagerly strive for an ever ascending approach toward the glory of our Creator. There are significant platforms of understanding within the shadows of divine communication and activity whereby our minds and hearts are enabled to comprehend and focus on a greater measure of that divine glory. This glory will eventually cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. The Messiah altar is one of those platforms. In our next commentary we will examine the similarities and differences of the alpha and the omega altars of the Tabernacle and the Millennial Kingdom temple.

Jim Dillingham

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Our Messiah Altar No. 2

We have determined that the four altars for the four divine sanctuaries all represent our Savior. He is the altar from which we regularly partake of the bread and wine (Heb. 13:10). These are the only two altar offerings (bread and wine) under Kingdom Law that continued into the Ecclesial Age. The other four altar offerings were blood centered. The unleavened bread (or grain or flour) and the wine/drink offering were bloodless and always accompanied the two positive animal altar offerings (burnt and peace) but were not required for the two negative animal altar offerings (sin and trespass).

Jesus defines himself as the alpha and omega, the first and the last (Rev 22:13). Similarly the most extensive altar dedication details target the first and the last altars (out of the four total altars). Our previous commentary centered on how the divine sanctuary altars specifically shadowed the roles of the Messiah, with definitive multi-layered precision. The first altar in the Tabernacle courtyard was dedicated over eight days. It could not be used for anyone or anything else until that dedication procedure was concluded. The last altar in the Millennial Kingdom temple will also be dedicated over an eight day procedure. In each of the eight day procedures for the dedicating of both the alpha altar and the omega altar, the prescribed sacrifices on the first day were different from the following seven days. Despite the fact that both altars represent our Messiah, the dedication for the alpha altar at Sinai during the initiation of the original Kingdom of Heaven under Moses was different from the dedication of the omega altar planned for the restoration of the Kingdom of Heaven at Zion under Christ. What is our Heavenly Father inviting us to see in these shadows of His beloved son, our Master, our King and our Savior? What does He expect us to understand?

Moving Mentally Forward

We have noted throughout these commentaries the wisdom of applying the laws of the **spoken** word of our Creator to the consistent metaphors and similes expressed throughout the **written** word of our Creator where the features of creation are employed. Our Creator 'spoke' and things came into existence, with their incredibly complex, interdependent relationships in place (light, vegetation, animal life, atmosphere, weather patterns, human life, etc). Under the terms of the spoken word of God a moving light source will create varying shadows of a single object as the light source moves. In this same divinely appointed pattern a scriptural shadow lesson for a single object can project slightly varied lessons as the divine plan progresses. This progressional divine teaching pattern reflects the same progressive teaching patterns we employ with our children as they mature. However, these teaching pattern transitions have been a major stumbling block for humanity since creation. The Jews refuse to progress beyond Sinai law. Christians refuse to accept and understand the perfect symmetry between the divine teaching pattern after the sacrifice of Christ with the pattern before his death and resurrection. Each cling to the exclusivity of their preferred paradigm, refusing to mature in their understanding of divine principles. We should not fall into the same mental trap. We cannot be satisfied with the milk of the word forever. We need to eat solid spiritual food (Heb 5:13-14). We should not be seduced by the venom of oversimplification, underestimating the thoughts of our Heavenly Father.

This progressive teaching pattern is exhibited in the first and last Messiah altars in front of the first and last divine sanctuaries. There are many similarities between these altars but there are also differences inviting our deeper meditations. Our Messiah has several roles in the divine plan as well as many titles. The alpha and omega titles (Rev 22:13) are reflected in the alpha and omega Messiah altars constructed and employed during the alpha Kingdom established at Sinai and the omega Kingdom that will be established at Zion.

The Same but Different

The structural similarities between the alpha and omega altars include the foursquare design and the four horns extending vertically. Although the alpha altar at Sinai had to be bronze covered acacia wood there is no distinction concerning the construction materials for the omega altar. The alpha altar had to be five cubits square and three cubits high while the omega altar will be considerably taller and larger at twelve cubits square and ten cubits tall. Although there were two vertical stages extending from earth to heavenward for the alpha altar (altar and horns; Ezek 27:1-2) there will be four vertical stages for the omega altar (two foundational platforms, the altar and the horns; Ezek 43:13-17). The alpha altar could not have stairs (Ex. 20:26). However the omega altar at Zion must have stairs (Ezek 43:17). Those stairs would appropriately face east, requiring the invariable westward direction for approaching the divine presence and the associated principles. This westward approach

has been true ever since Adam and Eve were driven eastward away from the divine presence in the Garden of Eden with the Tree of Life.

The prescribed dedication procedure for the alpha altar at Sinai is detailed throughout Exodus 29 and Leviticus 8-10. This was a very special and unique procedure. The blood of the sin offerings for the High Priest and nation was smeared on the four horns of the bronze altar as opposed to the four horns of the incense altar, as in all other cases. This altar dedication blood also never entered the Tabernacle, as it did in all other cases for the High Priest or national sin offerings (Lev 4). The blood of the peace offering for the first day's dedication procedure (the offering of consecration) was dabbed on the right ear, right thumb and right large toe of each priest (Ex 29:19-20). This was never required again. These uniquely distinctive procedures underline the significance of these divine shadow lessons for the alpha Christ altar... the shadows of our Messiah, our King, our Savior and our Creator's first begotten son. This same unique sin offering blood procedure will be practiced at the dedication of the omega altar in front of the Millennial Kingdom Temple. The blood will be smeared onto its horns but will not enter the temple. These lessons are presented in shadows for the exclusive review of the faithful with seeing eyes and hearing ears. Without the light from an understanding of gospel truth these shadow lessons will only disappear into the darkness of men's self-worshipping imaginations.

The first day of this procedure for dedicating the alpha altar at Sinai required a bullock sin offering followed by a ram burnt offering and a ram peace offering. Each of the successive seven days required a sin offering for the atonement of this bronze altar. As noted, the initial eight day dedication procedure for both the alpha altar and the omega altar demanded a sin offering. However the dedication procedure for the omega altar of the approaching Millennial Kingdom will require a single sin offering the first day. The next seven days of the eight day dedication term requires a sin offering accompanied by two separate burnt offerings. The alpha altar dedication asks for three offerings on the first day with one each of the following seven days. The omega altar at Zion will ask for a single offering the first day with three for each for the following seven days. Each altar shadows our Messiah but the Creator demands a different procedure for the initiation of each Kingdom age, the original and the restoration, the beginning and the end, the alpha and the omega.

Always A Sin Offering but Never A Trespass Offering

The one constant is the sin offering required for every day of each altar dedication period. The only offering absent from either dedication procedure was the trespass offering... quite appropriately. There were burnt, peace, sin, meal and drink offerings (meal and drink offerings were always components of every burnt and peace offering). There was no trespass offering during the dedication of either the first or last altar. In order to serve as the exclusive platform for all life offerings there could be no trespasses generated by our Messiah against God or man. **It is very important to frame the sin offering saturation of the dedication procedures against the total absence of any trespass offering.** This relationship confirms the same requirements of the red heifer offering. The red heifer was a sin offering whose flesh had to be sin-red, yet there could be no blemish whatsoever. The alpha and omega Christ altars had to be dedicated with sin offerings every single day, but there could never be a trespass offering. These parallel observations shadow the same lesson. That lesson is the defeat of sin within the blemishless flesh of God's son, through his sacrificial death.

In order to see the light of divine principles within the altar shadows we need to understand the divinely intended focus for each individual sacrifice. Then we can begin to consider the order of sacrifices and the difference between the dedication of the first and last altars. Our commentaries have considered these sacrificial themes before, therefore confirming evidence will be brief. There are six basic altar offerings (burnt, peace, meal, drink, sin and trespass). Despite the fact that the drink offering (wine) was not an independent offering, it is still defined as an altar offering and therefore we are not free to forbid its inclusion. The bread and wine

offering categories exclusively bridge the divinely appointed rituals of the Mosaic Age and the Ecclesial Age. Any consideration of these bread and wine categories would therefore have to be quite extensive. We will limit our attentions to the divinely prescribed altar dedication offerings of sin, burnt and peace. The bread and wine offerings simply accompanied, as always, the burnt and peace offerings but were not offered independently during these altar dedications.

The sin and peace offerings each had several sub-categories. There were three sub-categories for the peace offering. These were the thanksgiving, votive and freewill offerings (Lev 7:11-16). There were six sub-categories of sin offerings (High Priest, nation, ruler, common, poor and very poor; Lev 4-5). Yet there was also a second parallel sin offering category that did not fit within those six sub-categories. Those six sin offerings were for transgressions of the law. There was also a category of sin offering that was outside the framework of law transgression. A behavioral transgression of divine law invariably applied guilt from which repentance was necessary and the six sin offering categories were the prescribed procedure. However, there were also six **guiltless** sin offerings without any attached behavioral transgression whatsoever. These included the sin offerings required for giving birth, touching the dead, recovering from a bodily issue, recovering from leprosy, the annual atonement of the Tabernacle and of course... the dedication sin offerings for the bronze altar. Bronze altars can't transgress divine laws. Having children was an act of righteousness, fulfilling a stated divine intention. There was certainly no repentance necessary for bearing children. There was no divine command forbidding anyone to experience a bodily issue or to suffer from leprosy. Each of the six are all transgressionless sin offerings absent of any guilt. This guiltless sin offering required for the dedication of the alpha and omega Messiah altars defines the manner in which the Messiah would bear and defeat sin, especially when considered against the glaring absence of any trespass offering during both altar dedications. The burnt offering did not have sub-categories, but served as the foundational and finishing offering every day (the alpha and omega offering).

Our Heavenly Father is Always Right

Each divinely appointed offering indicated a principle theme as well as an expected behavioral response. The theme of the sin offering was the serious nature of behaving in a divinely unacceptable manner. The expected behavioral response was a humble, public repentance. However, this was not the case for the guiltless sin offerings. Repentance was not necessary since there had been no transgression of divine standards. This sin offering recognized our cursed nature with its sin producing proclivities, what Paul refers to as *another law in his members* (Rom 7:23). This sin offering was the recognition of our Creator's righteousness in requiring death for sin. There had been no transgression and yet the sacrificial animal had to die. Jesus of Nazareth had no transgressions, but still had to die. Babies without transgression (or righteousness) still die. There is no unrighteousness in our Creator or His judgments or His laws. Yahweh is always right! The introduction of death into a previously "very good" creation was **necessary** to maintain the righteousness of our Creator. Sin could not be accommodated or overlooked. Death was the righteousness judgment due to the introduction of the corruption of sin by creation's appointed caretaker: man (Rom 5:12).

The faithful of the Ecclesial Age maintain the theme lesson of the guiltless sin offering by testifying to the righteousness of our Heavenly Father in requiring death for sin in our baptism. Jesus established the pattern and the purpose. Our Messiah responded to John's humble objection by expressing the purpose of his baptism: *Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness* (Matt. 3:15). Christ's baptism underlines the foundational theme of this ritual. It is a demonstration of a believer's personal validation of the righteousness of the Creator in demanding death for sin (voluntary water burial to eliminate sin) as well as His righteousness in offering renewed life (rising up from our water grave) despite His righteousness in our legitimate death due to sin. The guiltless sin offerings exclusively demonstrate the righteousness of the

Lawgiver in our death due to sinful nature, but did not demonstrate the further righteousness of our Heavenly Father in renewed life. That was not the foundational purpose of Kingdom Law. The further divine righteousness in offering renewed life is a great theme of Ecclesial Age law, emphasizing our Father's grace. Both aspects of our Heavenly Father must be understood. Exclusively concentrating on either the judgments or the grace of our Heavenly Father will imbalance our relationship with our Creator.

Divine Knowledge and Divine Harmony

We addressed this concept in our eighth commentary entitled: The Path to Spiritual Balance. We also examined the behavior patterns our Heavenly Father expected from the burnt and peace offerings, which were and will be necessary for the alpha and omega altar dedications. Christ quotes from Hosea 6:6 more than once to tell us that if we understood his Father's statements in that verse in Hosea we would have the capacity to judge matters correctly. Yahweh explains that He wanted the knowledge of Himself more than burnt offerings and merciful love more than peace offerings. It should be noted that the Hebrew word translated *sacrifice* (zebach) exclusively indicates the peace offering and not altar sacrifices in general. *For I desired mercy* (chesed/mercy generated by love as opposed to pity), *and not sacrifice* (zebach/peace offering); *and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings* (Hos 6:6). Our Immortal Lawgiver expected everyone to understand the need to dedicate ourselves to the knowledge of that Lawgiver by the performance of the burnt offering. He expected us to understand the exhortation to practice merciful love through the performance of the peace offering. The three divisions of the peace offering perfectly parallel the three great love commandments. The theme of the peace offering is 'peace,' which is the **presence** of harmony (and definitely not simply the **absence** of disturbance or aggression). The theme of the peace offering is perfect harmony. The application is the performance of merciful love. This information was covered extensively in that eighth commentary in this series.

The theme of the burnt offering is complete dedication. The application is the pursuit of the knowledge of Yahweh (as noted in Hos 6:6). This particular offering defines the altar itself throughout the Law and serves as the foundational offering and the final offering. It is the alpha offering and the omega offering for each day. Just as the seventh day (Sabbath) required a doubling of the morning and evening burnt offering so the dedication of the omega altar in the seventh millennium required two burnt offerings over the final seven days of its dedication. Despite the fact that the sin offering dominates the dedication of the alpha altar at Sinai it is always defined as the "altar of burnt offering".

With this groundwork we can consider more carefully the detailed procedures for the alpha altar dedication and the very different omega altar procedures at Zion. If we look at the dedication offering progression as an educational outline we can think of the first day's offerings as an overall theme for that particular divine educational age. The repetition over the next seven days would serve as the procedure for applying that educational theme during the useful term of that altar.

Alpha Altar (Ex 29, Lev 8-10) **Sinai**

Day 1: sin offering *bullock*

Burnt offering *ram*

Peace offering *ram*

Days 2-8: sin offering *bullock*

Omega Altar (Ezek 43) **Zion**

Day 1: sin offering *bullock*

Days 2-8: sin offering *goat*

burnt offering *bullock*

burnt offering *ram*

These Christ altars preside over each of their respective divine educational ages, the initial and the restored Kingdom of Heaven. The alpha altar's educational theme would include a focus on sin, dedication to pursuing the knowledge of our Creator (burnt offering) and harmony through love (peace offering) with Him. The educational 'application' for this altar would be repeated over the next seven days of its dedication, which was exclusively a concentration on sin (sin offering only). Therefore the overall educational theme for the Christ

altar during the initial Kingdom period (commonly referred to as the Mosaic Age) would be presenting the knowledge of Yahweh concerning sin in pursuing divine harmony (first day of altar dedication). The ‘application’ of this educational theme would be a concentration on sin, emphasized by the seven following days of sin offerings for that altar dedication.

The Law and Sin

This conclusion is confirmed repeatedly by Paul. *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ* (Gal 3:24). The law was an educational channeling of the minds of the enlightened where the only possible light of hope would be a savior. *By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin* (Rom 3:20). The law was the divinely appointed educational procedure to understand sin. *Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound* (Rom 5:20). The law spotlighted and magnified sin so that it could not hide in the dark recesses of our minds. It was the circumcision knife that cut away the self-worshipping crust from the conscience. *I had not known sin, but by the law... without the law sin was dead ... But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful* (Rom 7). Kingdom law’s primary role was to offer us an insight into how our Creator understands sin. Our committed goal is to think and act like our Heavenly Father, to reshape ourselves into His image and likeness. Without the law, our education concerning how Yahweh thinks and why He acts is crippled. This is why our next commentary will address the issue of why the sin offering was the divinely appointed dominant offering during the dedications of both the alpha and omega altars for the original and the restored Kingdom of God.

Jim Dillingham

Vocational Training for an Immortal Priesthood No. 19 September 2009

Our Messiah Altar No. 3

Sin Times Seven

Our most cherished shared goal is to serve as the immortal priest/kings in the Millennial Kingdom under the direction of the Creator’s first begotten son. This has been our continuing premise for every commentary. The benefits of this uniting goal are beyond our capacity to imagine. We are told this more than once in scripture. *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him* (1 Cor 2:9; Is 64:4). Our greatest barrier, our primary antagonist in the pursuit of this goal is our own personal heart. Our natural thought patterns, our instinctively correct imaginations, frequently re-craft our perceptions of truth and error and right and wrong to accommodate our own preferences and conveniences. As this is a feature of all humanity, we can easily find and attach ourselves to others whose imaginations accommodate personal preferences above painful, heart circumcising truth. A sense of community offers comfort that has the capacity to overwhelm the discomfort of conscience. Mankind’s natural homogenous nature craves that community comfort and sense of safety. It makes no difference whether that community identification is expressed through family, a competitive team, employment, neighborhood, national identity or a particular Ecclesia. The emotional dependence for the continuing comfort and safety of ‘community’ can be a great challenge in pursuing divine principles. Our Creator’s thoughts are far above ours. ‘Community’ always solidifies itself on the basis of the lowest common denominators. The urge for community demands simplicity and a sense of shared significance, an identity. Yet, our Creator’s thoughts and principles are never simple and are consistently counter-intuitive.

The positive aspect of this principle of community is that it is the framework for the divine principle of God manifestation. Our Creator intends to bring all the faithful into perfect harmony with Himself. This is where our natural emotional dependence on 'community' should be directed. One of the features of 'community' is that the defining principle of inclusion invariably requires the principle of exclusion. Communities have borders. This is also a divine principle. We considered the law of the Nazarite where unity with Yahweh required separation from alcohol, grape products, dead bodies and hair removal. If we wish to be part of the divine community we must separate ourselves from the flesh communities. We have to think like our Heavenly Father, which automatically identifies us for exclusion from all the flesh based communities of this world. This is especially true when we address the subject of sin.

The Divine Spotlight

The first and the last Christ altars we have been considering (the alpha altar for the Kingdom of Heaven initiated at Sinai and the omega altar that will be employed for the restored Kingdom of Heaven at Zion) each required an eight day dedication period. Each altar's dedication required unique offerings the first day followed by a consistent seven day offering repetition. Each of the two altar dedication procedures required the same offerings but a different order. There was only one constant. There was one offering presented every single day for each of the altar dedications...the sin offering. The sin offering was exclusively required every single day during the dedication of both Christ altars. Balancing this observation was the fact that one exclusive offering was glaringly absent from the entire procedure... the trespass offering. The trespass offering was the only altar offering absent from the entire dedication procedures (as the meal and drink offerings always accompanied the burnt and peace offerings but were not independently mandated for the altar dedications). Despite this sin offering dominance during the altar dedication, the alpha altar was always identified (following its dedication) as the altar of "burnt offering." This is not a generic term indicating any kind of fire consumed offering. This term defined the whole burnt offering that was both the initial and final altar offering every day, the alpha and omega offerings. The divinely expected behavioral response from the burnt offering is a dedication to pursuing the knowledge of Yahweh (Hos. 6:6). It is abundantly clear that we are being divinely invited to consider why it was the sin offering that saturated the Christ-altar dedication procedures for each Kingdom Age. Why is the divine spotlight on the sin offering for the dedications of this Messiah altar?

A constant feature of all false doctrine is that our Creator is always degraded and the flesh is always exalted. There are absolutely no exceptions to this universal rule. Jesus highlights this lesson in his response to the Sadducees rejection of the doctrine of resurrection. *Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him* (Lk 20:37-38). Jesus points out that if we reject the doctrine of the resurrection we are reducing Yahweh to nothing but a god of the dead (like Hades or Pluto, the Greek and Roman gods of the underworld). This is true of all false doctrine. It was after this response that no one was willing to ask Jesus any more questions (vs. 40). It was Christ's attack against the underpinnings of the Sadducees 'community' definitions that led to his orchestrated execution later that week. All false doctrine is divinely degrading. The concept of a fallen angel presumes that the divine nature of immortality is an unclean state, capable of sin. This doctrine reverses the serpent's lie status and presumes that the Creator was the deceiver, who warned that sin would bring death. Jesus himself tells us that angels cannot die (Lk 20:36). Since angels cannot die then they certainly cannot sin, or we have to conclude that the serpent actually told the truth when he said that sin (divine disobedience) doesn't necessarily mean death. All false doctrine is both divinely degrading and flesh exalting. The natural thought process of man, our heart generated thinking, is always self-promoting. It is the humbling truths of divine principles that slice off the crown of ego, circumcising the heart and thereby re-empowering a disenfranchised conscience. This is why meekness is the absolute key to

understanding eternal principles. This self exalting feature of our natural thought process certainly engages itself in a desperately defensive posture when we consider the subject of sin.

The fact that the only offering required for dedicating the first and last Christ altar every single day of the procedures was the sin offering is a fact that summons our attention to the significance of the subject of sin in relation to the role of our Messiah. The divinely appointed textbook for understanding sin is Kingdom Law. Trying to understand sin without the Law is like trying to understand Revelation without Daniel, Ezekiel, Genesis or Isaiah. Trying to understand sin without the Law is like trying to learn calculus when we have never studied basic math, algebra or trigonometry. Let's demonstrate this another way.

Why Did the Apostle to the Gentiles Have to be A Law Scholar?

The Gentiles were invited to participate in the benefits of the gospel when Peter used one of the keys of the Kingdom that Jesus had given him (Matt 16:19; Acts 10). Yet strangely, Peter was not the divine choice to serve as the Apostle to the Gentiles. A Law scholar was needed for that appointment. Saul of Tarsus did not come along gently. He kicked against the goading until finally he was blinded by the immense light that he had refused to recognize until that journey to Damascus. Paul, the Pharisee of Pharisees, was needed so that the principles of the law could be expounded repeatedly in his inspired letters to the Gentile Ecclesias. The Apostle to the Gentiles had to be a Law scholar so that his contemporaries and all the faithful of the Ecclesial Age might understand the transition from a divine educational focus on sin to a divine educational focus on righteousness and grace. Paul, the Law scholar, addressed the temporary nature of Law rituals and the incompleteness of the Law. Paul wrote about the principles behind Sabbath observance, priestly activities, circumcision, altar offerings and the very Christ altar we are considering. Sadly, those who prefer the temporary comfort of wallowing in the heart generated thought process presume that the Law is now inconsequential and can be ignored. They don't realize that just like sin, righteousness and grace are also only part of the story. This is why Kingdom Law will have to be restored along with the restored Kingdom of Heaven. The shadow lessons of the law are eternal. The shadows themselves are temporary.

The Relationship Between Sin and Its Effects

The existence of sin is the only reason for sorrow, suffering, death, disease, exploitation, frustration, hunger, poverty, violence, etc. Heart disease is not the leading cause of death. That is only a symptom. It is sin, and only sin, that causes death. The relationship between sin and suffering is dramatically emphasized by the restraining of sin during the Millennial Kingdom. When the dragon, that old serpent, the devil and satan are chained in the bottomless pit for 1,000 years (Rev 20:2) there is a necessary and corresponding restraining of the effects of sin. When sin is restrained, danger will correspondingly be restrained. Weapons will be re-engineered into agricultural tools (Is. 2:4). Carnivorous animals will become herbivorous (Is 11:6-7; 65:25). Venomous reptiles and insects will become harmless. All military schools will close (Micah 4:3). When sin is restrained, life expectancies will extend to the degree that mourners will relent that the 100 year old dead person was just a child, with so much of his life before him (Is. 65:20). This direct relationship between the restraining of sin and the restraining of the effects of sin solidifies our understanding that the existence of sin is the only reason for suffering. The elimination of sin (both capacity and performance) at the beginning of the eighth millennium will automatically eliminate all suffering. The only reason for suffering is the corrupting influence of sin in creation. Christ was the ultimate warrior to defeat the greatest enemy of mankind and creation: sin. The first and last Christ altars were dedicated with a sin offering every single day.

Presuming that the creation account is just a parable and that mankind has been alive for tens of thousands of years is a God-despising philosophy based principally on a misunderstanding of the significance of sin. If death had been a reality during whatever term our Creator describes as the period of creation then it was not sin that facilitated the introduction of death and Paul would be lying when he claims that *by one man sin entered into*

*the world, and **death by sin**; and so death passed upon all men* (Rom 5:12). On the basis of an understanding of sin and its effects we can conclude that the creation period did not take six thousand years or sixty thousand years or six billion years. Yahweh spoke over six evenings and mornings and the result of his creating commands was definitely **not** what we see about us today. Everything changed when sin corrupted our Heavenly Father's creating expressions. Absolutely nothing in what had previously been "very good" even qualified as being divinely 'good' after sin infected all of creation. This distinction is highlighted by the only transgressionless man who ever lived refusing the title "good" when addressed in that manner by the rich young ruler (Matt 19:17). Since the best thing that creation ever produced since our ejection from Eden refused to be identified as even *good*, then what in our present natural order could possibly qualify as being *very good*? Everything in creation changed when sin corrupted what had previously been *very good*. The principle of sin certainly affects the features of creation. Is 24:5-6 *The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth...*" The features of creation (nature) suffer under the horribleness of sin along with ourselves. This is why Paul tells us that all creation groans and travails with us waiting for deliverance from the bondage of corruption (Rom 8:21-23). We should not think of our Creator as merely a manipulator of the far greater rules of the universe. Yahweh spoke and incredibly massive stars instantly came into existence, decorating the night sky. Yahweh spoke and countless species of vegetation in varying states of maturity came into existence with their complex interdependent relationships with animal life, atmosphere and weather patterns. An underestimation of sin automatically degrades our Heavenly Father, as does all heart based imaginings and presumptions.

Sin's Ultimate Border of Seven Times

Sin is not an eternal principle. Sin must end as righteousness is the eternal principle. The Creator's glory will eliminate sin and its corrupting influence when it blankets creation like the waters cover the sea, reflecting the covering principle of atonement. Sin (and its influence) is divinely limited to seven thousand years. This observation is further sin related evidence indicating that our current natural order has not existed beyond the nearly six thousand years since Eden's expulsion. The shadows of Kingdom Law repeatedly confirm the divine limitation of sin to seven times.

- The atoning blood of the sin offering for the High Priest or the nation had twelve applications at three progressive stations: (1) the veil separating the Holy from the Most Holy had to have seven blood applications; (2) the four horns of the incense altar and (3) the base of the bronze altar (Lev 4). The veil represents the flesh of Christ according to the Law scholar appointed to be the Apostle to the Gentiles (Heb 10:19-20). The atoning blood of the sin offering was spattered on the Messiah's flesh (the veil) seven times to indicate how the flesh of Christ would be the weapon to limit the power of sin to seven times. The forgiveness process reflected in this three stage procedure was addressed in our fourth commentary entitled Blood Times Three.
- This same seven times limitation of sin and its influence is demonstrated in the cleansing from the defilement of death by the ashes of the red heifer over a seven day period by participating in that *purification for sin* (Num 19) when the death defiled were cleansed and welcomed back into the divine presence in the camp after those seven days. The effects of sin are limited to seven.
- The cutting off of the flesh on the eighth day for the ritual of circumcision demonstrates this same principle, showing how flesh's crown would be cut off after the completion of seven days.
- A sacrificial animal remained with its mother for seven days and then was given to Yahweh (Ex 22:30) on the eighth day indicating how creation would continue for a maximum of seven times and then would be given wholly to Yahweh.
- The Israelite national rejection of divine Law (as with Adam and Eve's) brought a punishment term of seven times and then favor would be shown (Lev. 26:18). We demonstrate in our prophecy classes to the newly

enlightened how there would be exactly seven years of days to measure the divine punishment term of the seven times declaration that is repeated three times in this chapter. There were 360 days in the Jewish lunar calendar which is then multiplied by the seven times to arrive at the 2,520 years. This term stretches from the first deportation to Babylon forward to 1917, the year of the Balfour Declaration and the beginning of the reversal of Jewish fortunes. The term of punishment for national sin was limited to seven times.

- We can even find very subtle indications of the principle as we see it was seven years from the time the children of God entered the promised land until the land had rest from war. Joshua 14 presents this story as we learn that Caleb was 40 when he spied out the land with Joshua (vs 7). Caleb had wandered 38 more years in the wilderness with Israel to complete the 40 year death march judgment for the national rebellion. Caleb indicated it had been 45 years since he spied out the land (vs 10). That would mean Israel had been taking the promised land from the Canaanites for seven years. The final verse explains that the land has rest from war. Just as the defeat of the servants of sin and the inheritance of the promised land took seven years, so the inheritance of creation by the sons of God will take seven thousand years when the war between sin and righteousness will finally be over. Sin has a divinely mandated limitation of seven times.
- This same principle is demonstrated by the seven days of sin offerings to dedicate the Christ altar (following the unique initial day) to achieve an atonement for that altar. *And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin offering for atonement: and thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it, to sanctify it. Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar, and sanctify it; and it shall be an altar most holy: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy* (Ex 29:36-37).

The shadows of Kingdom Law are very emphatic in their declaration that sin will be limited to seven times and no longer. The Millennial Kingdom will serve as the seventh and final ‘time’ to which sin is limited. Therefore, since sin could not have existed more than 6,000 years ago then neither could death, making **any variation** of a distorted, extended creation history a violation of divine principles and a degrading of the glory of the Creator.

Underestimating the Enemy

The human mind automatically diminishes the horribleness of sin. We aggressively defend our personal sense of morality. We sometimes refer to lies as being little or even white. We explain away ungodly behavior on the basis of expediency or a momentary weakness that should be overlooked. The societies of the world have taken this tendency to an extreme by reversing sin and righteousness. Abominable behavior is redefined as alternate lifestyles and toleration of sinful behavior has become the new standard of ‘community’ righteousness. If we do not accept sinful behavior without highlighting it, then we are branded as judgmental, ungodly and the enemies of peaceful unity. That sense of community, based on the lowest common denominators, will encourage an aggressive defensive scrutiny toward the few who threaten that convenient plummeting standard of righteousness and sin that binds the many together.

We Needed a Hero

The Law highlighted the horribleness of the principle of sin. Kingdom Law crushes us with the understanding that we are without hope on the basis of self-reliance. We need a savior. We need a true hero. Sin is too powerful for us. The first and last altars shadowing that savior had to have a sin offering every single day of its dedication to highlight the greatest purpose of that Savior altar. He would make war against sin and win. At the end of seven times that savior would kill sin, eliminating it completely from creation. We diminish our Savior’s victory if we buy into the popular image of sin being separate from death and suffering. We diminish our Savior’s victory if we diminish the horribleness of the principle of sin. Christianity sees forgiveness as simple and easy and automatic when a shallow display of repentance is demonstrated semi-consciously. The intensity and sincerity of our repentance will correspondingly reflect on how seriously we fear and despise sin. Mankind often ignores the lesson of the final application of the sin offering blood for Kingdom Law’s national sin offering. After seven spattering applications were made on the veil (flesh of Christ) and the four horns of the

golden altar were smeared then the final step was to pour the great bulk of the remaining atoning blood at the base of the Christ altar. After we understand the gospel truth of how sin would be defeated in the flesh of Christ over a seven time period and we respond with prayerful repentance for our sin participation then we must pour out our mortal lives at the feet of our Savior, living differently. True repentance will demand a behavioral change, a despising of sin and a fear of its horrible effects.

In our next commentary we will consider our Heavenly Father's training methods and mental recalibration procedures for adjusting our understanding of sin. We need to think like our Heavenly Father so that we might act like Him and eventually become part of His eternal community.

Jim Dillingham

Vocational Training for an Immortal Priesthood No. 20 October 2009
Our Messiah Altar No. 4

Sin Re-education

We have noted the dominating presence of the sin offering for the dedication of the first and last Christ altars for the first Kingdom of God and the restored Kingdom of God. The sin offering was the exclusive offering demanded every day for each of the Christ altar dedication procedures. It wasn't the burnt offering inviting the offerer to dedicate themselves to pursuing the knowledge of God. It wasn't the peace offering where merciful love was highlighted as necessary for harmony with Yahweh. Although these were necessary for the altar dedications, they were only required on limited days. It was only the sin offering that had to be offered every single day for both Christ altar dedications. Just as all life (blood) offerings under Kingdom Law had to be brought to the altar so we must offer our mortal lives to our heavenly Father exclusively through Christ. Therefore, this relentless sin highlighting in relation to our Messiah altar should offer great significance to those who are sincerely committed to pouring out our lives at the feet of our Christ altar.

We stand at the end of the Ecclesial Age. This divinely appointed age (bordered by changes in law and priesthood) began with the generating of the great inspired writings of the New Testament and incredible divine power exhibitions through the faithful. The Holy Spirit gifts ended with the death of the second generation of Jewish and Gentile believers (as promised by Peter Acts 2:38-39). The final addition of John's recorded revelations on Patmos completed *that which is perfect* (completed word of God), marking the sunset of that *which was in part* (Holy Spirit gifts) as Paul had prophesied (1 Cor 13:8-10). This conclusion of inspired writings and Spirit gifts availability marked the beginning point for Amos and Micah's prophecies concerning a period of prolonged divine silence. The sun would go down on the prophets (Micah 3:6-7) and there would be a great famine of the word of God (Amos 8:11-12). We are told specifically when that extended period of divine silence will end... when the latter rains will arrive at the introduction of the Millennial Kingdom. Isaiah tells us, in the uncontestable context of the initiation of the restored Kingdom: *The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies. I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once* (Is 42:13-14). The accountable will have been taken for judgment before that birthing cry and that charging soldier's roar focuses the entire world's attention for the purpose of divine re-education.

No Fire from Heaven for Us

Our final generation of this Ecclesial Age enjoys great blessings and great challenges. We currently have no new revelations to recalibrate our hearts and minds. We have no invading Mideonites or Assyrians to punish any embrace of sin and distancing from righteousness. We also have no Gideons or Samsons to save us. We have no Moses to part the challenges we face and make them stand at attention while we pass safely between them. We have no Elijahs to call down fire from heaven and then order the execution of the false teachers within the brotherhood. There have always been false teachers within the brotherhood. Our generation offers no exception to this timeless rule. The entire book of Jude is about the danger of false teachers within the brotherhood. The warnings saturating the New Testament about abandoning the gospel truths highlight the danger as coming from within the brotherhood. The challenge of paganism was primarily persecution, not a seduction of false wisdom. This famine of God's word without any new and open revelations imposes a greater personal responsibility for self-recalibration to divine standards and principles. A greater level of spiritual maturity has been expected of the faithful in this divine educational age. Parents do not teach and discipline their teenagers the same way we do our toddlers. A greater level of personal responsibility is expected as children mature to different stages. We currently stand ready to meet our bridegroom, enjoying the hindsight of divine lessons taught to previous generations and recorded for our benefit. We understand mysteries that were hidden from younger maturity stages of the Messiah's fiancé. We groan with all of creation, our hearts aching, for his imminent return. More is expected of our generation. We have been privileged to witness the resurrection of the national first born son of God. This is the appointed sign for the final generation that will witness the return of the resurrected first born son of God. Our generation has the greatest literacy capacity and freedom to read scripture of any generation since the Ecclesial Age began. Much has been given to us. Much is required of us.

When backsliding Israel needed attitude re-adjustments concerning sin and righteousness Yahweh would send prophets, invaders, judges, miracles and eventually His son. We have no prophets or invaders or judges or miracles and Christ has not returned. We have the Bible. We have our consciences. We have each other. We have our life experiences and observations to interpret. This greater dependence on personal resilience and understanding offers a great advantage to sin (the great deceiver.. the cruel king we have rejected.. the lion hunting us.. that other law in our members) in our pursuit of divine standards. The recalibration prompting procedures we personally experience are far more subtle than prophets calling down fire from heaven or blinding the army surrounding our city. We are not asked to kill and bleed out living animals and incinerate them on a bronze platform. During this last stage of the maturing of the bride of the King's son we are encouraged to think without the obvious hand slappings. We must contemplate divine principles and truths, finding ways to express them in what we say and do and think. We are no different from previous generations in that our hearts and minds also need recalibration. Just as refusing to replenish oxygen, water and food will bring our death so a refusal to replenish spiritual nutrition will lead us to perishing. We need mental and emotional refreshing because our natural tendency under the curse of sin and death is self-accommodation, self-centered attention and self-worship. Our understandings of sin certainly fit within this necessary regular re-calibration. There are divinely provided tools for this purpose that should not be discouraged.

Resisting the Vacuum

The horribleness of sin is dramatically highlighted throughout scripture. Yet sin is minimalized and diminished by the natural thought process of the human mind, with that diminishing effect exponentially multiplied through a cumulative community based disrespect for the loathsomeness of sin. The crusting over of our conscience accelerates as our diminishing of sin's inherent evil is confirmed and reinforced by others in whichever 'community' to which we are drawn. This is the term politely referred to as "political correctness," which is just dressed-up mob morality. This is the great evil of a democratic society, where the majority redefines right and wrong according to convenient preferences and majority perceptions. Right, wrong, truth and error lose their

‘absolute’ status, becoming malleable and static in a democratic environment. The challenge for the servants of the Most High God is maintaining a stationery mental position as everything around us is accelerating rapidly into the broad path of destruction, creating a powerful vacuuming effect.

This shared and reinforced underestimation of sin surfaces visibly in multiplying features of the world’s plummeting societal standards. For example, the degrading of the principle of sin tows a mental distancing between pain and sin. No fault insurance and no fault divorces have replaced the determination and cost of assigned blame. It is so much easier, less expensive and less painful to wipe the slate clean without determining responsibility or assigning accountability. Parents who respect the divinely appointed association between bad behavior and pain are arrested and jailed when they physically discipline their children publicly, labeling these loving parents as deplorable child abusers. Democratic societies have decided that pain and unacceptable behavior should never be associated together... until a child matures to an adult with this unnatural presumption and society protects itself with an isolating imprisonment for unacceptable behavior. The majority has ruled that light is darkness and darkness is light. Democracy (majority rule) is a great enemy to the absolute truths of divine principles. The majority regularly redefine right and wrong, creating societal paradigms directly opposing the divine truths concerning sin.

Recalibrating at The Beginning

How can we reposition ourselves to the divine standard concerning sin and not some warped societal variation? Clearly, we need wisdom. Wisdom is correctly applied knowledge. We have previously determined that the absolute key to understanding divine principles is personal meekness. The intentional complexity of divine communication is designed to strip away our natural arrogance. It makes no difference whether we focus on truth with a minimal attention to love or love with a minimal truth focus. Arrogance reigns in our minds and hearts unless we balance both truth and love in the divinely appointed progression of a truth foundation strongly conditioned by love. An imbalance requires a re-calibration. We are repeatedly taught that it is the fear of Yahweh that identifies the very beginning of wisdom (Ps. 111:10; Prov. 1:7; 9:10). If we truly desire wisdom then fear is the entranceway, whether we find that palatable or not.

There are two primary behavioral fears expected from the faithful. These are reverential fear (great deferential respect) and simply being afraid. Just as imputed righteousness is not effective without personally performed righteousness... just as behavioral sin is not exclusive, being generated from the foul spring of sin producing human nature... so reverential fear does not eclipse the necessity for fear and dread. When our Creator demands that creation bow before His enthroned son... when the period of self imposed divine silence has ended... when education in eternal principles is no longer voluntary, we see that it is the overwhelming fear of our Creator that will facilitate mankind’s mental re-education posture. Heaven and earth will be the two required witnesses who will first execute the divine judgments against the accused (Deut 17:6-7). Heaven and earth together will circumcise the hearts of men with unimaginable earthquakes, volcanic devastation, plague and panic. Fear induces meekness. Meekness is the only mental platform possible to begin to understand eternal principles.

Fear and Pain Extend Life

Fear is unpleasant, just like pain. However, just like pain, fear is necessary to sustain life under the terms of our curse. There have actually been children born without the capacity to feel pain (Congenital Insensitivity to Pain). They rarely live to become adults. There are a few hundred young people in the world with this painless condition. There are no old people with that condition. Pain prolongs our life as it makes us more careful, attentive and preventive. Pain and tears are not features of immortal spirit based life, only cursed mortal life. Fear also facilitates longer life terms. Fear prompts careful, cautious, respectful attention. The absence of fear encourages carelessness and overconfidence, just as the absence of the fear of God encourages inappropriate self-righteousness and presumption of certain divine acceptance. Even the Apostle Paul defines the fear of

Christ's potential rejection as a personal motivation for preaching. *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men* (2 Cor 5:10).

The problem for our community is the potential disengaging of this divinely appointed sin-recalibration tool by suggesting that our exclusive focus should be reverential fear for our Heavenly Father, without any of the uncomfortable fear that Jesus clearly commanded. *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather **fear him** which is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna* (Matt 10:28). Unfortunately, the same oversimplification tripping point is used to limit the fear of God to reverence as is used to limit our understanding of sin to simply transgression. I John 3:4 clearly states that *sin is the transgression of the law*. What is suggested but never scripturally stated is that sin is **only** the transgression of the law and nothing else. That unprecedented limiting conclusion would be a violent attack against the laws of our Heavenly Father's kingdom. This presumption of exclusivity is also imposed on the principle of the fear of God. In the very next chapter of John's first epistle we read: *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love* (1 Jn 4:18). Once again it is presumed that all categories of fear are eliminated in a mature (perfect) love. Jesus already made it clear **which** fear is eliminated by a mature (perfect) love of our heavenly Father. It is the tormenting fear of what men can do to us that is cast out by that love. Our Master always sets our correct course and lived what he exhorted. *Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared* (Heb 5:7). Just as Jesus commands us to fear the one who can make us perish (destroy both body and soul), he feared the one who was able to save him from death. Maturing love casts out the fear of what man can do to us. Men can only kill us once. We don't perish when our bodies expire. The perishing of the divinely accountable will be after we live again to face judgment.

I learned this lesson as a child. The only time I ever had reason to be afraid of my loving father was when I was contemplating or performing things that were very unacceptable to him. He loved me enough to teach me the association between bad behavior and pain, so that I might be wise enough to avoid the pain that always accompanies unacceptable behavior by the time I matured. We only have reason to be afraid of our Heavenly Father when we are contemplating or performing in a manner that contradicts His righteousness. However, diminishing the pain and discomfort of the principle of the fear of Yahweh and the fear of the effects of sin will encourage an inappropriate overconfidence and carelessness, with a dismissing of the horribleness of sin in reference to ourselves.

The Called and Chosen Deflection

An example of the effects of this fear diminishing mental platform would be the way a dire warning from Jesus Christ is deflected from our community onto the world. The frustrating ineffectiveness of our preaching efforts is often cushioned with a very inappropriate quote from our Messiah. We are told that *many are called but few are chosen*. Upon even a casual examination of the two times Christ uses this phrase it is unmistakable that the enlightened are the called from which few will be chosen at the judgment. The linguistic gymnastics that are sometimes demonstrated in Bible presentations cannot wrest these frightening phrases from their context. Jesus concludes two separate parables addressing judgment surprises with this chilling phrase concerning those called to the judgment... *many are called but few are chosen*. The first kingdom of heaven parable is the awarding of the denarius by the householder at the conclusion of their labor (Matt 20:1-16). The second kingdom of heaven parable is the marriage of the king's son where a man is ejected from the wedding for lack of a wedding garment (Matt. 22:1-14). Each parable concerning who will be rewarded and participate in the wedding of the King's son ends with this warning to those called to judgment: *many are called but few are chosen*. We are the called. This is exactly how we very appropriately define ourselves, as the Ecclesia (the called). Jesus warns us that few of the called will be rewarded or allowed to experience the marriage of the King's son. These were not

'preaching' parables, so why is Christ frequently quoted in the entirely wrong context, as if it is the unenlightened world that should be afraid and not ourselves?

Have we personally disengaged this powerful tool (the fear of Yahweh) for recalibrating ourselves from sin's relentless (but often subtle) coaxing? Do we comfort ourselves by listening to the soft words of reinforcement whispering that we have nothing to fear, that our salvation is assured? Underestimating the power, the vileness, the horribleness of sin is energized by surrendering our defensive weapon of the fear of Yahweh. We don't have Philistines and prophets to induce our recalibrating fear. We are supposed to be the mature fiancé awaiting the imminent arrival of our bridegroom. We must *cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God* (2 Cor 7:1) but must do this relying on scripture, an engaged conscience and each other as we stand on our toes scanning the horizon eagerly for our bridegroom.

Relying on Each Other

We are also reliant on each other. One of the divinely appointed tools for sin recalibration is fellowship withdrawal. This community embarrassment was initiated in order to save the unrepentant and to save the ecclesia from the leavening effect of unaddressed and unrepentant sin (1 Cor 5). Paul withdrew fellowship from Hymenaeus and Alexander to teach them not to blaspheme, since they had *put away* their conscience (1 Tim 1:19-20). Withdrawing fellowship is a tool for sin recalibration where those of us who love each other more than superficially are willing to socially discipline the resistant, unrepentant backslider. This is another divinely appointed tool for sin recalibration that some among us resist on the professed grounds of love (quite hypocritically). Sin toleration and unity on the basis of dramatically lowering standards will confirm the course of the unrepentant and endanger the Ecclesia as sin tolerance grows like leaven.

None among us can bring the dead back to life like Peter. We can't shake off poisonous snakes attached to our arm into a fire, unharmed, like Paul. We don't have incredible visions of the future like John. We have limited defensive weapons against sin. Sin is far more powerful and seductive than many of us realize. If we underestimate sin we have already surrendered our advantage from when we learned the true gospel, recognizing sin is not an exterior influence but a force inside us that is not dependent upon our invitation for its operation. Our weapons against sin's power in this dispensation are limited to the truth within scripture, our conscience, our fear and each other. Dismissing the motivation of the fear of our Heavenly Father, along with refusing to love each other enough to recalibrate each other's unrepentant embrace of sin, permits a far easier disengaging of our conscience. Once our conscience has developed a thick, insulating crust we have only the truth of scripture to painfully circumcise our hearts. If we are unwilling to listen to our conscience we may be far more willing to redefine the lessons of scripture in a more comfortable, self affirming manner. Beware the seductive power of sin working from within us and within the various communities where we find ourselves (family, employment, friends, ecclesia, etc).

The Christ altar for the initial and the anticipated restoration of the Kingdom of Heaven have only one particular offering for every single day of their dedications. This is the sin offering. This is what our Messiah came to defeat. His victory over sin is why we have a real hope to be saved from the curse of sin and death. Our Messiah is our standard. He is the **way** we must follow. Beware the seductive power of sin and the vacuuming effect of a society that dramatically underestimates and dismisses sin's power.

Jim Dillingham

Circumcision of Heart and Flesh

The divinely required laws for the Kingdom of Heaven, initiated at Sinai, exhibited a powerful physical emphasis. Domesticated animals were killed, bled, skinned, dismembered and incinerated on a daily basis for spiritual worship. Violators of the stone covenant of the ten commandments were stoned to death by their family, the sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. War was mandated. The divine presence had a particular address on earth, a physical sanctuary (Tabernacle). There were dietary laws, construction laws, agricultural laws, labor laws and even laws concerning attire. Baby boys had part of their bodies cut away with a sharp knife. Compliance with divine law was mandatory and compelled by the community. Then the law and priesthood changed as the divine plan progressed into the Ecclesial Age. The Kingdom of Heaven was eliminated, along with the earthly address for the focused divine presence along with the Kingdom laws. The introduction of the Ecclesial Age replaced that powerful physical emphasis with a decidedly more spiritual, introspective emphasis. The abundant rituals from the previous age were distilled to just four (baptism, memorial service, sisters' headcoverings and sisters' silence). Participating in the wars of men was forbidden. Violators of the covenant are now lovingly corrected, with the greatest extreme being a temporary (at least that was the intention) social ostracism. The dietary and clothing and agricultural and mandatory Saturday rest laws were revoked. Compliance with divine law is now completely voluntary. In the greatly anticipated transition into the next divinely appointed age (Millennial Kingdom) there will again be a change in the law and a change in the priesthood. This final educational stage for earth's appointed caretaker (man) will not favor **either** a physical or a spiritual emphasis. This stage in the divine plan will embrace **both**.

Refusing Any Part of the Whole Leaves Us Incomplete

The Jew clings to the old covenant with its physical emphasis. The Christian (using the term loosely) prefers the exclusive embrace of the new covenant with its spiritual emphasis. Yet both are divine covenants. Both covenants portray parts of the divine whole. The divine principle of peace is the presence of harmony (and certainly not the toleration of diversity or the absence of disturbance). We must see both physical and spiritual blend together perfectly and harmoniously for the divine standard of peace to be realized. This intended marriage of natural (physical) and spiritual can be validated in amazing ways within the framework of our current dispensation.

Physical Into Spiritual Into Both Together

The ritual of circumcision offers an excellent introductory confirmation into this extensive principle of the necessary harmony to be achieved between the natural and the spiritual. The physical and spiritual applications of this particular divine appointment span all four divinely appointed priesthood ages (Patriarchal, Mosaic, Ecclesial, and Millennial Kingdom). The circumcision ritual was initiated in the Patriarchal age immediately prior to the conception of the son of promise, to be born from the dead womb of Sarah. It was a physical ritual offered to a man who demonstrated great spiritual understanding and confidence. The circumcision of the flesh confirmed the heaven and earth covenant with a man who powerfully demonstrated the spiritual lesson of the circumcised heart. The physical application of this ritual was also highly significant during the initial Kingdom Age (also referred to as the Mosaic Age). The Ecclesial Age emphasized and demanded the spiritual application of circumcision (circumcision of the heart) while disengaging the physical application. In the final Millennial Kingdom Age both physical and spiritual applications are both absolutely demanded without exception. Yahweh makes this rule perfectly clear in reference to His sanctuary in the Millennial Kingdom to which the world will come to learn about Him. Ezek 44:9: *Thus saith the Lord GOD; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel.* In

order to enter the literal temple of Ezekiel's vision one will have to be circumcised in **both** flesh and heart, both physically and spiritually. People around the planet will say, *Come let's go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to **the house of the God of Jacob** so that he may teach us his ways and we can walk in his paths.* They will not enter that renewed divine address without being **both** physically and spiritually circumcised.

Didn't the Apostle Paul declare circumcision to be irrelevant? *For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love* (Gal 5:6). Didn't Paul tell us that true circumcision is spiritual and not flesh? *For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh* (Phil. 3:3). Didn't baptism replace circumcision as the covenant seal? *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead* (Col. 2:11-12). The answers to these oversimplified questions would have to be both yes and no. The answer would be yes in the context of the Ecclesial Age but no in the context of the Millennial Kingdom Age. Flesh circumcision alone is incomplete in the same sense that spiritual circumcision of the heart alone is incomplete. Faith does not invalidate Kingdom Law. Faith confirms the Law. *Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? **By no means: yea, we establish the law*** (Rom. 3:30-31). The underlying principles of Kingdom Law perfectly compliment and balance the underlying principles of the spiritual instructions of the Ecclesial Age. However, they each offer a separate educational focus concerning our Creator. In the Kingdom Age, as immortal priests (saints) and mortal priests (Israelites) work together, the world will learn the harmony that must exist between the physical priesthood and the spiritual priesthood for the Creator's plan to be realized.

As we have learned before, our Creator offers a variety of confirmation avenues for His principles. There is always an entire orchestra of divine expressions playing His symphony of interdependent truths. We simply need ears to hear. Let's consider the wind section of this orchestra of evidence, which would be the works of creation. Both the Hebrew and Greek words for spirit (as in Holy Spirit) are related to air and wind. Therefore the features and interrelated laws of creation are the works of the Holy Spirit. Our Creator simply spoke and incredibly complex and interdependent features of our planet and solar system appeared and began operating as if they had been there forever. Paul confirms that the works of creation offer significant evidence concerning our Creator. Rom. 1:19-20: *Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, **being understood by the things that are made**, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.* These two verses offer a wonderful invitation for the final generation of the faithful before our Heavenly Father ends His silence. Our particular generation has the capacity to consider the invisible things of creation like no generation before us. We can look into molecules and count the protons in the nucleus of an atom. Computers can process information at a rate that converts a hundred years of work into minutes. We can map the bottom of the oceans and send discovery equipment into deep space to learn about the planets and stars. If we actually look for it (with the meekness of a circumcised heart), we can see our Creator and His principles in the things that have been made. Let's look for it.

Looking Low and Looking High

Space constraints will limit us to two examples of the evidence for the invisible things from the creation of the world that display the power and design of our beloved Creator. We will look high and low, starting with low. Let's look to the molecular level to see the subtle divine signatures hidden away exclusively for those with hearing ears and seeing eyes. Scientifically we know that there is no form of life in our existence that is not carbon based. Carbon is the exclusive element that scientifically identifies literally all forms of life under the

curse of sin and death... mortal life. That same scientific world also universally recognizes the atomic number of carbon as being six. This is due to the number of protons in the nucleus as clearly identified on any chart of the elements. Coincidentally the number six is scripturally stamped on the effects of the curse of sin and death (carbon based life): mortal man, death, sin, disease, hard labor, and subjugation. The foundational element for all mortal life numerically mirrors scripture's testimony. If this partnership between 'nature' and scripture were an isolated coincidence then this observation would appear to be contrived. This is actually the introduction to a definite pattern. However, please excuse my use of the word 'nature' as it is a word I passionately despise. The word nature is defensively applied by a self-worshipping humanity to avoid the correct term: creation. That word (creation) demands a moral responsibility and a humility that uncircumcised hearts will desperately fight until they perish. However, our current subject demands a dual perspective. Therefore I uncomfortably surrender to the necessity of using this highly distasteful word: nature.

Since we have identified the element that defines mortal life we should be able to define the element that personifies immortal life. That is also quite simple. We determined our elemental identification of mortal life by observing 'nature' and then referenced scripture. The only place we can possibly go to elementally manifest immortality would have to be an eternal source. That could only be God's word. Jesus explains to a confused Nicodemus what it will mean to be born again, to be born of the Spirit from mortal to immortal. The change in nature from flesh to Spirit is represented by Christ as becoming like the wind. *The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit* (John 3:8). It is also quite commonly understood (and easily verified) that the Hebrew and Greek words that are translated Spirit are both related to air and wind (Heb.-ruach and Gk-pneuma). The element in air and wind that sustains life is oxygen. Oxygen is the elemental representation of immortal life. Oxygen is universally identified throughout the scientific world by the number eight on that same chart of the elements, due to the eight protons in the nucleus. Eight is a number that both scripturally and scientifically is identified with that which is eternal and infinite. An eight laid on its side is the mathematical symbol for infinity. It is **after** the seven thousand year divine plan is concluded that death and the grave are cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death. The 'second' death is eternal. Eternal death is cut away from eternal life in the eighth period just as circumcision cuts off the crown of flesh on the eighth day. Perfect peace is achieved when we arrive at the eighth divine 'time,' when all flesh is cut off. All of creation will be circumcised in that eighth 'day,' since *one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day* (2 Pet. 3:8; Ps. 90:4). The exclusive divinely appointed **door** leading from finite to eternal and from mortal to immortal is also identified by both numbers: six and eight. Jesus is the appointed portal between mortal life (elementally defined by carbon) and immortal life (elementally defined by oxygen), between six and eight. Does this six and eight Christ-pattern, evident in the features of creation, also flow through scripture? Of course it does!

The Six and Eight Christ Connection

The very name of Jesus, meaning savior, embodies both the scriptural and matching creational theme of six and eight. Our Messiah's original Greek name is made up of six letters that add up to 888 (iota=10, eta=8, sigma=200, omicron=70, upsilon=400 and sigma=200...888). He is the first begotten from the dead. Jesus was the first to progress from mortal flesh to immortal spirit nature, from six to eight. The covenant between heaven and earth in Genesis 15 required six half carcasses of sacrificial animals and two whole birds to make a total of eight components, identifying our savior, the mediator between heaven and earth, between six and eight. The golden Ark of the Covenant formed a closed container by joining six surfaces at eight convergence points (corners). The acacia wood covered by gold further emphasizes the same flesh to spirit transition presented by this six and eight feature of the ark. Another interesting example would be the vision of the Kingdom on the mount of transfiguration. All three gospel accounts offer a time frame specifically from Christ's declaration *There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.*

Matthew and Mark identify that timeframe from promise to performance as being “after six days.” Luke identifies this timeframe as being “about eight days.” One might ask why these brethren of ours didn’t all just identify that time frame as being late on the seventh day. The answer would be that these men were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write exactly what they wrote, veiling the glory of God’s word so that only the heart-circumcised true believers can witness its hidden beauty and glorious perfection. Matthew and Mark explain that the vision of the Kingdom came **after** six days. That would have to mean at least the seventh day, perfectly matching our hope of the Millennial Kingdom arriving in the seventh millennium, after the six divine days of 1,000 years each since the promise was offered upon the ejection from Eden. Luke alone identifies that same timeframe as being **about** eight days, suggesting the transfiguration took place late in the seventh day after Christ’ promise that some of his disciples would not die before seeing the son of man coming in his kingdom. Slightly different expressions of the same account should serve as spotlights for those who love the word of our Heavenly Father. The six and eight timeframe references dating from the promise reflect the realization of our hope to be free from the curse of sin and death, numerically identified by the digit six. We hope to be clothed with immortality, to be born of the Spirit, to be covered (atoned) with the divine nature of immortality which is numerically identified with the digit eight. Our creator’s signature can be seen in the features of creation right down to the molecular level since the two elements representing these features of mortal fleshly life and immortal spirit life are identified by the same numbers... six and eight.

The Foursquare, Twelve Division Universe

We have considered a ‘small’ example of how that which is physical manifests spiritual principles. Let’s go to a rather large example: the whole universe. The foundational structure of the created universe perfectly matches the foundational structure of the Kingdom of Heaven. Both offer a foursquare foundation with twelve divisions. We should all be familiar with the divinely appointed structure mandated at the origin of the Kingdom at Sinai. Yahweh’s presence was in the center of the camp with the double foursquare configuration surrounding that presence within the Tabernacle. The inner square constituted the three Levite divisions and the priests. The outer foursquare division was formed by the twelve divisions of the tribes. This is exactly the framework of the universe.

Physicists agree that everything in our universe can be capsulized into four separate categories. These are matter, time, space and energy. There is nothing within our scientific range of observation that cannot fit into one of these four foundational categories. It gets rather interesting when we realize that each segment of this foursquare foundation for creation has exactly three divisions for each component. Matter can exist as a 1) solid, a 2) liquid or a 3) gas. Time can be divided into 1) past, 2) present and 3) future (which is exactly how our Creator defines himself as He who was, He who is and He who shall be). Space can be divided into 1) height, 2) width and 3) depth. Energy is the tricky issue. Scientists separate energy into only two categories: 1) potential (energy at rest) and 2) kinetic (energy in motion). A barrel of oil would be potential energy but burning oil would be energy in motion. However, there is definitely a third category of energy that cannot be scientifically measured.

This is the Holy Spirit, the spiritual energy that created and maintains all things, performing the spoken commands of the Creator to make the lights to rule day and night, to separate dry land, and produce plant and animal life as well as eventually clothing the faithful with immortal life. Spiritual energy is the third separate but very real category of energy that does not fit within the potential or kinetic definition restraints. It is absolutely immeasurable and therefore undetected by scientific observation. It is a spiritual foursquare divine configuration that has twelve segments constituting our Creator’s Kingdom. Mirroring this is the divinely appointed foursquare configuration with twelve components constituting our physical universe. Our Creator is at the center of each foursquare configuration. Our Creator’s signatures saturate our universe on every level,

from the microscopic level to the vastness of the universe. However, this glory is only revealed to those with circumcised hearts and minds.

Both the Image and the Likeness

Physical and spiritual have to blend in perfect harmony. This encompasses the original intent that man be made in **both** the image as well as the likeness of the Creator. The only way true peace can be accomplished is for the physical to manifest the spiritual in perfect harmony. That is the only way the glory of Yahweh Elohim can cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Even this exact expression displays this same theme of that which is spiritual being manifested in the physical things that have been created.

This principle of how what is natural projects spiritual truths is why the physical laws of 'nature' must accompany the spiritual restraint of sin during the Millennial Kingdom. Just as the dragon, the serpent the devil and satan are bound in the bottomless pit for 1,000 years so we see a matching relaxation of nature's response to the presence and intensity of sin. Venomous reptiles and insects become harmless. Flesh rending carnivorous animals become calmly herbivorous. The earth yields dramatically greater bounty. Mortal life is extended to the point that a one hundred year old man is considered still a child. Natural must mirror spiritual!

One of the orchestral expressions of this divine principle is the progression of circumcision law. This is why circumcision was first required as a physical act (cutting off the crown of flesh on the eighth day) and then a spiritual act (cutting away the self-worshipping ego dominance issuing from the human heart by the sharp sword of divine truth) and then in the Millennial Kingdom it is **both** the physical and spiritual applications that are required together. No one uncircumcised in flesh or heart will enter the temple or even Jerusalem (Is. 52:1).

The Incompatibility Between Science and False Religion

A legitimate question would be why both the scientific and religious communities of our world are oblivious to this required marriage of natural and spiritual now, continuing into the changes planned for the Millennial Kingdom and into the true glory of perfect peace at the conclusion of that Kingdom. The core of the problem is not the scientific truths of mathematics (as opposed to scientific theory, such as evolution). The problem is religious misunderstandings. When divine spiritual truth is removed from the equation there can be no compatibility between the natural (scientific) and the spiritual. This is why Galileo was horribly persecuted by the religious authorities for his scientific conclusions concerning planet earth constantly moving and circling the sun. That suggestion was far too humbling to a self-worshipping religious community teaching that the universe revolved around a stationary earth. The constant eastward rotation of the dust of the Earth around the blazing sun maintaining our solar system perfectly reflects the divine truth concerning the natural state of man (dust of the earth) moving away from the divine presence (eastward-mirroring Adam and Eve's ejection from Eden... as west was the exclusive direction to approach the divine presence). In order to witness the perfect symmetry between the natural laws and the spiritual laws we must have seeing eyes, which are only available to those who have painfully circumcised their naturally deceitful, mirror worshipping hearts. It is meekness that is the exclusive path to true enlightenment. The meek will inherit an earth that flawlessly demonstrates spiritual principles.

In our next commentary we will consider the principles (and their exhortational values) within the details of circumcision law as required during the initial Kingdom of Heaven.

Jim Dillingham

Circumcision of Heart and Flesh No. 2

Seriously, what is the only gift we truly have to offer our Heavenly Father that He doesn't already have and cannot take from us without our consent? There is only one gift we truly have to offer. It may be demonstrated in a great variety of ways, but it is still only one personal possession under our exclusive control that He wants from us. That is our heart. He gave us our lives, whatever wealth or physical comforts or advantages we may enjoy, our families and our skills. He can take our life whenever He chooses. The one and only thing our Creator cannot forcibly take from us is our hearts. That would violate His principles and His righteousness. Forced love is not love. Love has to be voluntary to be legitimate. Eliminating any possibility of failure in Eden would not have projected any glory to the Creator. A husband and wife are not satisfied to start their family with plastic dolls that play recorded expressions of devotion and never do anything that is not pre-programmed from a computer chip. We want children who choose to love and appreciate us. Unsurprisingly, so does our Creator.

The Exclusive Acceptability of the Circumcised Heart

The ritual of circumcision completely encompasses the expression of this exclusive gift we can offer our Heavenly Father. An uncircumcised heart is an unacceptable offering to our Creator. Before we can ever lovingly embrace truth we must recognize, despise and refuse error. There have always been only two gods in the world to worship, ever since the failure in Eden when the exterior temptation source of the serpent was internalized into the hearts of man and woman, thereby guaranteeing death. There is the mirror and there is our Heavenly Father. All variations of Pagan, Christian, Islamic, Buddhist, Shintoist and Humanist forms of worship are creations of the human heart. The basic concepts are symmetrical, with only the names and legends being slightly changed to satisfy local patterns, expressions and societal mutations. This is why all false doctrine always has two features in common. All false doctrine, without exception, degrades the only true God and improperly exalts the flesh. These mirror gods are created in our own image and likeness by our own heart generated imaginations. Societies embrace these doctrines and legends warmly as they offer an instinctive comfort, a warm 'feeling' that they are right and good. Jeremiah declares the famous warning that *the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it?* This divine warning directly opposes mankind's universal mantra: Follow your heart and you will never go wrong. An uncircumcised heart is never comfortable with the true doctrines and eternal principles of our Creator. Yahweh wants our heart, but it must be circumcised to be acceptable.

In our previous commentary we considered the divinely appointed educational progression of circumcision law. The physical application of circumcision was initiated during the Patriarchal Age and continued through the Mosaic Age. In the Ecclesial Age the physical application has been dismissed while the spiritual application of the circumcision of the heart is promoted. In the approaching Millennial Kingdom Age we will see both the physical and spiritual applications mandated without exception. This divinely appointed marriage between physical and spiritual is a significant theme coursing through the divine plan from beginning to end. The architectural formula for creation's centerpiece (man) is expressed simply as the image (physical) and likeness (spiritual) of Elohim. Similarly, the incredibly complex biological construction of the first man is expressed as simply body (dust/physical) and the breath of the Creator (air/spirit). The resurrection of the national firstborn son of God is also prophetically presented in two stages: political (physical) and then spiritual (Ezek. 37). The resurrection to immortality similarly takes place over two stages: 1) the physical resurrection from death to judgment and 2) the spiritual resurrection from mortality to immortality following judgment. The final stage of

the divine plan is expressed as the glory and knowledge of Yahweh Elohim (spiritual) covering the earth (physical) as the waters cover the sea (Hab. 2:14, Is. 11:9; Num. 21:14). The complimentary state of physical and spiritual has always been a feature of the divine plan.

Divine Rituals... Where the Physical Projects the Spiritual

All divinely appointed rituals (including circumcision) are physical portrayals of spiritual principles. This is the essence of the divine plan for creation, that all things (physical and spiritual) blend into harmonious perfection to the glory and honor of the Creator. This glory will be witnessed by His spiritually reborn children who refused error, denied the venomous seduction of their egos and manifested His spiritual principles throughout their previous mortal (physical) lives. It is this physical and spiritual harmony that is vigorously rejected by heart generated religions. It is presumed that the physical body is discarded at death to free the spiritual consciousness that continues forever, into eternal bliss or eternal torture. This presumption opposes the divine plan of peace, of perfect harmony between all that is physical and all that is spiritual. The Creator's written word teaches of the atonement, where immortal covers mortal and where spiritual envelops physical and the body is redeemed from the power of sin and death. The world's religions think of atonement as simply forgiveness, defining salvation as an uncovering where the body is stripped away at death to uncover the immortal consciousness of an individual. The salvation process is not an uncovering. Salvation is a covering, an atonement, when the spirit nature is added to the physical body, when corruption **puts on** incorruption and mortal **puts on** immortality. The Creator's plan is to blend physical and spiritual into perfect harmony. It is not the whole body that must be cut away. It is only the self-worshipping human heart that must be circumcised.

Ecclesial Rituals and the Creator's Righteousness

If this physical/spiritual harmony is truly understood and valued by the community of true believers then the few rituals imposed on us during our divinely appointed educational stage will not be disrespected. After all, perfectly blending physical realities and spiritual principles is the divine plan. The current four divinely appointed rituals of the Ecclesial Age are intended to validate the righteousness and wisdom of our Creator, when performed as scripturally directed. Each requires a rejection of instinctive, heart generated presumptions (a circumcision of the heart). The Jews make the mistake that everything is about the physical execution of the ritual. The 'Christian' makes the mistake of thinking that everything is about the spiritual lesson and that physical execution is close to meaningless. Both aspects are each highly significant in understanding our Heavenly Father's principles and motivations.

Baptism, at its core, is a statement that we understand and accept the validity of the divine punishment in Eden. We accept the judgment that sin deserves death... that sin must die. We put our sins to death as we completely descend into that watery grave. This sensitivity to the divine philosophy is instinctively unpalatable to the human heart, which is why society and organized religions all reject this core lesson emphatically. The world's religions agree that sin should not have to die, that their gods can co-exist eternally with sin and that sin itself is eternal, just like righteousness. Evil immortal angels and delusions of eternally suffering immortal souls saturate religious doctrines across the planet, rejecting the righteousness of the Edenic judgment of death for sin. The elimination of capital punishment and the morality debates centering on abortion, assisted suicides and stem cell research are all dependent on the presumption that mortal (sin-cursed) life is somehow inherently sacred. The sacredness of human life is a heart treasured delusion that is absolutely Creator despising, since it was our Creator's law and judgment that inflicted a death sentence upon creation due to the introduction of sin. Godless men think they are more righteous than Yahweh because they consider execution for heinous crimes to be immoral. The world places the worship of man above the worship of the Creator. Their hearts tell them they are right. This is why heart and flesh circumcision is such a significant scriptural issue. The natural, self-worshipping, instinctively right philosophy springing from the human heart must be recognized, painfully cut off and discarded.

Memorial Service validates this same principle as we participate in the death and resurrection of our savior through the broken bread followed by the wine. We recognize the righteousness of our Heavenly Father in requiring death for sin and then His further righteousness in offering us renewed life despite his being right in demanding death for sin. We participate in this physical reflection of spiritual truth to demonstrate our adopted philosophy that is so repulsive to the uncircumcised heart. Sister's silence is a validation of the Creator being right in His creative order as well as His judgment upon womankind due to Eve's contribution to the original failure introducing physical corruption into a very good creation (1 Tim. 2:11-14; 1 Cor 14:33-35). It makes no difference how valuable a contribution a sister might have the capacity to offer upon challenging that divinely imposed silence, they would be denying the wisdom and righteousness of the Creator. This voluntary silence is an act of humility, a willing acceptance of divine wisdom and righteousness, void of self-promotion. The divine ritual of Sisters' silence during the Ecclesial Age is an extension of the principle of the circumcision of the heart, just like baptism and memorial service and sisters head coverings during any prayer. All acceptable divine service begins with the necessary paradigm shift of the circumcised heart.

The Sharp Edge of the Intentional Complexity of Divine Communication

The mindset of the circumcised heart is one of meekness. Arrogant self-worship, that is so natural to the flesh, has to be cut away. This is why meekness is the only possible path to true enlightenment. The intended circumcision of the human heart is evident in the very distinctive, intentionally complex, divine teaching pattern. Divine expressions are intentionally complex and contradictory to the instinctive, natural, self-worshipping thought patterns of the human mind.

Moses exhibited the greatest level of heart circumcision in his entire generation. *Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth* (Num 12:3). This qualified Moses for an entirely different level of divine communication forbidden to all others. When his older brother and sister undermined Moses' authority in the community by complaining about his wife (a Cushite, most probably indicating a black woman) Yahweh demands their presence at the Tabernacle. The divine presence in the cloud lowered to the door of the Tabernacle and the voice from the cloud dramatically and indignantly addresses Aaron and Miriam. They are asked why they were not intelligent enough to be afraid. They are asked how it is they missed the significant status of Moses, being identified by the absence of the standard intentional complexity in divine communication. *And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed* (Num 12:6-9). Yahweh communicated completely differently with Moses than all other prophets and believers. There was no distancing veil of dark sayings, visions, dreams or imagery necessary with Moses. He was already meek. He already had a circumcised heart.

Beware the Unwise Pattern of Aaron and Miriam

Please allow one slight digression for a significant behavioral lesson. Aaron and Miriam were not afraid to highlight what was presumed to be a negative feature of their younger brother. This angered their Creator. This should offer a word of caution to any speaking or writing brethren who choose to highlight or dramatically promote the recorded flaws of men in scripture who are greatly loved by Yahweh. The presence of these flaws and mistakes in the divine record should not offer an invitation to exalt ourselves at their expense, since we should be afraid that our Heavenly Father may be angered by our possible disrespect to someone that He has made clear He loves greatly. While King David did commit murder and adultery he was also defined as a man

after God's own heart. If we are going to address his failures we should do this very carefully and respectfully, as we will have to stand before David's greatest son and give account for every idle word we speak.

Reinforcing A Cherished Perspective

Jesus taught in exactly the same intentionally complex pattern as his Father. Jesus exclusively taught in parables and only explained them exclusively to his disciples privately (Matt. 13:34; Mark 4:33-34). Jesus explained the motivation for this intentional complexity to his disciples. The plan was for those who 'had' to get even more and those who did not 'have' would have what little they actually 'had' to be taken away from them (Matt 13:10-16). The consistent, intentionally complex divine communication pattern is intended to intensify a chosen perspective. Those who 'have' will get more. Those who do not 'have' will end up with less than they started with. Those who refuse to love truth will be sent a strong delusion (2 Thess 2:10-12). Our global society is addicted to simplicity. We are taught to keep it simple and keep it quick. Give us our sound bites and our acronyms because we don't want to have to think. We just want to experience on an instinctive level. The imagery and metaphors of divine expressions within scripture license their mutation into self glorifying delusions by an uncircumcised heart. This is why 'christians' actually believe that their god had to reshape himself into their image and likeness, that he had to redesign himself according to their mortal standards so that he could save his wrecked creation. They believe their god had to disguise himself within a mortal frame, lying about his capacity to sin and lying about his capacity to die, lying about actually dying and lying about coming back to life and also pretending to be his own son. These incredible distortions can actually be cherished because they reverse the significance, making mortal man the standard to which their god must conform... pure blasphemy when considered in relation to the God of the Bible. Do not underestimate the incredible leaps in reasoning that can be presumed by the uncircumcised heart.

The pattern of intentional complexity in scripture cannot be denied by any reasonable mind. The mis-shapen beasts and multi-metaled image of Daniel, the seraphim and the cherubim, the abundance of rituals, the parables of Jesus that were exclusively explained privately to his disciples, his willingness to let disciples walk away without explaining his requirement that they eat his flesh and drink his blood, the transition from Mosaic Law to Ecclesial construction, the dreams and visions and dark sayings throughout scripture and the seals, trumpets and vials of Revelation all validate the intentionally complex divine teaching pattern. The only path to true enlightenment, to correctly understanding this imagery and the divine expressions, is to develop a circumcised heart. Meekness is the needle through which the camel must pass for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. The intentionally complex divine teaching pattern is a behavior modification tool intended to diminish the bloated ego inflated by the naturally self worshipping heart. The circumcision of the flesh also reflects the change in nature when immortality envelops mortality, cutting away the defiling influence of the human heart from which sin emanates its brackish stream of deceit. The circumcision of the heart is the spiritual application to the principle where we voluntarily submit to the divine wisdom of this self-denying, majority opposing, mental frame of reference.

Oversimplification of scriptural principles and truths is the greatest tripping point for Bible students claiming to pursue divine truths. Our Heavenly Father has designed a mental obstacle course for diminishing us in our own eyes before we can approach Him. Arrogance is the enemy of understanding. However, do not mistake confidence and arrogance. They may look alike to the uncircumcised heart defending its treasured delusions, but the correct understanding will be the one where eternal principles are exalted and the flesh is degraded. Our Creator is always right. Adam and Eve chose the serpent's testimony above the Creator's, just like almost all of mankind has done ever since. In both ritual and doctrine, in both physical and spiritual, we must recognize and validate the correctness, the rightness... the righteousness of our Creator.

The 'Only' Trap

One of the most dangerous words in the Bible student's vocabulary is the word 'only'. We should fear this word. It is the core language of the false teachers both outside and within our brotherhood. It is the language of oversimplification and minimalizing of divine principles. This word makes divine mountains into fleshly mole hills. It is the language of sweeping generalizations, of swallowing camels while straining at gnats. Frequently the word "only" does not appear in an offered text but the reference is read with an emphasis that promotes an exclusivity. The disciples of the 'instant guaranteed salvation' delusion confidently quote Romans 10:9-10 as proof positive that one **only** has to believe with their heart and confess with the lips and the salvation process is finished. Sin minimalizers will recite 1 John 3:4 with an emphasis suggesting that sin is **only** the transgression of the law. The Jew **only** concentrates on ritual service. The 'christian' **only** focuses on spiritual service. Underestimating the thoughts and expressions of our Creator is as common as breathing. The word "only" certainly has legitimate scriptural applications, but we should understand it is one of the favorite words and concepts of the uncircumcised heart.

The one gift we truly have to offer our heavenly Father is our heart. He cannot take that involuntarily and He has no interest in an uncircumcised heart whose god is the mirror. Circumcision cannot be accomplished without great pain. Three days after the city of Shechem circumcised all the men it only took Levi and Simeon to completely butcher the now defenseless city, incapacitated by the pain of circumcision (Gen. 34). This realization emphasizes the significance of Israel's national circumcision at Gilgal upon entering the promised land. Surrounded by their enemies, that they have been commanded to drive out or annihilate, they totally incapacitate themselves through circumcision. Israel accepts a complete dependence on the protection of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in that valley of the shadow of death. Loving our heavenly Father means that we must painfully circumcise our hearts, exposing ourselves to the aggressively defensive posturing of a self-worshipping society that doesn't take kindly to highlighting its hypocrisy. True love always demands sacrifice, but the first thing that has to be sacrificed is our heart generated, instinctive self-validating and self-promoting thought process. Then we have to continually pour out our lives at the feet of Christ, just as the priests poured out the remaining blood of the sin offering for the priests and the nation at the base of the bronze altar in accordance with Kingdom Law. Only the circumcised could eat the Passover lamb (Ex 12:48). Only the circumcised in heart will be invited to participate in the final passing over of death when mortal will put on immortality.

In our next commentary we will consider how the law of circumcision interacted with other commandments, rituals and laws. This examination will encourage a greater breadth and width of understanding for the principle, exhortation and prophecy being projected by this ritual.

Jim Dillingham

Circumcision of Heart and Flesh No. 3

We have determined that divinely appointed rituals are physical projections of spiritual principles. When performed as instructed these rituals validate the judgments, design and intentions of the Creator. This physical and spiritual partnership reflects the Creator's intention for perfect peace when all that is physical will harmonize flawlessly with all that is spiritual after sin and death are eliminated completely. We have demonstrated that physical features of creation reflect divine principles from the atomic level right through to the foundational laws guiding the universe.

Toying With Divine Rituals

When Jews (or Christadelphians) modify heaven's rituals this always results in an exaltation of the flesh at the expense of the spiritual principle that was intended to be demonstrated. The washing of hands and cups and platters (an expansion of the washing of the priest's hands and feet prior to approaching the altar or tabernacle) was not observed by Christ. When challenged he responded: *Well hath Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do* (Mark 7:6-8). Jesus continues by pointing out how their heart generated law of Corban violated the intention of the fifth of the ten commandments, making the word of God *of none effect* by their tradition. The leaders of God's community imbalanced the significance of ritual components, thereby qualifying for Christ's contempt. Jesus publicly addressed these leaders of God's people as fools and blind guides for thinking that swearing by the gold of the temple was more serious than swearing by the temple itself and that the gift on the altar was more significant than the altar (Matt 23:16-21). Spiritually identifying and then balancing the significance of the components of heaven's rituals is not an inconsequential challenge. Not one of us would ever want to be addressed by Jesus Christ as a blind fool.

The principle of balance is the tool that crushes the instinctive urge to oversimplify scriptural issues. Balancing judgment and mercy is not simple or easy. Thinking like our Heavenly Father is not natural to us. Throughout scripture and our mortal lives we are repeatedly faced with seemingly contradictory issues to balance. We are exhorted to judge **not** as well as being commanded to definitely judge. We are supposed to know when and how each focus is appropriate. We are commanded to preach but we must balance that with the injunction against casting pearls before swine. We have to balance issue after issue according to divine standards without constantly preferring one exclusive 'imbalanced' course. Yahweh commanded the execution of the man who gathered firewood on a Saturday in the wilderness yet He pardoned King David for adultery and contract murder. We have to understand and appreciate why both judgments were right. Yahweh incinerated Nadab and Abihu for improperly improvising during an important ritual but spared their father after he cast the golden calf. Would we have made the same judgments as our Heavenly Father? Where would that leave us if we disagree with Yahweh?

Circumcision offers a great deal of opportunity to address this principle of balance within our meditations of divine expressions and activities. The ritual of circumcision offers insights into the principles of judgment and salvation. Circumcision is also a prophetic portrayal of divine intent, including the prophetic timing of that intent. It is a great exhortation that spotlights the exclusive path of true enlightenment. Circumcision is interwoven into issues such as gender, Passover, inclusion and exclusion, agriculture, Sabbath Law, slavery,

baptism and sin in the flesh. It is this scriptural ‘weaving’ that offers insight into the issue of balancing divine instructions, exhortations and principles. We have to learn to think and act like our Heavenly Father, understand that He is always right and reshape ourselves into His image and likeness... so that we might be His sons and daughters, now and forever.

Circumcision Law Challenges Sabbath Law

We have already addressed the most obvious example of this circumcision ‘weaving’ in our eighth commentary in this series entitled: The Path to Spiritual Balance. We noted that Sabbath law and circumcision law could conflict when the eighth day of a boy’s life fell on a Sabbath. However, there was no divine mandate to settle the issue of these potentially conflicting laws. Should Sabbath law observance eclipse Circumcision Law or vice versa? Should a boy’s circumcision ceremony be postponed to the ninth day or should Sabbath Law be over-ruled with a strict observance of the eighth day circumcision command, even if it fell on a Sabbath? Which law was supposed to be understood as greater than the other? The answer would be highly significant as these rituals are the two divinely appointed tokens of the two great covenants of works and faith (Gen. 17:11; and Ex. 31:13; 20:12,20). The glaring absence of a definitive scriptural mandate in this conflict of token rituals underlines our responsibility to respect the intentional complexity of divine communication. We finally learn the correct balance between these two laws in the Gospel of John. Jesus defends his Sabbath healing pattern by pointing out the Jewish practice of circumcising on the Sabbath (John 7:22-23). In paralleling his Sabbath healings to Sabbath circumcisions Jesus confirms the appropriateness of the Jewish understanding that circumcision law had to be observed even at the expense of Sabbath law.

Our hindsight privileges deny any legitimate grounds for self affirmation in concluding this very significant conflict between Sabbath and circumcision laws. There is no room for personal glory when we are handed the answer on a platter. The great challenge now becomes addressing the divine motivation. **Why** should circumcision law be considered greater than Sabbath law? We must look to the principles from which divine laws radiate to understand why one law had to be preferred at the expense of another. Sabbath observance projects a rest from sin and ritually prophecies of the great rest of sin and its effects in the seventh millennium/day when the serpent, the dragon, the devil and satan are bound in the bottomless pit for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:2-3). However, circumcision projects an entire elimination of sin at the eighth millennium when sin, depicted as the crown of flesh in the ritual, is cut away from creation, when sin and death are completely eliminated from any existence. Just as there is a numerical progression from the seventh to the eighth day there is a significance progression from merely restraining and resting from sin to a total annihilation of sin and its effects. Sabbath observance had to be practiced repeatedly (highlighting its limitation) but circumcision was only performed once in a lifetime (highlighting its effectiveness). Sabbath observance was the divinely appointed token of the Mosaic covenant of works. Circumcision was the divinely appointed token of the Abrahamic covenant of faith. It is easy to see why our Messiah confirmed the Jewish understanding that the law of circumcision had to be preferred above Sabbath observance.

However, this issue of balance and the danger of oversimplification and sweeping generalizations is promoted by the odd significance reversal of these two rituals during the forty year wilderness wanderings when the Kingdom of God was initiated. Sabbath observance was initiated and enforced under penalty of death during the 40 years in the wilderness, yet there were no circumcisions whatsoever during that same period.

The Circumcision Gap

Israel was nationally circumcised just before leaving Egypt. There was another national circumcision upon entering the promised land at Gilgal, their first encampment beyond Jordan. *And this is the cause why Joshua did circumcise: All the people that came out of Egypt, that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way, after they came out of Egypt. Now all the people that came out were circumcised: but all*

*the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised. For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people that were men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: unto whom the LORD sware that he would not shew them the land, which the LORD sware unto their fathers that he would give us, a land that floweth with milk and honey. And their children, whom he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, **because they had not circumcised them by the way.** And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole. And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you. Wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day (Joshua 5:4-9).* There was a national circumcision before the first Passover just prior to leaving Egypt. There were no more circumcisions until entering the promised land, just before their first Passover there. The glaring absence of circumcision against the strict policing of Sabbath observance during the initiation of God's Kingdom offers a reversed impression of significance when compared to Christ's testimony as well as the covenant and prophetic projections of these rituals. What is our Heavenly Father telling us?

The Final Heart Circumcision of Both Generations

Apparent contradictions serve as divine beckoning gestures to those who are willing to pursue the divine mind through the ego crushing, heart circumcising, and self-denying process of true enlightenment. It is far easier to simply ignore or oversimplify these scriptural challenges our Creator presents, but true love is always humbling. Devoted husbands and wives put each other before themselves. Loving parents are more concerned with their children than themselves. This necessary humbling feature of 'true' love is a divinely designed requirement. This is why scripture prophesies of the national heart circumcision of Israel at the introduction of the Millennial Kingdom which finally enables them to observe the greatest of all commandments... loving Yahweh their Elohim with all their heart and soul. *And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers. And the LORD thy God will circumcise **thine** heart, and the heart of **thy seed**, to love the LORD thy God with all **thine** heart, and with all **thy** soul, that thou mayest live (Deut. 30:5-6).* National heart circumcision is their path to love. This prophecy identifies the 'heart' circumcision of **both generations**, like the generation that left Egypt (physically circumcised just before their first Passover) and their children that entered the promised land (just before their next Passover, the first upon entering the promised land). There has been no national 'heart' circumcision of Israel as of yet. Even the great miracles of the wilderness wanderings only had temporary effects. Israel's national heart circumcision at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom will not be temporary. The prophecies state that they will not fall into apostasy ever again after escaping their greatest peril, saved by Christ and the immortalized saints (Ps 85:8-13; Is. 59:21; Jer. 3:12-19; Ezek. 20:40-44). Just as there would be no lasting heart circumcision during the forty years in the wilderness, there were no physical circumcisions either.

Circumcision defines the final stage in the divine plan. At the end of the Millennial Kingdom there will be a final judgment. Following this final judgment we see death, the grave and all the rejected cast into the lake of fire which is described as the second death (Rev. 20:11-15). The second death is an eternal death, as opposed to the first death which is temporary and ends at each of the two resurrections to accountability. The final stage in the divine plan is when all that is mortal and fleshly is cut away from creation and discarded, perishing in that second death. The timeframe for this event is after the seventh divine day of 1,000 years. It is that 'eighth' day when the flesh is cut off from creation, paralleling the ritual of circumcision when the crown of flesh is cut away from an eight day old boy in accordance with the divine command. The initiation of the Kingdom and the mandating of Kingdom law at Sinai were not going to achieve the results portrayed in the ritual of circumcision. The law was weak through the flesh (Rom. 8:3) and limited in its capacity. The law was intended to highlight

sin, identify it and border it, but could not destroy it. Something more than the law was needed. Therefore it seems quite appropriate that the ritual identifying the complete elimination of sin capacity in man (circumcision) would be absent from that 40 years when the law would be introduced and established. The law's signature ritual (its 'token') portrayed only a 'rest' from sin on the seventh day (Sabbath observance). This token ritual was policed under penalty of death during those forty years. Yet the ultimately greater ritual of circumcision (portraying the total cutting away of sin capacity at the eighth day) was absent during that same time. This dichotomy highlights the limited effectiveness of the law in permanently dealing with the corrupting influence of sin in creation. The law was necessary, but incomplete.

Knowing the Right Time

This is the issue of balance. The law is needed but it is incomplete. Faith and grace are needed but they are not exclusively effective. *To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace* (Ecc. 3:1-8). We are supposed to **know** when it is the divinely appropriate time for each of these opposite activities. This is balance. We are supposed to know when to judge and when to refrain from judgment. We are supposed to know when to preach and when to avoid casting our pearls before swine. We are supposed to know when to praise and when to discipline. We are supposed to think like our Heavenly Father, deafening ourselves to our deceitful hearts.

Gender Specific Rituals

Circumcision is a gender specific ritual. Obviously, only males participated in this ritual. However, gender specific rituals have not been limited to the First Kingdom Age (the 'Mosaic' Age). Under the laws of the Ecclesial Age we are required to observe two gender specific rituals: Sisters' silence and sister's head-coverings during prayer (and prophesying during the first two generations of this current age). Despite the fact that a ritual may be limited to a single gender, these particular rituals always project divinely appointed features of inter-gender relationships. A sister's head covering during prayer declares her respect for the divinely appointed relationship order of God being the head of Christ being the head of man being the head of woman (1 Cor. 11:2-16). A sister is bypassing her appointed head by praying to God through Christ and therefore covers her head to both respect that divinely appointed relationship order as well as refraining from displaying the glory of man in the face of God with an uncovered head during prayer (1 Cor 11:7). A sister's silence respects the creative order of man before woman as well as the divine righteousness in her gender's specific curse for the role in Eden's failure (1 Tim. 2:11-14). In each case specific features of a woman's relationship to man is emphasized with the righteous judgments of our Creator being validated by the prescribed gender specific procedure. It is interesting to note that during the laws of the first Kingdom Age the gender specific rituals centered on man but the gender specific rituals of the Ecclesial Age center on woman. Circumcision fits into this gender specific theme in the same context of 'salvation' we have been considering. Only the circumcised were permitted to participate in the Passover (Ex 12:48).

Passover is certainly an image of salvation, when death passes over those appointed to die. The qualification for Passover participation, whether Israelite or stranger or slave, was circumcision. *And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for **no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof*** (Ex. 12:48). Technically, that would suggest only males were allowed to participate in the Passover. There would be no value to painting the lintel and posts of their door with the blood of the lamb or eating the

roasted meat with bitter herbs if they were not first circumcised. Their participation would be invalidated. Yet we read of **all** Israel keeping the Passover, especially Josiah's great reformation Passover in his eighteenth year. On what basis could an uncircumcised wife or daughter participate in the Passover, one of salvation's ritual projections?

We Only Qualify for the Ultimate Passover Through A Circumcised Christ

Once again it is inter-gender 'relationships' that are being highlighted in a gender-specific ritual. The inter-weaving of circumcision with Passover confirms and then broadens and deepens our understanding of divine principles that are impossibly invisible to 'Christianity' and all the other mirror worshipping religions spawned by the hearts of men. One of the features of true doctrine is that we are only saved by Christ because he first saved himself. He had to experience the antitypical Passover so that we might benefit from our relationship to him. Just as a woman or girl could participate and benefit from the Passover on the basis of her circumcised father or husband so we can only participate and benefit eternally from the antitypical Passover because we constitute the children and the bride of Christ due to his antitypical circumcision. The faithful are frequently represented throughout scripture as the bride as well as the children of the Messiah. Christ's fiancé and husband status is seen in Matt. 22:1-14; Song of Solomon; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:21-33; Rev. 19:7-8. Christ's fatherhood status is referenced in Isaiah 9:6 with the everlasting father title and in Is. 53:10 when the Messiah sees his seed after his sacrifice for sin and the technical feature of his fatherhood is explained in 1 Cor. 15:20-23. It is because Christ, as the father and the groom of the faithful, truly experienced the real Passover due to his singularly unique circumcision that we may enjoy the privilege of participating in his Passover.

The false doctrines smothering Christianity reject any concept of Christ experiencing an antitypical circumcision so that he might enjoy the antitypical Passover. In Christ's death the power of sin was destroyed. It is because of his sacrificial death, qualified by being blemishless (without behavioral sin), that the shackles of death released him after three nights and three days in the grave. Just as divine law demanded one must be circumcised in order to participate in the Passover, so Christ had to cut off the sin producing flesh in his death so that death might pass over him, returning to life but without the sin that was cut away in his sacrificial death (Heb. 9:28). We, however, are not blemishless at death. Although our sins end in death, ours is not a sacrificial death. The only hope we have in participating in the ultimate passing over of death forever is in our relationship to our Messiah, our father and our groom. These features of the Creator's plan are perfectly projected in the interdependent relationship between the law of circumcision and the law of Passover.

He Will Come For Us

It is with deep sadness we continually witness the blind foolishness of the world. Glory and riches are offered to those harnessing the secrets of scientific truths while ignoring the humbling spiritual truths from which these temporary scientific laws emanate. The world is smugly satisfied with their own glorious image reflected from a calm surface examination of scripture and creation. Only a circumcised heart can penetrate that intentionally complex surface and see the incredible wonders below. As we witness more and more of the perfect symmetry of creation, scripture, science, and the maturing educational ages of our Creator we begin to see a greater measure of the glory of He Who Shall Be our Mighty Ones. As our intimate knowledge grows, so does our love. Our comfort becomes more assured. He will come for us. He will save us.

Jim Dillingham

Circumcision of Heart and Flesh No. 4

The heart's rebellious war cry since the eighteenth century has been "Freedom." The human heart's resistance to true spiritual principals has progressively focused itself into this rallying icon of self worship. Freedom is the absence of restraint. Pure freedom is nothing but anarchy. The political entity called democracy is often propped up as the imagined defender of freedom, where the majority define right and wrong and police whatever restraints are determined necessary to ensure the perceived 'freedoms' of that majority. The human heart is the greatest deceiver in all of creation (Jer. 17:9) and its capacity to delude the unsuspecting is unfathomable. The great delusion of our global society's obsession with freedom is that we are all born into slavery. As yet, only one man in all of creation has escaped that slavery to sin and death. He invites us to be his bride as well as to experience a rebirth into a spirit nature absolutely free of all the restraints of sin. One of the scriptural images projecting this invitation is Israel's escape from the harsh Egyptian slavery on the morning after the first Passover. The key to participating in that Passover was circumcision (Ex. 12:47). It is circumcision that represents the loyalty transition commitment from serving sin to serving righteousness, qualifying the Children of God to participate in the passing over of death.

Slavery has come to be despised on a nearly universal basis by mankind. Therefore the divine acceptability of slavery under the laws of the first Kingdom Age can be unpalatably counterintuitive. Our minds resist the divine lessons within this subject because the concept is emotionally unacceptable. However, changing our thought patterns and our loyalty from flesh to spirit is never easy. If it were, then circumcision would be painless.

The Slave's Advantage

It is very interesting to note that under divine law a slave was given greater spiritual benefits than a 'hireling' or temporarily contracted employee whose service commitment was voluntary and subject to change. During the Patriarchal Age we see circumcision introduced through Yahweh's friend. *He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant* (Gen. 17:13-14). Two categories of males qualified for the ritual that would identify those in covenant relationship with the Heavenly Father: the lineal descendants of Abram and a purchased slave. Since we Gentiles are certainly not the actual lineal descendants of Abram, then one of scripture's shadows framing our relationship to God is actually slavery. *He that was bought with money* enjoyed a covenant relationship with Yahweh along with the genealogical descendants of Abraham. In fact, we can and will see this slavery image projected onto the Messiah and the apostles, in addition to the obvious application of the Jewish people.

The Great Privilege of He that Was Bought with Money

Another example of how *he that was bought with money* qualified for a greater spiritual benefit than a hireling is in the family of the priest. The priest and his immediate family lived by eating the holy things that had been dedicated to Yahweh. **Only** the immediate family of the priest, **along with the purchased slave**, could partake of the holy things. *There shall no stranger eat of the holy thing: a sojourner of the priest, or an hired servant, shall not eat of the holy thing. But if the priest buy any soul with his money, he shall eat of it, and he that is born in his house: they shall eat of his meat. If the priest's daughter also be married unto a stranger, she may not eat of an offering of the holy things* (Lev. 22:10-12). Visiting guests, a married daughter and independent employees would have to eat separate food, having no access whatsoever to the holy things that the slaves of a priest were divinely invited to enjoy. *He that was bought with money* enjoyed an equal status with the wife and

children of the priest in relation to the holy things. Our previous circumcision commentary noted how an ‘uncircumcised’ woman qualified to participate in the Passover due to her wife or daughter relationship with a circumcised Israelite husband or father. This parallels how we, the bride and the future children of an antitypically circumcised Jesus Christ, can participate in the antitypical Passover of salvation. We are now extending that same lesson to show that this includes the category of *he that was bought with money*.

This issue of the forbidding of the holy things from the priest’s friends, honored guests and anyone only indirectly related to the priest is reflected in Christ’s parable of the wedding of the King’s son (Matt. 22:1-14). The guest at the wedding, who is ejected from the proceedings by the King for presumptuously arriving without a wedding garment (see Rev. 19:8), is addressed as “friend.” Unlike our weddings where we are seated according to the family or friend status there will be no one but family allowed at the marriage of the lamb. Just like the friend of the priest was forbidden to partake of the holy things, so the “friend” was ejected from the wedding of the King’s son in Christ’s parable, forbidden to participate in the holy proceedings. The issue that is so interesting in this context is that *he that is bought with money* **did** get to partake of the holy things of the priest. There is clearly great value in understanding why our Heavenly Father provided for the slave of a priest to enjoy such an elevated position in relation to circumcision, Passover and the holy things of the priesthood.

The Opening of the Ear of A Hebrew Slave

Although no Israelite was permitted to actually enslave another Israelite involuntarily, there was an accommodation for the voluntary slavery of a Hebrew brother. The particular ritual that was performed to seal this relationship is detailed in Exodus 21 and Deut. 15. By divine law, an Israelite indentured servant would be set free with an abundance of goods in the seventh year, unless he or she voluntarily chose to stay with their master for the rest of their lives. The binding ritual was performed at the doorpost of the master’s home, just like Passover (Ex. 12:7) and just like the first and greatest commandment that had to be written on the posts of their home (Deut 6:4-5,9). You can refer back to the 5th commentary in this series for a more detailed examination of these three rituals performed at the door of one’s home. *And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee. And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to day. And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee; because he loveth thee and thine house, because he is well with thee; Then thou shalt take an aul, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maidservant thou shalt do likewise* (Deut. 15:12-17). The Hebrew indentured servant would sacrifice his or her freedom as well as a generous subsidy that would have jumpstarted their continued economic security because they loved their master and the master’s house. This is our position as well, refusing whatever economic and morally unrestrained advantages this current world pretends to offer so that we might commit the rest of our lives exclusively to our beloved Master and His house. The ritual validating this commitment and relationship bond was painfully opening the ear of the voluntary Hebrew slave with an awl at the doorpost of the Master’s house. The pain of the transition rituals of both circumcision and voluntary slavery signifies how this relationship commitment to our Heavenly Father (the true Master) can never be accomplished easily or painlessly.

This identifying feature of the voluntary slave, the opened ear, offers an infrequent point of reference dotting the Old Testament. This expression of the opened ear signifies an attitude of willing submission as opposed to arrogant opposition and rebellion, which is sadly the human heart’s natural and most comfortable position (what the computer savvy would define as the ‘default’). David writes: *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire;*

mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart (Ps 40:6-8). David's prophetic expression of the Messiah mirrors Samuel's rebuke of King Saul. *Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry (1 Sam. 15:22-23).* The 'opened ear' is preferred above the blood and grain altar offerings, just as true service is preferred above symbolic service. Yahweh expresses the house of Jacob's rebelliousness in the terms of an unopened ear. *Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldst deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb (Isaiah 48:8).* The unopened ear is synonymous with those who will not submit their will to Yahweh, despite promising to do so. They are rebellious and treacherous.

One of Isaiah's many Messiah prophecies describes his 'opened ear' submissiveness. *The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting (Is 50:5-6).* If one finds this identification of our Messiah as a slave uncomfortably unpalatable and objectionable, we should further understand that the word that is used concerning Christ's servant status throughout the Old Testament prophecies is the Hebrew *ebed* which is the word for a bondservant, one who has been bought for money (Is 42:1-3; 49:1-6; 52:13-15; 53:11; Zech. 3:8). This word for bondservant is what Moses and David use to define their servant status to Yahweh. In the New Testament there are several words that indicate a servant but one particularly that defines a bondservant (as opposed to a 'hireling' servant or just a servant on the basis of loyalty). This Greek word *doulos* (indicating a bondservant) is the word preferred by the Apostles (and particularly Paul) in defining the nature of their service to Christ and God. Joshua, Moses, David, Paul and Jesus Christ all have the term 'bondservant' define their service relationship to our Heavenly Father. Despite the fact that this anti-freedom precedent of slavery is currently politically incorrect and absent from our societies, it is spiritually necessary. This is the total (without reserve) and permanently submissive foundational frame of reference that provides the good earth for the seed of the word to grow within us and bear fruit to the honor and glory of our Heavenly Father. It is the 'meek' that will inherit the earth... not the presumptuous, not the complaining, not the rebellious, not the pompously self-righteous, and not those who constantly redefine the borders of truth and propriety for their own preference, convenience or advantage. These will be inherited by the earth.

The Bondservants of Righteousness

Paul, as is often the case, enlightens the principles within the shadow expressions, laws and rituals of the Old Testament. The Apostle emphasizes the balance between freedom and slavery to the Corinthian brotherhood. *For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman [a slave released from servitude]: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant [Gk: doulos indicating a slave]. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men (1 Cor 7:22-23).* In Christ we are released from one bondservant status (redeemed) because we volunteer for another. We are freed from our bondage to sin and death but commit ourselves to lifelong servitude to Yahweh, opening our ear at the doorpost of His house, which is Christ (John 10:7). This balance between freedom and slavery can be a tripping point of those who wish to oversimplify divine expressions. Simply because we are free in Christ does not mean there is no more bondage. Paul references this bondservant transition portrayed in baptism. *Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants [bondservants] of righteousness (Rom 6:18).*

We are all born into slavery. No one is exempt. We have the opportunity to choose a different Master, but there is only one alternate choice to the standard mirror worship. We are born into the curse of mortality, where sin and death harshly rule over us, like the Egyptians over the Israelites. Expediency, temporary advantage,

defensive egos and the endless siren song of self-worship issuing from our hearts are the shackles that bind us to sin's death spiral of domination. A redemption, the 'ransoming' of our lives, was powerfully accomplished by our Messiah. We have been offered freedom from a cruel master, but must accept another bondservant position. Volunteering to accept this lifelong bondservant status to our Savior, qualifies us to participate in the redemption being offered, just as *he that was bought for money* by Abraham was circumcised and *he that was bought for money* was also circumcised in Egypt to participate in the first Passover and *he that was bought for money* was divinely privileged to partake of the holy things of the priest. It is this bondservant mental frame of reference that is so significant in the necessary transition in our lives from serving self to serving Christ. *Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many* (Matt 20:26-27). The perfect template for our bondservant mind-set is our King, who redeemed us from the power of sin by being a willing 'servant' of his Father.

The Mind of the Slave

Paul directly addresses Christ's bondservant mental pattern that we must adopt. *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. **Let this mind be in you**, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped [RSV]: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant [doulos/bondservant], and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross* (Phil. 2:3-8). This mind of the bondservant **must** be in us. Adam and Eve grasped for the fruit they thought would make them like Elohim. This arrogance became part of our nature ever since that failure. We have to fight its power every day in our committed bond-service to our King and his Father. This mind of the slave is also the lesson of the circumcision of the heart. It is the unnatural human behavior of meekness that is the absolute key to beginning to understand the Divine Mind. This is why Moses, the meekest man of his generation (Num 12:3) was the only prophet to whom the Creator would not speak in the veiled pattern of dark sayings, visions and dreams... but as friend to friend (Num. 12:6-8; Ex 33:11).

Natural human arrogance is the impenetrable barrier to understanding divine expressions. Meekness, the submissive mind of the slave, the circumcised heart, the pompous heart deflated by fear and the willing teachableness of a child serve as the gate to understanding the divine mind. This is why all false religions and all challenges to divine truth consistently reverse the doctrinal emphasis. Men claim to worship their gods but create gods in their own image and their own likeness. It makes no difference whether the philosophy is generated outside the community of believers or by the mixed multitude, or the waterless wells, fruitless trees and wandering stars always within our community. The motivation and the pattern is always the same, despite whether the challenge is an impossibly sinful immortal angel or objections to the gender specific rituals of the Ecclesial Age (Sisters silence and Sisters head coverings) or a redefinition of sin that contradicts our statement of faith. The motivation and pattern is always the same.

Our Heavenly Father seeks a people for His name that understand Him, recognizing that He is always right, loving Him for who He is and not what they imagine Him to be, appreciating Him for both His mercy and His judgments, recognizing the incredible horribleness of sin and therefore the justified necessity for death and suffering. He seeks a repentance in us springing from our pain in disappointing our loving Creator because our thoughts and behavior have contradicted His righteousness. He wants people who want to be like Him, that will appreciate His principles... without painting our self-worshipping ways onto His image. This is why it is so important to see the divine principles framing all the rituals, parables, dreams, visions, prophecies and promises in scripture. This is why it is important to understand how the detailed features of creation (the spoken word of

God) perfectly mirror the written word of God. We will not see our Heavenly Father with any casual glance on the surface. That is where we see our own reflection. Our hearts will urge us to look no further than that glorious surface, confirming our own glory but redefining it as our god. It is the rejection of the human heart's instinctive self worship, painfully circumcising that heart, adopting the meekness of the submissive slave, opening our minds like a child to receive instruction and responding to humbling chastisement that enlightens that dark glass through which we might witness a greater measure of the glory of our Creator. This glory is progressively visible in the eternal principles that are intentionally hidden behind the parables, imagery, visions, laws, rituals, promises, carefully worded historical events of scripture and even the features of creation.

The Fear of Our Master's Displeasure

Our window of opportunity will soon expire. Our King is coming soon. Our final generation has been identified by the appointed herald of the resurrected national first born son of God. We have so little time to prepare our minds and hearts. The foaming waves of society's political correctness, that seem so instinctively right to our hearts, continue to flow into the brotherhood. Christ's chilling warning at the conclusion of two judgment parables that many are called to judgment but few are chosen (Matt 20; Matt 22) replays itself repeatedly in the minds of those who refuse to presume their absolute acceptance by Christ. It is not eternal death that serves as the great fear of those who truly love their Creator with all their heart and mind and life. It is that our inappropriate choices and ungodly behavior might have separated us from the eternal love of our Father... that we may not see our beloved Father's name glorified throughout the earth... that we may not see every head drop and knee bow before the power and glory of our beloved savior... that we may not see the glory of the knowledge of He Who Shall Be our Mighty Ones cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. It is the crushing fear that he might not want 'me'.

Balance

It is the comfort of divine grace that raises us up from these mental ashes again and again, inflating the lungs of hope, drying out the tears of a feared rejection, defending us from an immobilizing depression that could have swallowed us by the concentrated realization that we can never be good enough. We need balance. If we concentrate exclusively on the wonderful grace that is offered to the faithful, we offer our hearts the opportunity to encourage a relaxed and non-vigilant commitment platform. However if we concentrate on our ultimate unworthiness the power of hope is diminished. There must be a balance, calibrated by wisdom, truth and sacrificial love.

We need both perspectives. We need to understand our freedom from the bondage of sin and death. We also need to embrace our bondservant status to the Master and His house, having our ear opened at the door because we love our Master and His house. Like those who were bought with money by Abraham and those who were bought with money by the priests, we will benefit from accepting this mental platform by qualifying to participate in the passing over of death and partaking of the holy things of our High Priest and Savior.

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