

THE CHOCOLATE CAKE PRINCIPLE

Feasting
on the
Presence
of the
Lord

NANCY ANGOVE

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Introduction

This “Presence Book” was written because of my own experience and enrichment when I studied and thought about it. And you get what you hunger for. Remember that wonder-working Beatitude, “Blessed are they which do **hunger** and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be **filled**” (Matthew 5:6). When I hungered for His Presence I received more, and there’s much more to go!

His Presence will bring an eternal perspective into every situation we face. His Presence and viewpoint turns obstacles into opportunities. You are never alone: you’re in the company of One who knows everything—take advantage of it! This book will help to saturate you with His Presence because we become what we dwell on. When I concentrated on the Presence of the Lord a few years back, Jesus appeared to me! (see chapter 9).

Why *The Chocolate Cake Principle* as part of the title? Chapter 7 tries earnestly to explain this principle. If you’re allergic to chocolate, change it to vanilla.

When we say the Lord speaks to us through tongues and interpretation it means the Lord speaks to us through tongues and interpretation! These gifts, as well as Exhortation and Discernment are invaluable to us in our ministry and personal lives, and we consider them to be among the greatest blessings He has given us, because it’s His Presence that is speaking through those gifts. They have lighted our way and given us needed wisdom, knowledge, and understanding about a situation, or even about things we didn’t even know we needed to know, but did! We consider every word He speaks to us, whether writing it in our hearts and minds or showing His Presence through His gifts, to be a treasure, and we honor Him for sharing Himself with us.

All the gifts of the Spirit are from God, the Father of spirits, to us, and are evidence that He is right there with us speaking through the spirit of a man. I'm saying this to encourage you towards the few interpretations and exhortations I chose for this book in chapter 12 as I feel I'm sharing God's heart for you as well as us.

Bless yourself, others, and bless the Lord by practicing, allowing, and learning how to draw on His Presence through His Word, gifts, and Spirit.

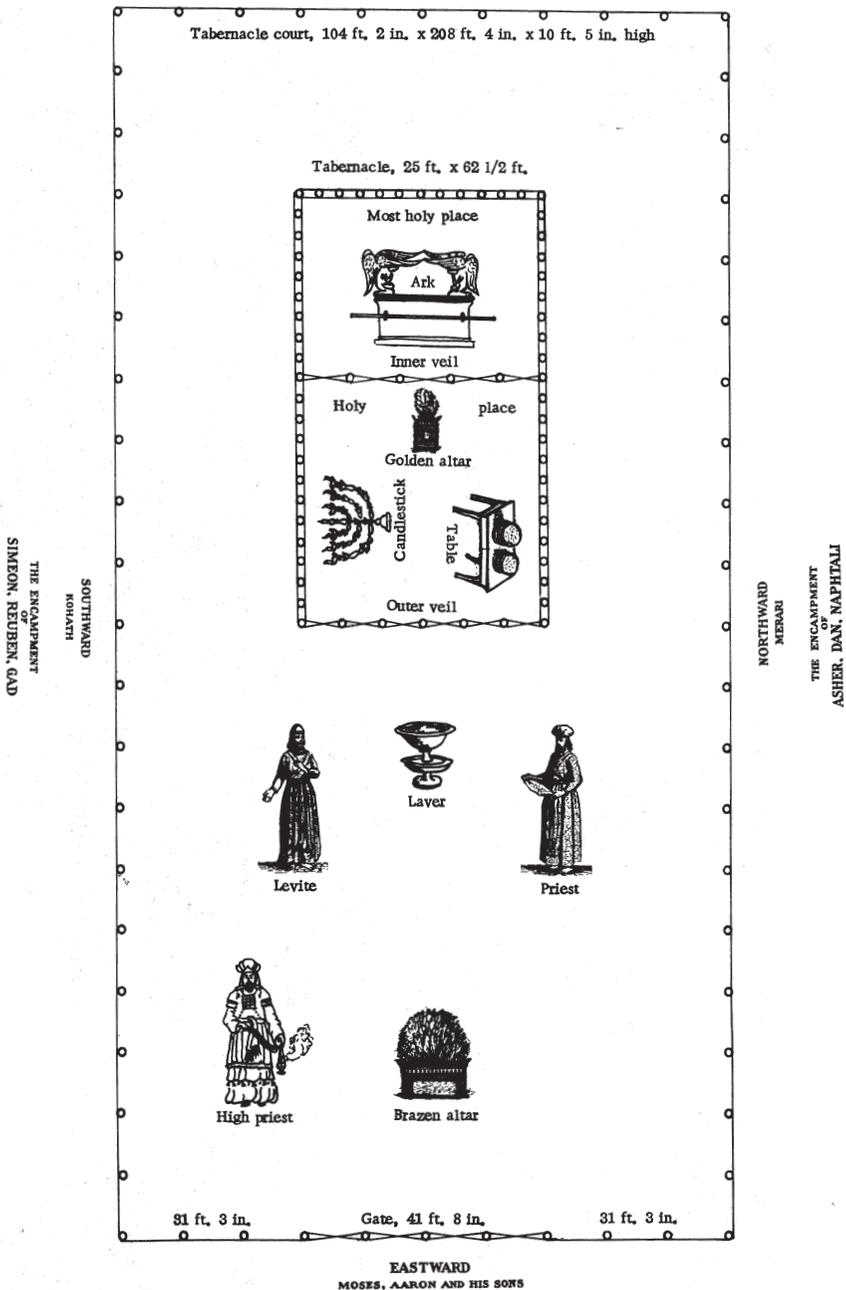
(The King James Version and the Amplified Version are used in this book.)

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Picture of Tabernacle.....	6
Ch.	
1 The Tabernacle in the Wilderness Containing the Ark of the Covenant.....	7
2 The Life & Death Discussion Between God & Moses.....	21
3 The Journey of the Tabernacle Of God's Presence.....	31
4 Solomon's Temple—The Ark Taken There.....	55
5 The Path of His Presence From the Garden to Your Spirit.....	67
6 God Has Always Wanted to be WITH His People.....	75
7 The Chocolate Cake Principle.....	81
8 God Has Always Wanted to be IN His People.....	91
9 The Lord's Appearance to Me.....	99
10 Presence Thoughts.....	103
11 Absorb His Presence by Absorbing His Word.....	109
12 Absorb His Presence by Absorbing His Words Through His Gifts.....	115
13 The Presence Ending.....	125

THE ENCAMPMENT
OF
BENJAMIN, EPHRAIM, MANASSEH

GERSHON
WESTWARD





CHAPTER 1

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness Containing the Ark of the Covenant

God *Among* His People

This chapter is a brief overview of the “Tabernacle in the Wilderness” and particularly the Ark of the Covenant that resided in the inner room in this tabernacle. This may not be your favorite subject to study, but it gets very interesting. This overview is necessary to help you understand the next chapters. A picture of this tabernacle is on previous page.

Many years ago we attended a Sunday School class where the teacher in a brown suit was earnestly and solemnly explaining with maps, charts, pictures, and a pointer stick about the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. Jack, “the husband” and I thought it was the most boring class we had ever endured, and we didn’t get the significance of it for our lives. We were kind of rude back then and mocked the class as irrelevant and couldn’t get why we were sitting there following the pointer stick to objects that were made centuries ago for the Israelites.

Now that I’ve slightly matured, I think it is one of the most fascinating studies in the Bible, and can teach us so much about God’s Presence in our lives, how He thinks, how He moves among His people, and what kind of treatment we can expect from Him

depending on how much we follow the instructions He has in His Word about His Presence.

This is the tabernacle that the children of Israel erected shortly after they left Egypt, and literally carried with them for centuries. It was the “sign” in the Middle East that there was a God, not the god of Islam or the Philistines or the Moabites, but the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

After the children of Israel were led out of Egypt by God they arrived a few months later to Mt. Sinai, where God called Moses up to meet Him and personally gave him the directions to this tabernacle. This wasn't to be just a beautiful tent to prove that somehow God was aware of them, but where God intended His actual Presence to be with them at all times, to lead, guide, direct, and protect day and night. Anything that was that valuable to God's children and to God for that long is worth a little delving into.

After Moses received the instructions for the tabernacle from God, and came down from the mountain he had to behold the shocking sight of the children of Israel having a party at the bottom of the mountain. When God is speaking and making plans for your future on the top of a smoking mountain, it's wiser to stay put at the bottom and not go out and tempt yourself to revel! (Exodus chapter 32).

This was definitely not revel time, so God was tempted to destroy all His beloved people, but Moses made earnest intercession for them, so they repented, some thereby surviving, finally got serious, and started building the tabernacle. It took about a year to finish the tabernacle at **Sinai**. It was a holy, beautifully constructed tabernacle and symbolized God's Presence with His people, and where His will was communicated. This portable sanctuary, also called a tent because it was designed to be dismantled when the Israelites moved their camp and reassembled at the next stopping place. Their first destination after completing it was to start out for the Promised Land. And we thought some of our trips with an air conditioned car, maps, and two kids were stressful at times! (To clarify the meaning of their “Promised Land” see last pages of this chapter.)

The instructions for this tabernacle that God gave Moses on the mountain were a pattern of the heavenly tabernacle or temple in the third heaven that God dwells in now. Hebrews 8:5 called it “a pattern of the heavenly sanctuary.” The Hebrew nation built and carried on earth what was built in heaven. The earthly tabernacle was a reflection of the heavenly tabernacle. God uses patterns so that mankind can see a picture of what is invisible, the heavenly realities of the kingdom of God! This heavenly tabernacle in heaven where God dwells will be coming down from heaven to Jerusalem on earth in the end times. Hebrews chapters 8-10 speak of this tabernacle, yes, it’s spoken of many times in the New Testament too! So when God revealed to Moses on Mt. Sinai a vision of the original heavenly furniture also, Moses then produced a miniature duplicate for the earthly tabernacle!

There are many connections between heaven and earth in the building of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. This tabernacle had deep meaning for the million or so Israelites thousands of years ago, but God’s Spirit wants to teach us truths of God and His Kingdom through it, and even what we will see in the future. There are many prophecies in the Torah (the first five books of the Bible) concerning Christ and His sufferings, and at least one-third of the prophecies in the Old Testament have yet to be fulfilled. There are many layers of truth in the Word to learn. It’s a deep wonderful world of the Kingdom of God.

The workers who made the furniture were anointed by God. Two of the men responsible for making the tabernacle and its furnishings, were *Bezalel*, meaning “in the shadow of God.” He was of the tribe of Judah and great grandson of Caleb. The other was *Aholiab* of the tribe of Dan. Just as we need to have the anointing and Presence of God in our life to match the degree of what He wants to structure and build in our life, so did they.

Remember, they just came out of 400 years of bondage and I don’t think they had gone to classes in Egypt on how to construct a beautiful tabernacle to house God’s Presence. Pharaoh didn’t believe in educating his slaves! But God, the great Educator, gave them

the level of anointing needed for this awesome task. At every level of the battles they had the Lord gave them the necessary wisdom, leadership and anointing to accomplish things they never dreamed of accomplishing.

The Lord said to Moses concerning these two men, and this same applies to us (Exodus 31:1-6):

“And the Lord said to Moses, See, I have called by name (put your name in) Bezalel, and I have **filled him with the Spirit of God**, in wisdom and ability, in understanding and intelligence, and in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship.

“And I have appointed with him Aholiab, and to all who are wise-hearted I have given wisdom and ability to make all that I have commanded you.”

The tabernacle is not “outdated” and ancient history pertaining to Israel, but it teaches us much about the Presence of God, which we all need desperately in our lives in all its reality. All the things that happened to the children of Israel happened to them for *our* example, and they were written for *our* admonition (1 Cor. 10:11).

The study of His Presence, from heaven to the tabernacle for those centuries, teaches us the respect we should have for God, and no matter how much He loves us, we’ll be a carcass in our own wilderness if we don’t obey His cloud by day and fire by night.

The whole outer boundary of the tabernacle was 208 feet long and 104 feet wide. The two rooms inside the tabernacle itself were about 45 feet long, 15 feet wide, and 15 feet high. The whole tabernacle itself was divided up into three parts:

1. **The Outer Court**

This part was all open but there was a “fence” around the whole tabernacle to separate it from the surrounding territory. Between the fence and the other two rooms was the **Brazen Altar**, or the altar of sacrifice where they sacrificed the animals and took blood to sprinkle over the different

furniture and the Ark of the Covenant. This altar had fires that were continually burning. Closer to the entrance of the other two rooms, but still outside them was a bronze basin, or **Laver**, where the priests washed their hands.

2. **The Holy Place**

This was an enclosed place, along with the Most Holy Place, separated by a heavy curtain inches thick that could not be torn between the two rooms.

This was the inner court where after the Levite priests finished their duties in the outer court they would enter this covered court. There were three pieces of furniture in the Holy Place:

a. **Table of Shewbread**

“The Bread of His Presence” was a table holding 12 flat loaves of bread that were replaced once a week.

b. **Golden Lampstand, Menorah, “Place of Light”**

Only light in the inner court, had seven branches with sockets with a wick to hold containers for the purest olive oil.

c. **Golden Altar of Incense**

Looked like the Brazen Altar in the Outer Court but much smaller. Twice a day, morning & evening, priests would take fresh burning coals from the Brazen Altar and put them on the golden altar which caused smoke & aroma to fill the inner court & tabernacle area.

3. **Most Holy Place**, or Holiest of All

This was the most sacred place where only a Levite Priest could enter once a year. A thick curtain separated the Holy and Most Holy places.

Inside this room was the **Ark of the Covenant**, where God dwelt. It was about 3.75 feet long and about 2.25 feet wide and high. This was the only piece of furniture in this room.

The Ark of the Covenant was like a small chest with a lid, called the **Mercy Seat**, or “atonement cover,” or “ark of the testimony.” This box was overlaid inside and out with pure gold. On top of this mercy seat were two cherubim, one at either end with their wings facing each other, also of pure gold.

God appeared above this mercy seat in a cloud, as the Ark of the Covenant contained the manifest Presence of God, the Shekinah glory, where God chose to dwell among His people. (They didn’t ask Him; He asked them and told them exactly what the preparations were!). The inward looking cherubim formed a throne for the invisible God who told the children of Israel through Moses in Exodus 25:22:

“There I will meet with you and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are upon the Ark of the Testimony, I will speak *intimately* with you of all which I will give you in commandment to the Israelites.”

This Ark contained three items inside its box:

1. **Two Tablets of Stone**, which contained the 10 commandments God wrote for Moses.
2. **Aaron’s rod that budded** miraculously, it brought forth buds, produced blossoms, and it yielded almonds, proving him to be the first High Priest.
3. **Manna**, a golden jar of manna, miraculously preserved.

Because of the Presence of the Lord there was always life in the rod and manna. They were never replaced as they stayed alive from the Life above them.

On the day that the tabernacle was finished in the wilderness, a cloud covered it, and in the evening there was fire over it until morning. When the cloud lifted they would travel, when the cloud settled down they would camp. (And you don’t think God wants to be personal with you!) He’ll send you a voice in the morning and a voice at

night, or whenever you need to know what direction to go in.

Any priest was permitted in the Outer Court, only Levites permitted in the Inner Court, and only the High Priest once a year in the Most Holy Place on the great Day of Atonement. Even Moses wasn't allowed in the Most Holy Place.

Day Of Atonement, "Yom Kippur"

This was the most important day of the year for the Israelites because it covered their sins for another year where they could be dealt with again on the next Day of Atonement. It wasn't the forgiveness and cleansing we have in Christ, but they were rolled ahead to the next year. This was the only day the High Priest, who was a Levite, entered the Most Holy Place to sprinkle the blood seven times for himself and the people upon the Ark. The Jewish people celebrate this day even now, 4,000 years later, around our October 2nd.

The High Priest had to be fully prepared for this Day, following all of God's instructions. They even kept him awake all night so he wouldn't defile himself by a dream before he entered the Holiest of All. If everything wasn't right to enter God's Presence, the High Priest died on the spot. He wore bells on the bottom of his garment, and if the people outside couldn't hear the bells they knew they had a dead priest on their hands and had to pull him out with a rope that was tied around his legs.

Before the priest entered the Most Holy he sprinkled blood upon himself so he would be sanctified enough to carry the blood in, and when he lifted the veil before entering the room where the Ark was he sprinkled the blood of bullocks and goats upon the Ark by means of a hyssop in his hand that had the blood on it.

Before he entered he reached through the curtain separating the two rooms and waved a censer. A censer is a bowl or container connected to a chain. The container had hot embers in the bottom taken from the Brazen Altar of Sacrifice in the outer, open court. He would then take a handful of holy incense from off the altar of incense which was right outside the curtain separating the two

rooms. As he dropped it on top of the hot embers it created a thick cloud of sweet smelling smoke. He swung it back and forth until smoke completely filled the room. This was to help protect the flesh of the priest from getting consumed by the holiness of God. He fulfilled his duties by feel, not sight, while sprinkling the blood on the Mercy Seat.

Then the High Priest would come out to the outer open court where they had two goats prepared. He would lift his hands and pronounce the Aaronic blessing on the people—this was the only time in the year anyone would invoke the tetragrammaton (“Y-H-V-H”) “LORD”—the usually unutterable name of God.

They then cast lots over these two goats to see which goat was chosen to be “for the Lord.” This goat was sacrificed as a sin offering and its blood was sprinkled on the altar, sanctuary, and the tent of meeting to cleanse from defilements of the past year in order to make an atonement for the holy tabernacle.

The second goat was the “goat of removal,” or “scapegoat.” The High Priest laid hands on this goat’s head and symbolically transferred the sins of the people onto the goat, and then the goat was led away into the desert, to a “land cut off, a land of forgetfulness and separation” (Lev. 16:22). Of course this is a picture of Christ taking our sins away from us into the “land of forgetfulness” (see my *Christ in Hell* book, Ch. 5).

The great day of atonement was to atone for sins for the nation as a whole, but throughout the year the children of Israel were very diligent to personally confess and atone for their sins by giving offerings and sacrifices at the Outer Court on the Brazen Altar. There were *Burnt Offerings*, where the worshipper brought a male animal without any defect—a bull, lamb, goat, pigeon or turtledove depending on their wealth—to the door of the tabernacle. He placed his hand on the creature’s head to symbolize surrender to God. The animal was then killed, and the priest sprinkled the animal’s blood over the altar.

There were *Cereal Offerings* where they offered cereals and vegetable products. There were *Fellowship Offerings*, or peace,

offerings shared with God, the priests, and other worshippers. It involved male or female oxen, sheep, or goats. This offering expressed the worshipper's desire to give thanks or praise to God.

There were *Sin Offerings*, which paid for a worshipper's unintentional faults against the Lord. There were different sacrifices for various people, the High Priest, leaders, or sins of "ordinary people." (That's most of us!)

There were *Trespass Offerings*, similar to the sin offering, but this was an offering of money, and was made for sins of ignorance or disagreements or sin connected with fraud. The guilty party would have to pay a fine determined by the judges, with 20% more, then offer a ram to the priest to atone for his sin.

The whole procedure of offering sacrifices for various sins was no doubt of interest to many people. If you were peeking out your tent door, and saw your neighbor lugging a ram behind him, you knew he had defrauded someone. Or any of the other offerings mentioned above would be a telltale sign of what your neighbor in tent city was up to. There wasn't much covering of sin and it would be hard to find a back alley to sneak up to the priest at the Brazen Altar with a million people around. Actually that might even have been considered "entertainment" by some back then. Women, you know if you were stuck in a tent all day you'd be doing a little looking.

And what if you wanted to hide your sin from your mate, that would be complicated. And it probably wouldn't work to give your goat to your sister to drag there on your behalf. So your sin was right out there, rain or shine, but at least you'd have lots of company on the way. How convenient we can confess our sins to Jesus, or to another brother, as Jesus was our burnt offering for sin forever and we don't have to trudge down to the church with animals following. I think a good veil would be in keeping at those times.

There are many more details to this whole procedure, but the important thing is the spirit behind it, that God is holy, don't be casual about approaching Him any old way after you know better and have invited the presence of Christ into your life. And every sin has to be dealt with in the right way.

It should be important to us to learn Who He is, what He expects of us, and how He wants to “travel” with us through our life. He has staves through our heart and is trying His best to carry us and lead us into fellowship with Him through our brief journey here.

When the cloud came and told them when to move on, the whole tabernacle was folded, carefully dismantled and prepared to move. The altars were carried by staves. No-one could carry the Ark of the Covenant but the priests and it was carried by staves. They walked backwards and covered it with the veil to avoid its being seen by the people. Over this they placed a badger skin and finally a “cloth of pure blue.” Certain ones were designated to handle and carry the different items and furniture.

Apart from the Ark and the altars, it seems the rest of the tabernacle was carried in six covered wagons hauled by oxen (Num.7:3). The 12 tribes of Israel always took the same positions around the tabernacle as they traveled in an orderly fashion with the tabernacle being in the center. Moses and Aaron set up their tents on the east side of the tabernacle, and the other three families of priests on the other three sides, then outside this square the 12 tribes of Israel, three on each of the four sides of the tabernacle.

He is more approachable now because of Christ, but He is still holy and has given us certain instructions in His Word on how He is to be treated. He knows He can travel with us only to a certain point if we leave sin in our life. I want those bells on the garments of my life to keep ringing with life and know I’m pleasing Him with my daily fellowship (not just once a year!), and know when I come out of the place of The Most Holy with Him, I can lay hands on people, invoke the Holy Name of Jesus that I’m allowed to use any time, remember the instructions God has given me, and those sins and bindings will be removed from those I pray for.

Even though you didn’t ask for it, there’s the overview of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, and the more you study and think about it, the more there is to learn. For instance, many Christians hang out in the Outer Court, and even make some spiritual progress toward the Holy Place, but many are afraid of or disinterested

in the anointing and glory of God found in the Most Holy Place. We stop short of entering through the veil and entering into His intimate Presence, and worshipping Him in Spirit and in Truth.

One of our best offerings is praise, and yet we offer it with defects in our heart and blemishes that we haven't striven to get rid of. And what did we learn from this little chapter? Their offerings had to be perfect. Well, I don't know what my sin is? Find out and your praise will be more accepted by God. They had to look for the animal without blemish, I don't think it appeared on their doorstep asking to be put on the altar of fire. Of course we're not perfect yet, but we can keep pressing forward and not covering our sin or being unconcerned that we're lifting up hands that are not holy in praise to God.

But don't stop praising God because you feel empty or sinful, keep praising even more so He can reveal to you the way of deliverance, but carnality has to be offered on the fires and burned out of us, one by one, day by day, thought by thought, word by word.

So God revealed His glory to His people in the middle of empty and desolate surroundings. In the midst of the noise of millions of stubborn Hebrews, the burning sun, dust, animals, and enemies, God still revealed His glory! How much more to us because we have Christ, the True Tabernacle of God.

The "Promised Land" was the focus of their travels, and eventually their territory to possess and live in, and the Jews are all coming back to part of this land now. We don't always have a picture of it in our minds, so here is a brief description:

The Promised Land, i.e. Canaanland

The whole land that God had promised to the Israelites was also known as the land of Canaan, the most common name used in the Old Testament, and is the land where the history and future of Israel takes place. It occupies about 9,500 square miles, about the size of Vermont, or Belgium.

In the book of Numbers it gives the borders of Canaan (Num. 34:2-12):

Your *southern border* shall be from the wilderness of Zin (or Sin) by the coast of Edom eastward to the Dead Sea and westward through Kadesh and on to the Mediterranean Sea, about 80 miles.

Your *western border* shall be the Sea, about 300 miles.

Your *northern border* shall be from the Sea westward through mount Hor, Hamath, Zedad, Ziphron, and Hazarenan, about 70 miles.

Your *eastern border* shall be from Hazar-enan on the north and southward to Shepham, Riblan, east of Ain, the east side of the sea of Chinnereth (Galilee), and down the Jordan to the Dead Sea, about 280 miles.

So basically from the Mediterranean on the west to the Euphrates on the east, and from Hamath on the north to the Indian Ocean on the south, including all the Arabian peninsula (Ezek. 48). The land was later allotted to twelve men from the twelve tribes, with definite borders.

In Scripture this land was also called Palestina, land of Israel, land of the Hebrews, land of the Jews, land of promise, the holy land, the Lord's land, Immanuel's land, and Beulah land.

A 12-fold description of this land from Deuteronomy 8:7 is:

A good land

A land of wheat

A land of brooks of water

Of barley

A land of fountains
and depths that spring
out of valleys and hills

Of vineyards

Of fig trees

Of pomegranates

A land of plenty

Of olive yards

A land of wealth

in iron and brass

Of honey

Because this land was so good there were many other enemy cities to conquer, but God had promised it to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the same as today!

In Acts 13:19 Paul says, “when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He gave the Hebrews their land as an inheritance, distributing it to them by lot.”

King David later captured Jerusalem from the Jebusites, who had used it for a main stronghold, renamed it, and made it Israel’s capitol. The “city of David,” also known as “Zion” or Mt. Zion was one of the hills, where he later took the Ark of the Covenant. If you look on a map all of this land included names we are familiar with now in that area. There has certainly been a lot of activity in this Holy Land, and it’s increasing!! There have been different shiftings of the land, but the eyes of the whole world are now on this tiny country still fighting for their land and survival. And their enemies are still looking at them, still ranting and raving against them, just like in the Old Testament. They don’t realize who they’re really ranting and raving against, but they will!!!



CHAPTER 2

The Life & Death Discussion Between God & Moses

Before The Tabernacle Was Built

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness in chapter 1 would never have been constructed, with all of its ensuing history, if an extremely serious conversation hadn't taken place between God and Moses in which the future of Israel was resolved. Ask Moses if it doesn't pay to have clout with God in serious situations.

After the children of Israel were led by God out of Egypt, they eventually encamped at Mt. Sinai where God instructed Moses to come up to the mountain and He gave him the instructions for a tabernacle where God could dwell and His Presence would be carried around with them. This tabernacle was of great value to God, so for that reason should be of value to us to study. If the word "study" isn't your favorite word, try "looking into" or "having a fun time with God," or "learning of eternal things."

When I was having "fun" studying about this in 2001, I was quickened to the tabernacle and discovered it is talked about in over 50 chapters of the Bible. A truth that caught my attention was in Exodus 33. The Lord was wroth (really angry) with the people because while Moses was in the mountain conversing with

God about building a place for His Presence the children of Israel were dancing, making merry and worshipping a golden calf. What a contrast! The whole background of Moses trying to keep his lively congregation from perishing is interesting, and can tell us a lot about how God thinks.

Moses was good at talking God into forgiving His people at times, but they never got by with their rebellions completely, as this time God sent a plague upon them for loving their world at the bottom of the mountain more than loving what God was doing in the top of the mountain. Poor Moses even said, oh God, don't blot their name out of the book which you've written, blot mine out (now that's an intercessor! or a great example of love!). It was a serious time in the history of all the Jewish people and their survival. When God's face is burning because of your sin, it's time to get serious about your commitment to Him and quit dancing around the fires of this world.

You have to behave because what happened after that is not pretty. Moses stood among the people and said, whoever is on the Lord's side, come here. The sons of Levi went to him and Moses said, Get your sword and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. Those who continued to rebel and not come back on God's side were done in by their own brethren, maybe in their own family. There were 3,000 of them who were too dense to be on the Lord's side. The love of the world, the love of our own desires and life can cause layers of density to come upon us and our decisions.

In the next chapter it says God plagued the people because they had made the golden calf. This could have been additional judgment and doesn't state how many lives were taken. You wonder what they thought when they saw their brother come in the tent with a sword to kill them, or when a plague broke out on them. I don't think it was, sorry about that Lord, I'll do better next time. But the Word of the Lord had gone forth: no next time, that was your last bad decision on earth, I don't want to see another one.

I'll Bless You, But I Won't Go With You

So after all this life and death drama in the camp, God had a heart to heart talk with Moses and said to him in Exodus 33:1-3:

“Depart, go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought from the land of Egypt, to the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, To your descendants I will give it.

“I will send an Angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanite, Amorite, Hittite, Perizzite, Hivite, and Jebusite.

“Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey, **but I will not go up among you**, for you are a stiff-necked people, lest I destroy you on the way.”

Meditate on that a while. People may think well that was for the Jews. But God said in the New Testament that all the things that happened to them were for our learning and our admonition. Think of the truth in what God personally told Moses after He had simmered down: He said, I'll keep My promise and give you the land (land is important to God) that I promised to Abraham. And to show how much I've forgiven you I'll even send an Angel before you, and not only that but I'll drive out your enemies, and not only that but the land flows with milk and honey.

Think of how comfortable and well off you'd be, and even your enemies will be driven out. That sounds like a deal a lot of us would take. Thanks God, let's make a covenant on that, finally the good life is here, we'll have the blessings of God without His interference!

But then He said, “**but I will not go up among you.**” Some carnal Christians would still accept the deal because they're after the blessings, and they fall in love with what God has done for them and don't stay in love with just God. His Presence might get too close and keep them from making a golden calf if they're in the mood for one, while still enjoying their land of lattes and honey,

and even getting some measure of deliverance by having their enemies driven out.

But Moses couldn't stand the thought of God not going with him and them. He wanted God Himself. So right away Moses pitched a tent, and while he went into it to plead with God over this important matter, all the people that caused all this trouble stood in their tent door and watched. As Moses entered the tent the cloudy pillar descended and stood right at the door. Then "the Lord talked with Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend."

God could do this because Moses had proven himself by laying down his life for the revelers and asking to be blotted out instead of them. That's the heart of God, so God honored him and they worked out the plan for the whole nation of Israel. The earnest conversation between them about God's Presence going with them, or just God's blessings is fascinating. Moses said, "you've said that I've found grace in your sight, and God, don't forget that this nation is your people."

God recanted because of this God-man conversation, and said, "My Presence shall go with you and I will give you rest." Moses again said, If your Presence doesn't go with me, don't carry us up from here. The next words Moses says in 33:16 are important:

"For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in **that thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.**"

And, brethren, that's what separates us from the other people of the world or the other people of the church, that God is personally really with us with His fruit, His power, His glory, His anointing, and His Spirit of grace. That we are not just showing forth our blessings, our houses, lands, cars, and even gifts of the Spirit, but we're showing forth His gracious presence, His atmosphere, His refreshing, and even His admonitions and judgments to all people every day.

That seems impossible, but not if you consider that His Presence is abiding in and on you because you're like Moses, that's what I want, I don't want the things you can give me more than You. Yes, blessings are wonderful and they do show forth God's grace in your life, but that's not what you seek after, it's Him that you want, and how He wants to express Himself in you.

Bring This Lesson Into Your Own Life

We don't always think of how God must feel in situations like this, because He's so all-powerful, so Almighty, pulling the strings of everything so to speak. But think of God's heart of love, compassion, and mercy towards His people, and when He said to Moses I can't go with you, it brings tears to my eyes. It's like if I was going on a trip with my kids, planned on it, looked forward to it, moved heaven and earth to make it possible, and did miraculous things for them so they could go on the trip with me to find a better life and be close to me. And I knew it was so important to their whole future and that of my grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

And then they didn't appreciate the plans and murmured and complained over the plans, food, which route to go, and who was supposed to drive. I had so loved being involved with them with all the planning, excitement, and the blessings that were ahead for all of us. Then they threw this golden opportunity away by gambling all their exodus money and making a golden Buddha to go with us. Hey, mom, do you have any more money, we spent what we had on careless living, and can we take this Buddha statue with the bloated belly with us?

I would have to tell them I couldn't go with them as we don't have the same focus and destination in life. It would be so sad to change all the wonderful plans we had, the wonderful vision of what was ahead, and I would cry as I told them to go ahead, I'd get them some more money, get a lube job for their car, we'd pray earnestly for them to be delivered from their enemies and use our gifts to get those demon Hittites and Liberalites out of the way, but dad

and I will have to stay here while all the people I love go ahead, and we won't even be able to personally hold the grandkids or kiss and hug those that we love because we'd be in two separate places.

I know it wasn't just God's judgment talking, His heart had to be hurting with the pain of sending His children on ahead without Him. Who else did He have?

There is such life and pertinence of the Holy Scriptures to our own life. Paul is writing to the New Testament church in 1 Corinthians 10:1-6:

“For I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, that our forefathers were all under and protected by the cloud **in which God's Presence went before them**, and every one of them passed safely through the Red Sea.

“And each one of them...were brought under obligation to the Law, to Moses, and to the covenant, consecrated and set apart to the service of God.

“All of them ate the same spiritual, supernaturally given, food.

“They all drank the same spiritual, supernaturally given drink, the spiritual Rock which followed them, produced by the sole power of God Himself.

“Nevertheless God was **not pleased with the great majority of them**, for they were overthrown and strewn down along the ground in the wilderness.

“**Now these things are examples, warnings and admonitions, for us not to desire or covet or lust after evil and carnal things as they did.**”

God is saying, church, I've offered My Presence, you all have had the same opportunity, I've been no respecter of persons, I've offered Myself to you all, you all drink from the same Rock, the Holy

Spirit I've given, you all ate the same spiritual food, but most of you have carnality, even mixed with the talent and gifts I've given you. So God is giving us warnings and admonitions of what to do and not to do to have His Presence, if we earnestly desire it.

“Do not be worshippers of false gods...”

That doesn't mean Confucius, that means bowing down to sports, movies, People Magazine (kind of kidding), the ways of the world, the things of the world, and probably the most devastating, our own will and desires hidden underneath while still showing forth a Christian life. Bowing down means putting them first before God, not eliminating them altogether unless God impressed that upon you. I always thought bowing down to a golden calf was downright stupid after all God had done for them, until I realized I bowed down to things more stupid than that, at least that was made of gold. The subject of false gods is too complicated for my mind right now, so let's go on in this chapter:

“They rose to sport, to dance and give way to jesting and hilarity.

“We must not gratify evil desires and indulge in immorality as some of them did—and **23,000 suddenly fell dead in a single day!**”

This was another “incident” when the children of Israel started bowing down to Moab's gods, the god of Baal of Peor. If you're interested in how God feels when we put our gods of self and who knows what else ahead of him, I'll tell you. There again, it's not a pretty picture (Num. 25:1-8):

“And the Lord said to Moses, Take all the leaders or chiefs of the people, and hang them before the Lord in the sun after killing them, that the fierce anger of the Lord may turn away from Israel (or me, or us).

“Moses said to the judges of Israel, Each one of you slay his men who joined themselves to Baal of Peor.”

And look what happens next. All the children of Israel were weeping at the door of the Tent of Meeting over the divine judgment and the punishment. And a man who had joined himself to a Midianite woman and this woman were before Moses:

“And when Phinehas, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from the midst of the congregation and took a spear in his hand.

“And went after the man of Israel into the inner room and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel and the woman through her belly.

Then the plague was stayed.”

Oh, I wish they would make some movies on these stories! We need to get shaken out of our complacency and lukewarmness at times.

If you think God would never do that to me, think again according to the Word. These things are written right before your eyes to pay attention to, your destiny here on earth and heaven depends on believing what we’re talking about here. His long suffering and Christ’s blood keep judgment from us many times, but it says God forbid that we should continue in sin. 1 Cor. 10:9-11:

“We should not tempt the Lord, try His patience, become a trial to Him, critically appraise Him, and exploit His goodness, as some of them did—**and were killed by poisonous serpents.**

“Nor complain as some of them did, **and were put out of the way entirely by the destroyer.**

“These things befell them as an example and **warning: they were written to admonish and fit us for right action by good instruction.**”

Take Your Test

They obviously didn't pass the faith test and the survival test, but we can. Remember in school, after chapters in books, they would test you with questions to see how much you had learned, like:

How did they treat His Presence in the wilderness?

What happened when they didn't respect His Presence among them?

What can we learn from this chapter?

How will this chapter help you in getting ahead in life with the career you've chosen? Or, better yet, to stay alive while you're trying to succeed?

Are you taking chances by exploiting His goodness, and complaining?

Is this a poison that will kill you?

Does it pay, yes or no, to hook up with a Midianite, unsaved, woman?

Do you think it was fair for God to downright kill so many of His own children?

Do you think He should have let bygones be bygones?

Do you feel God takes advantage of His power in trying to control us?

Do you or anyone in your family think that some of the rules in God's government should be changed to allow more flexibility in our lives?

Do you feel He is out of balance between His judgments and His mercy?

The question list could be long and revealing if you're honest in your answers. You can't cheat and look on your neighbor's test because they may not be spiritual.

We have access to God as much as Moses did, and more because of Christ. If you're serious about your relationship with Him, have a heart-to-heart talk with Him. Are you allowing Him to just bless you, or is His Presence really with you?

So, how are we doing, and do you think the lessons in the Bible about the Ark will mean more to you now? This Ark is still alive and well and we'll continue our journey with it in the next chapter.



CHAPTER 3

The Journey of the Tabernacle of God's Presence

Who Are These People??

The tabernacle, which housed the Ark of the Covenant, or the Presence of God, was vitally important to the children of Israel. It distinguished them from the rest of the nations who all knew about it, TV or not. Millions of people carrying a tabernacle in the middle of the procession draws attention. Can you imagine all their enemies standing on the tops of mountains and hills watching their procession—that was top news in the world at that time—and thinking like enemies always think, shall we attack them now or wait until they're sleeping? These people are strange, and do they really carry their god inside those rooms that they can't seem to live without? Why do they keep everything covered? We'd attack but we've heard scary stories about their God defending them. They have to have a weakness, we'll wait. (Another test question: What was their weakness? Answer: Sin, by not obeying God.)

There must have been many discussions on what to do with these "strange" people, just like today. I'm sure the men in the other nations were eyeing their strengths, trying to see the weaknesses, and the women probably their clothes and wondering why their shoes

didn't wear out. All the enemy lands must have wondered why a million people wandered around the same wilderness for 40 years, that was a head-scratcher, their god is strange, all their bodies are falling while they're walking, maybe the whole million will die off and then we can take the spoil, let's give notice to our kids that we're going to wait awhile and then they'll eventually have everything they want that they keep begging us parents for. I don't know what that would be in the wilderness, but you can bet there was covetousness back then too, especially for land, cattle, and gold.

As they thought about it, though, somebody, maybe a kid, must have said, but that thing they're carrying around has some kind of magic to it and there's a god in there that can jump out of the box and kill us. Let's wait and see if they make their god mad and he won't fight for them any more, and then we can get rid of them forever, and take all the gold we think might be in that portable tent, we know they're hiding something. There might be some women we want in those tribes too. I wonder why they travel in groups with names, we've never done that, and neither has anybody else in the middle east. We need to think this over because we know we're stronger than they are, and they have to lug their weaponry and kids and animals around with them, so maybe we'll catch them at the end of the day, maybe on a Saturday, we heard they rest then.

Even now most of the world don't understand the children of Israel and have chosen to walk in the vanity of their minds concerning them. Many Christians understand the battle between good and evil, God and Satan, and realize there is much more going on than the little nation of Israel. When God decides to come out of the box, so to speak, His Presence is going to be felt over the whole world and people will know who the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is, and it will be too late for most. Sad to say, most would rather fight their God than leave their gods.

They must have caused a lot of consternation then just like now. You know all the lords, kingpins, leaders of all the nations around were licking their lips over bringing them under their subjection, thereby proving their gods were stronger. The Jewish history is an

amazing one of survival against all odds. That has been quite a journey for them, and God with them. He's a Great God of the Journey of every individual, tribe, nation, and family, through the wilderness of life.

The journey of the tabernacle is worth our thoughts, particularly the Ark of the Covenant of His Presence, which was eventually taken and separated from the main tabernacle itself. The fact of God's Presence in that Ark is so intriguing, and what He was willing to endure just for the sake of being with His people who had taken Him as their God. They knew where He lived, even though He was everywhere, but to them they knew what the tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant meant, and I'm sure the children were taught from the time they were born what all the procession (and fuss!) was about, and the history of it. The kids were probably complaining, why do we have to always be following that Ark? (Why do we have to go to church?) We're tired of following that tent. (We're tired of all the trouble it is to follow God.)

When a million or so people marched out of Egypt they didn't have a clue to their future, exactly how their relationship with God would apply to them personally, what God wanted them to do, how good God was, and all the things we know now, and they had no clue what living outside of Egypt and slavery was going to bring. They only knew, as Moses told Pharaoh, we have to leave Egypt so we can sacrifice to "our God" in the wilderness. They had only known a servant mentality and great bondage. As we would say, they had to get their feet under them, and most lessons they learned the hard way, like us sometimes.

God provided everything for them, clouds and fire for direction, manna to eat, their shoes and clothes didn't even wear out, but for pity's sake, they still disobeyed and got mad at Him whenever they were inconvenienced! Women nowadays would be upset over having to wear the same shoes for years instead of meditating on that they are walking on supernatural shoes because God loves their feet. Shoes didn't grow on trees! God must have spoken life to the soles of their feet and shoes! Actually, God is still conscious of our

feet as now He provides the money for us to go buy new shoes, the result is the same, we don't have to barefoot it through life stepping on snakes, snails, and slugs.

If you want a good jolt in how good God was, and is, to His people and how they (we) treated Him, read Nehemiah 9 the whole chapter. Nehemiah, years later after rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem after it had been destroyed by their enemies, was reminding them and talking about their ancestors' wilderness experiences. There again, you notice how often these experiences we're talking about were related by the prophets and leaders throughout the Bible. You might say this whole story is loaded with nuggets.

To get the story straight here, the peoples' journey (no tabernacle or Ark yet) obviously began when they left Egypt, namely the city of **Rameses**. God was good to their whole bodies, they all came out healthy, strong, and not a sick or feeble one among them. God knows it's hard to travel for 40 years while sick and tired.

It took a week to get from Rameses to the **Red Sea**, and we're familiar with what happened there, one of the greatest miracles ever told, the parting of the Red Sea so they could all pass over on dry land. After that wondrous experience, they traveled for three-months, with a few stops in between, to **Sinai**. "Sinai" is used meaning the mountain and the whole wilderness surrounding.

So there they all were, Egypt behind them, God in front of them. They must have felt a little like we do when we travel and land in a new country, what do we do now, why are we here, where's the map, and how do we keep from getting killed with these crazy drivers, and our pockets picked. We have needed instruction while traveling through the Wilderness of Christianity and Churches (and classes!), trying to find our calling in life, facing strange enemies, facing one setback after another setback. And we had to learn to proceed with safety and avoid the pitfalls. Some of the instruction was good and some was shall we say not beneficial.

Here at Sinai is where God called Moses to come up to the mountain, the synopsis being that God gave him specific, detailed instructions for a tabernacle. This was God's idea, Moses didn't ask for a tabernacle, how would he have ever imagined, I think I'll build a gold box where God can stay, we'll put a Mercy Seat lid on it to keep Him there, build a tabernacle around it, make it portable and carry the whole thing with us for hundreds of years, and I'll be your anointed leader and get to tell you what to do, because you're all so easily led!

After various conversations, experiences, and trips up and down the mountain, Moses had many instructions on what God required of all the people, but mainly detailed instructions on the construction of a whole tabernacle with the Ark of the Covenant in one of the three sections. The Ark of the Covenant was the first piece of furniture commanded to be made; however, when it came to the construction, the Ark was made after the tabernacle itself, presumably so that it could be housed immediately. The Ark was built about 480 years after Israel had first been in Egypt.

The Start Of The Journey

They worked diligently at Sinai on the tabernacle for about a year at the bottom of the mountain. After it was completed they started their travel to their Promised Land, and a year later ended up at **Kadesh**. This is where Moses sent out their spies to spy out the land that God had promised them, in the land of Canaan. Their faith failed here and they walked by sight. The spies came back and said we can't conquer this land (addiction, lying, stealing), there are too many giants there, we're like grasshoppers, we're scared, some of us break out in hives over the stress, and some start to have nervous breakdowns and there's no psychiatrists around here.

That doubt and evil report in God's Word was costly. This is where walking by sight costs us so many years of our life, as then God has to regroup us and start again after we've learned our lesson. God told them that because of their unbelief they would

wander in the wilderness for another 40 years or so until that whole unbelieving generation died. That was all the adults who had left Egypt, and they had seen all the miracles there. There's a lot to think about here.

So they were just ready to enter the Promised Land, but couldn't because of the report of the spies that their human bodies had suddenly transformed into grasshoppers, and then that Spirit of Doubt swept through the camp. So poor Moses had to gather all the grasshoppers together and have a conference, and told them how God felt about their attitude (Deut. 1:31-35):

“In the wilderness, the Lord your God bore you, as a man carries his son, in all the way you went until you came to this place.

“Yet in spite of this word you did not believe and remain steadfast to the Lord your God.

“Who went in the way before you to search out a place to pitch your tents, in fire by night, to show you by what way you should go, and in the cloud by day.

“And the Lord heard your words, and was angered and He swore.

“Not one of these men of this evil generation shall see that good land which I swore to give to your fathers.”

So the judgment wasn't just that they were so bad but that God was so good, “I carried you like a man carries his son,” and you can't mess with that goodness, you have to appreciate it and forge through the battles gaining your strength from the truth that God is good.

So the judgment came, 40 more years of trudging all day around the same block, or mountain, or wilderness. There would be so many tempting thoughts for the younger generation, like man, I

wish these people would hurry and die off so my kids and I could enter the Promised Land, and at least see some new scenery. You know how you'd feel, kind of guilty for wishing for the demise of the green grasshopper generation, and you might even miss some of the scared chickens.

Moses must have had to resist some big negative thoughts himself, after all, it wasn't his fault, and he had to be sick of walking and not seeing the beloved Promised Land. Oh, another one died, good, hundreds more still to go, let's keep walking and burying, day after day, until the last holdout who still wants to hang on to their unbelieving life drops.

And how would the adults of that generation that were supposed to die feel? Either I wish I could die to help the whole tribe obtain the promises, or I refuse to die any time soon, it wasn't my fault I had doubts, anybody would that could see those giants, and I think the judgment was unfair, He expects too much, God has something against our generation, He doesn't like older people, and He could have zapped those giants out of our land before we got there, after all, He's in control.

We have to believe that "He prepares a table before us in the presence of our enemies," the giants. His Presence, even in a box, if you allow it, is greater than the presence of our enemies. Those enemies are always eyeing us, wanting the food that God has promised us, and we have to fight to keep it on our plate. They want to eat at your table after scaring you off. They hate to watch you partake of the manna of God. So while all this *Days of Our Life* drama and boredom was going on, God was still with them in the Ark, longsuffering, loving, and watchful.

We think we're so spiritually bright sometimes and doing all the right things, then suddenly a giant appears in our pathway and we start stuttering and going backwards to Egypt instead of forward to our promised land. Then we accessorize our unbelief with a lot of excuses rather than fighting for our territory, our land, our children, and our advancement. Thanks, Israelites, for all you went through to teach us. And thanks, Moses, for writing it all down for us, even

your shortcomings, to teach and help us Gentiles who would be grafted in to your Jewish roots.

All their experiences are exhausting for everyone concerned as there's a big weight to unbelief. So after all the old doubters had died, the rest were ready to leave the wilderness to cross over into the land of Canaan. After all that walking, talking, murmuring and dying they finally were ready to advance to a different area, or a new level. After all that boredom they got some action as they had to defeat the enemies that were already there, and as you know, men don't give up their territory without a bloodbath.

It must have felt good to do something besides wander. They defeated the Amorites and Og the king of Bashan and encamped on the plains of Moab. Remember, in all these journeys they still had the tabernacle, the Ark, and the orderly procession of the tribes in traveling.

After defeating the problems that were hindering them, in this case people, they camped on the plains of **Moab**. From here Moses climbed Mt. Pisgah to look at the Promised Land, which he was not to be permitted to enter (sad but true; Deut. 3:27). After Moses died, it was up to Joshua to lead them into their land.

The Beginning Of The “Wonders” God Had Promised Them

Another type of problem presented itself. They had to cross over the river Jordan to get into **Canaanland**. The river Jordan was smack in front of them and their land on the other side. Getting a ferry or boats was out of the question, but the big question was, how do you transport thousands of people, furnishings, tents, children, and animals over a swift flowing big river without drowning?

This time they had the faith to figure it out, a simple plan really, that God would have to do the miracles they had always heard about, to get them across, the revelation that God will do the impossible for them!

They got what they believed for here, and a great miracle happened. For three days the officers went throughout all the camp to

tell the 12 tribes, actually command, saying that when they saw the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, and the Levites bearing it, then leave where you are and get going after it. The complexity of all this traveling boggles my orderly mind.

The priests carrying the Ark went in the waters first, and when their feet hit the water the tumbling waters of the Jordan were cut off, holding the waters in a heap. The waters which came down from above stood and rose up in a heap far off, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan; and those flowing down toward the Salt (Dead) Sea were wholly cut off. The Ark stopped in the middle of the Jordan and all the people passed by it. This took a day. Don't you look forward to the videos of Bible events in the library in heaven?

Then the Lord said to Joshua to order the priests bearing the Ark of the Testimony to come up out of the Jordan, and as the soles of their feet were lifted up to the dry land, the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and flowed over all its banks (Joshua 3-4).

Joshua had faith to do this only on the word of God to him, and Joshua told the people, "Behold, **the Ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passes over before you into Jordan.**" The Presence of the Lord in the Ark parted those waters. And "the priests that bore the **Ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan.**" This was to be a sign or memorial to the children of Israel forever. Another reason we need signs and wonders, to put up those memorials in our families, and to tell them all that God had done for us.

Finally! Their Land!

They arrived on the other side to **Gilgal**, the site of the Israelites' first camp on the west side of the Jordan, serving for a time as the center of the Israelite tribes, during the early stages of the Israelites' conquest of Canaan. So the tabernacle and our **Ark of the Covenant** in it was located here. This was on the east border of Jericho.

Miracles are helpful to still your enemies, as "when all the kings of the Amorites, which were on the side of Jordan westward, and all

the kings of the Canaanites, which were by the sea, heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of Jordan, their heart melted, neither was there spirit in them any more.” God, give us miracles in our church, our land, the Middle East, and let the whole world know who the only true God is!

The first thing they did at “Gilgal” which means “to roll off” was to circumcise all the males. With victory comes a little pain. In Joshua 5:2-7 it explains that the males that came out of Egypt had been circumcised, but the males born in the wilderness had not been. The Lord said it was also to roll away the reproach of Egypt off of them. They stayed eight days there to be healed. In the Garden of Gethsemane Christ bore the reproach of His people who still continued in sin after being called by His Name.

They celebrated the Passover here, which they still celebrate today. This is to celebrate the day that when they were in Egypt the death angel passed over them and saved all the firstborn of Israel, while killing the firstborn of every other Egyptian family. God told every Jewish household to apply blood on the doorposts of their house, which caused the death angel to pass over them.

Those Famous Walls Of Jericho

This was on the plains of **Jericho** which were not too far from Gilgal. Another wonder happened here as Joshua met a Man with His drawn sword (Joshua 5:13-15).

Then a wonder we’re all familiar with, the falling of the walls of Jericho. Here again the **Ark of the Covenant of His Presence** played the leading role. Seven priests would go before the Ark with seven trumpets of rams’ horns. This continued for days, the Ark of the Covenant and the priests blowing the trumpets. On the seventh day they compassed the city seven times, shouted with a great shout, and as you know, the walls came tumbling down and the army of Israel went in and took the city (Joshua 6).

Now this is His Presence under the old covenant! Don’t you want to conquer those cities in your life that keep you from bring-

ing the walls of hindrances, weaknesses, and sin crashing down, so you can enter whatever territory in the life that God wants you to conquer. It may take a few times around the walls of hindrances, you need the Presence of the Lord going before you, maybe some of your friends blowing trumpets, and you all need to say nothing but words of faith about the enemy you're facing.

They then went to **Shiloh**, near Bethel. The Ark belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, the second son of Joseph born in Egypt. It remained here for the entire period of the Judges of Israel. Eli was the 7th high priest of Israel then and the 15th judge at the tabernacle there for 40 years. Samuel's mom, Hannah, brought him here to Eli to be given to the Lord. Eli's sons were wicked because he didn't restrain them in their sins, even their committing fornication at the door of the tabernacle, so God warned and foretold that his sons were to be slain and Eli would die (1 Samuel 1-4).

The Ark Of The Covenant Captured!!

This is a dramatic story concerning the Ark. The Philistines came in to Shiloh and slew 4,000 men, which Samuel had prophesied would happen, and they took the Ark out of the tabernacle and ran with it. They had been eyeing it for a long time, and they were finally going to learn some lessons the hard way. (If nothing else, Thou shalt not steal!). They knew Israel's strength came somehow from some god that was probably in this Ark, and this curiosity killed the Philistines.

A man of the army of Israel came to Shiloh that day with his clothes torn, and with earth upon his head, crying that there was a great slaughter, that the sons of Eli were dead, and the Ark of God was taken!!

When Eli heard that the Ark of God was taken he fell off a seat by the side of a gate backwards and broke his neck. Then more real life drama: when Eli's daughter in law was about to be delivered of a child and she heard that the Ark of God was taken, she bore a son, said to call him *Ichabod*, meaning "The glory of the Lord has

departed from Israel,” and then died. So here the Ark is called the glory of the Lord.

The tabernacle of Moses was built in the 13th century B.C. Here the Ark was taken in the 11th century B.C. After the Ark was taken from here it was never returned to the whole tabernacle again. The rest of the tabernacle, “sanctuary” stayed; it was also called the “house of the Lord.” The utensils and everything but the Ark remained there. The priests still maintained it and sacrificed their animals at the Brazen Altar. Some of the tabernacle main structure had probably been replaced because of wear and tear, and couldn’t have survived totally intact over the whole period of the Judges. But the furniture and utensils of gold remained the same.

The Philistines then brought the Ark from **Ebenezer** to **Ashdod**. The story of what happened is in 1 Samuel 5-6. They put the God of Israel in with their god Dagon, and Dagon kept falling on his face and only his stump remained. Not only that but the Lord smote (good old-fashioned word) them with emerods, not to mention destroying some of them. For the unenlightened, “emerods” is an old word for “hemorrhoids.”

The Philistines said this isn’t working out for us the way we had imagined, God’s hand is against our precious stumpless Dagon. But did they choose to run after the Almighty God of Israel? No, they actually took the Ark to **Gath**.

Then the hand of the Lord was against Gath and He slayed them and smote them with those bleeding emerods. It seems like destroying them would have been enough but the smiting of emerods is interesting, there could probably be a whole study on it, but I’ll leave it to someone else.

The remaining inhabitants of Gath said, this is enough, so they sent the Ark to **Ekron**. The people there were shocked and said, they’ve brought the Ark of Israel here to slay us. So the people of Ekron gathered together all the lords of the Philistines and said, get that Ark out of here and let it go back from whence it came! Meanwhile there was deadly destruction throughout Ekron. Remember our subject: *The Presence of the Lord!*

Return Of The Ark

The Ark was in the country of the Philistines for seven months. The Philistines gathered all their smart guys together and said, how are we going to get rid of this Ark? The brilliant diviners of the Philistines said, you can't send the Ark back empty, at least return to Him a guilt offering. They came up with that they had to make images of their emerods (that must have been a work of art), and images of their mice, and thereby give glory to the God of Israel. (Relating to God seems to be a serious problem to many.) These worldly minds reasoned that this was a true inspiration, if we do this perhaps He will lighten His hand from off of us, our gods, and our land (1 Samuel 6).

The diviners then had a good point in verse 6, "Why do you harden your hearts as the Egyptians and Pharoah hardened their hearts? When He had done wonders and made a mock of them, did they not let the people go, and they departed?" That's interesting that the diviners knew all about the history of the Israelites and God being with them and what happened with Pharoah in the 13th century B.C., and they were now in the 11th century.

So the inspired diviners continued with their plan to get rid of God's Presence:

"Make a new cart and two milch cows on which no yoke has ever come; and yoke the cows to the cart, but take their calves home, away from them.

"And take the Ark of the Lord and place it upon the cart, and put in a box at its side the figures of gold (their hemorrhoids!) which you are returning to Him as a guilt offering. Then send it away and let it be gone.

"And watch. If it goes up by the way of its own land to Bethshemesh, then He has done us this great evil. But if not, then we shall know that it was not His hand that struck us; it happened to us by chance.

“And the cows went straight toward **Beth-shemesh** along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right or the left. And the Philistine lords followed them as far as the border of Beth-shemesh.”

Beth-shemesh was about 20 miles from Ekron. Here was the Ark of His Presence on a new cart drawn by two cows lowing all the way because their calves were kept at home. The five lords of the Philistines followed it to see where it went in order to make the test complete. Beth-shemesh was on the border between Judah and Philistia.

The Ark's Arrival

When the cart came in to Beth-shemesh, the Judahites were harvesting wheat in the valley. The men of the place rejoiced to see the Ark, and sacrificed the two cows. That was kind of sad for those cows after having to leave their calves and then be done away with at the end, but it says they were sacrificed as a burnt offering to God, using the wood of the cart. Being sacrificed to God isn't really a bad ending, and for cow-lovers, there are animals in heaven.

The same supernatural and invisible force that caused the cows to leave their calves and go of their own accord to Judah also caused them to stop at this certain place near a great stone in the field of Joshua, who was a native of Beth-shemesh.

The Levites then took the Ark, the gold emerods and mice and put them on the great stone. And the men of the city offered burnt offerings and made sacrifices that day to the Lord.

More Trouble With His Presence

“And the Lord slew some of the men of Beth-shemesh because they had looked into the Ark of the Lord. He slew seventy men of them, and the people mourned because the Lord had made a great slaughter among them.

“And the men of Beth-shemesh said, Who is able to stand before the Lord, this holy God? And to whom shall He go away from us?

“And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirath-jearim, saying, The Philistines have returned the Ark of the Lord. Come down and take it up to you.”

Look how the Presence of God is woven throughout scripture, and how people treated Him, and how they were judged for not knowing the rules of approaching God. The Judah people should have known not to peek in the Ark. They should have known how blessed they would be to keep His Presence there, respect, honor, and draw from it. The Presence of God was too hot for carnal men to handle, even God’s chosen people.

We push His Presence away daily, hourly, sometimes, and take a quick peek at His Word instead of handling this cart that He has given us with respect, and we approach Him with unconfessed sin, and still say the cart is among us, we have the truth, we have His Presence; and the only thing that is saving us from being slain on the spot, or infested with hemorrhoids with our irreverent approaches is Christ and His constant intercession.

These stories are not stories, they are eternal truths for us to draw on, to learn from, and to do. Look at the progression of the Ark and what happened to those who didn’t respect it or put it up alongside their gods. I don’t think God wanted to smite the Philistines and kill them, I don’t think He rejoiced in killing 70 Judahites who peeked into the cart with curiosity when they should have known from their history the sacredness of the Ark. I don’t think it was humorous to Him to smite men with little tumors in their secret parts.

But God is holy, and judgment was there, and is here and ahead for those who treat Him carelessly even though they may not die on the spot now. It’s coming. Learn from these truths. God wrote these for us. Thank you, Israelites, and even you heathen Philistines with

emeralds for being in Bible history to help teach us how we should be and not be.

These stories are like God's diary of what He did every day, and you found His Diary when you went looking for Him, and He wrote: on November 4, I smote the Philistines with hemorrhoids; on November 10 I had to look upon their ridiculous personal offerings of their emeralds and their mice; on November 12, 70 men died who came close to Me, I didn't want to do it, and I felt bad for their families, but my justness to remain true to My Word caused it to happen. Don't we all like to read diaries, read God's that way.

It's nice to treat Him as a good friend, a buddy so to speak, and approach Him with friendliness and naturalness, but be careful, you may not be in a position to be too familiar if you're leaving faults and sins in your life. God isn't against you for your sin, but He is against you for leaving it there and not seeking Him with your whole heart to know Him so His Presence won't distress you in some way. We set Him up alongside many other Dagon's in our life and He's not about to let it continue. We'll lose our legs and arms so to speak and not fulfill our calling, even though He may be beside us. We can think we're above all that judgment stuff because we've accepted Christ as our Savior. Think again. "To whom much is given, much is expected."

God told my husband and I very specifically that when we approach Him for our morning prayer to treat Him with honor, respect, reverence, and even excitement. He's concerned how we approach Him, not just on special occasions, but with our every day life.

Don't Get Mad At Who Is Speaking Truth To You

Those cows obeyed God and went to the right place, all the while yearning to turn back to their calves, but they instinctively obeyed. It reminds me of the donkey that spoke God's Word to Balaam. God can use animals and even rocks to cry out if He wants to. His holy Presence can make grieving cows go a certain direction, and put

vocal cords and language in a donkey's mouth (Num. 22:27-30). I never thought until now how much that must have startled the donkey, speaking Hebrew for the first time. She must have thought, at last my old donkey life is changing, and I can now negotiate business and start a prosperous life, and what a blessing it will be to have something besides manure to pass down to my children. Think of the people who would pay to hear a donkey speaking perfect Hebrew, we can only assume it was perfect.

This is too good to pass by. Balaam was mad because the donkey was shifting around being startled whenever she saw the Angel. Balaam got mad and hit her three times. The donkey said, what are you doing hitting me, what have I ever done to you? (Leave it to a she to demand an explanation when mistreated.) Balaam's answer is what we would call very very carnal: He said, "Because you've ridiculed and provoked me! I wish there were a sword in my hand, for now I would kill you!" And the donkey, remember it's a she, said, I've been faithful to you all your life, have I ever done anything like this to you before?

Even the Angel of the Lord couldn't just stand by and spoke up, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? I came out to stand against and resist you, for your behavior is willfully obstinate and contrary before Me." If an Angel starts standing on the side of a donkey against you, there's likely something to repent from.

Balaam instantly talked back to the donkey after the donkey spoke to him which is humorous. If one of your animals spoke to you, would your reaction be to get mad and hit them? You'd be too startled, and some would say, oh good dog, smart dog, we didn't know you could speak. But here he's arguing with his donkey. Do you think he told his family or friends later? The other day when my donkey and I were traveling we had a huge disagreement and were arguing about her behavior...Oh, you and your donkey have discussions? Well this was only the first time.

Back To Our Ark

So the people of Beth-shemesh rejoiced when they first saw the Presence of God, then when trouble hit because of disrespect, let's get this thing out of here, will somebody please come and get God, He's too much for us, we can harvest and prosper without Him. Just like the cry of the children of Israel earlier when they begged God to let them go back to Egypt because they were better off back there! We let our thinking get so screwed up when pressure hits.

Think of all the nations round about Israel who saw the power and glory of God and still returned home to their own gods. I have to wonder if some of the Egyptians and Philistines and other nations could have been saved if they had turned to the God of the Hebrews. They wouldn't have been counted as a Jew, but they could have joined with them out of respect for their God, or at least not come against God's people. The only reason the heathen didn't kill all the children of Israel along the way was because of fear, not compassion or respect.

God doesn't delight in any of His creation getting taken down, but He has had to watch it all because of His unwillingness to interfere or force His will on anyone, so the power of the truth of His Word comes forth in judgment at times. "All the nations who forget God will be cast into hell," not just individuals but whole nations. A whole nation can forget God. "A little leaven leavens the whole lump." An awareness of the Presence of God upon this earth and in our own personal lives is necessary so we don't "forget" Him, even for a short while.

God's Journey Continued

The men of **Kiriath-jearim** came and took the Ark and brought it into the house of **Abinadab** on the hill and consecrated Eleazar his son to have charge of it. Kiriath-jearim was about 8 miles northeast of Beth-shemesh and eight miles from Jerusalem. The Ark remained there for 20 years.

David's First Attempt To Get The Ark

This Ark has really gotten a workout and was the talk of the nations. While the Ark was journeying around, David was going through all his problems starting with killing Goliath, which turned Saul's jealousy against him so he had to keep running for his life. But on the other side of the mountain of all his troubles God was preparing him to be king and to eventually get the Ark and finally bring it to the city of Zion, sometimes called the city of David, which was a mountain in Jerusalem. So there was more holy drama in 2 Samuel 6:

“David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, 30,000, and they went to Kiriath-jearim to bring up from there the Ark of God, **which is called by the name (Presence) of the Lord of hosts, Who sits enthroned above the cherubim.**

“And they set the Ark of God upon a new cart and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, and Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart.

“And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. And David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord with all their might, with songs, harps, tambourines, castanets, and cymbals.”

What a great time of rejoicing and everybody was so happy you would have thought God would have overlooked the “minor” infraction that happened next, because we all like to see everybody rejoicing and happy in the Lord over His Presence. But:

“Uzzah put out his hand to the Ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled and shook it.

“And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for touching the Ark, and he died there by the Ark of God.

“David was grieved and offended because the Lord had broken forth upon Uzzah. And David was afraid of the Lord that day and said, How can the Ark of the Lord come to me?”

So David was not willing after that to take the Ark of the Lord to him into the city of David, but he took it aside into the **house of Obededom the Gittite**. The Ark was there for three months.

Do you follow the whole point of the Ark—be careful how you treat even the symbol of His Presence. Emerods and death are no laughing matter and God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. So the whole gathering of over 30,000 went from singing to death in a few seconds because they had forgotten how to treat His availability.

In Numbers 4 even the Levites were forbidden to touch the Ark on the threat of death and this law was broken here. Some Philistines were probably not killed when they handled it because of their ignorance of the law.

David’s Second Attempt To Get Ark

Obededom and all his household were blessed because of the Ark (2 Samuel 6:11-12):

“And it was told King David, The Lord has blessed the house of Obededom and all that belongs to him, because of the Ark of God. So David went and brought up the Ark of God from the house of Obededom into the **city of David** with rejoicing.”

This hill **Zion** was a mountain that David our warrior had captured from the Jebusites who had a stronghold there. There are three main hills in the capital city of Jerusalem, one being Mt. Moriah where Solomon later built his temple.

This time David made proper investigation regarding why Uzzah was killed when they attempted to bring the Ark to Jerusalem on a new cart. He no doubt read the law of Moses on how to handle the Ark, and so he now used the proper priests consecrated to carry it.

The full details of preparation are in 1 Chronicles 15-16. How to treat God was of utmost importance this time so they could enjoy His Presence by remaining alive!

David was busy, and prepared houses in the city of David, and prepared a place for the Ark of God and pitched a tent for it. He said that nobody was to carry the Ark but the Levites (some things don't change). This was an awesome picture as it says that David gathered all Israel together to Jerusalem to bring up the Ark of the Lord to the place that he had prepared, and over 862 priests and Levites were sanctified to bear the Ark and offer sacrifices.

Great Rejoicing In Having God's Presence Back

The children of the Levites bore the Ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves in, as Moses had commanded. He then appointed singers and musicians to praise God before the Ark. Get this picture:

“So David and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord out of the house of Obededom with joy.

“When God helped the Levites that bore the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, they offered seven bullocks and seven rams.

“And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that bore the Ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the master of the song with the singers: David also had upon him an ephod of linen.

“Thus all Israel brought up the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, making a noise with psalteries and harps.”

While celebrating having the Ark in Jerusalem, Michal, David's wife, mocked him for dancing with his robes flying. She was barren from that day. David was so happy he said, I'm going to dance even harder. So one was delighted and dancing, the other was criticizing the joy, obviously not understanding the importance of the Presence of God, which brings life and death.

That's how important the Ark of His Presence was to them. This was about 997 B.C. But even David, a man beloved of God, would have been slain if he had not obeyed God's rules. You say we don't have those rules today. Yes we do, maybe in a different way as we have Christ's shed blood as protection while we get our Presence act together, but the spirit of it is the same for us Gentiles and the Church.

If you read 1 Chronicles 16 there were many more things David did to celebrate. He wrote a psalm to thank the Lord and gave it to the musicians. The Ark of the Covenant was under the open tent David had made and he appointed Asaph and his brethren to minister before the Ark continually, as every day's work required. He appointed Obededom (who had left his house and came with them), and others to be porters. There was continual singing and dancing around the Ark. (How often do we do that because we have His Presence?)

The Difference Then Between the Whole Tabernacle and the Ark

The main Tabernacle in the Wilderness that had been set up to house the Ark before the Ark was taken by the Philistines was still in Gibeon. In 1 Chronicles 16:39 David instructed:

“Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the Lord in the high place that was at Gibeon.

“To offer burnt offerings unto the Lord upon the altar of the burnt offering continually morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the law of the Lord, which he commanded Israel.”

Once the Ark was stolen by the Philistines from Moses' tabernacle, the cloud of glory never fell on the tabernacle again.

So why were the priests still ministering in the tabernacle while the Ark was gone? David's tabernacle (tent) was a place of intimacy with no form or rituals. The sacrifices were made only when the Ark was first placed there, and there was always dancing and songs around the Ark of the Covenant.

Moses' tabernacle at Gibeon was still in operation because God had never said to shut it down. So the Ark was never again in Moses' tabernacle. Gibeon was a place of form where the priests and Levites fulfilled the letter of the law even though the Ark was gone.

To continue ministering without the Ark seemed empty, but Tommy Tenney makes a good point when he says there has to be life and spontaneity mixed with order. The glory of God requires responsibility so that with our spontaneity will be purity. There is harmony between intimacy and form and structure.

At Moses' tabernacle at Gibeon they still had the ceremonial washings and sacrifices. The duties of the priesthood cleansed the nation of Israel from their sins so God could hear their prayers. It was the daily responsibility of priests to perform duties so Israel could experience His forgiveness. Even when the Ark was stolen the priests still made sacrifices and burned incense and were united in making certain the system continued to operate. So there was praise and worship in David's tabernacle on Mt. Zion, and sacrifices and priestly duties on at Gibeon.

David's emphasis was of a broken and contrite spirit, and spoke of the sacrifices of praise, not sacrifices of blood. Moses had a revelation of holiness and the law, the Outer Court so to speak. David's Inner Court message involved an understanding of praise and worship. Both had part of the message of God, and both messages came together at the dedication of Solomon's temple, because Solomon offered countless numbers of sacrifices, then had a praise team sing and minister on the steps; and the combination brought the glory of God down.



CHAPTER 4

Solomon's Temple Ark Taken There

The Journey Of The Ark Continued

The Ark was placed on Mt. Zion by David about 997 B.C. David proposed building a permanent temple for the Ark at Mt. Moriah, another mountain in Jerusalem not far from Mt. Zion. This is believed to be the place, centuries earlier, where Abraham brought Isaac for sacrifice. So the Ark remained on Mt. Zion until Solomon's Temple was dedicated about 959 B.C. at Mt. Moriah. David prepared many of the plans, but Solomon was responsible for building it. It was not far from "the tabernacle of David" where David had the Ark.

This temple was much larger than the original Tabernacle in the Wilderness, of course, but it was built to the same floor plan and it contained a Holy Place and Holy of Holies. It was a magnificent, awesome temple.

The main thought here is when the temple was dedicated they brought the Ark of God from Zion and all the holy utensils and furniture from Mt. Gibeon and had a celebration the likes that we've never seen. This is told in dramatic detail in 2 Chronicles 5, 6, 7, and 1 Kings 8, 9. Don't miss it, it's five whole chapters of our Bible, and all those years of the wanderings and history of Moses' Tabernacle

and the Ark are finally being met together in Solomon's Temple.

The consecration of the temple took seven days, then Solomon's prayer; and then Solomon's sacrifices at the Feast of Dedication took seven days. Then they had a day of solemnity, and the people were sent home "glad and merry in heart" (2 Chron. 7:9-10).

The reason we'll follow this through a little is because of our dear Ark, and a Most Holy Place in Solomon's Temple was built to house the Ark of God. The main purpose of the building of the temple wasn't to show off to the nations, for Solomon to declare his manliness, or for the people to have a beautiful building to worship in: the main purpose was as David had stated years earlier in 1 Chron. 22:19:

"Now set your mind and heart to seek (inquire of and require as your vital necessity) the Lord your God. **Arise and build the sanctuary of the Lord God, so that the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord and the holy vessels** of God may be brought into the house built to the Name and renown of the Lord."

So our pathway here is leading to the merging of God's Presence and God's Holy Vessels consecrated many years before from Moses' tabernacle. Think of the history of both, and the importance of the occasion of Solomon's Temple to the Jewish nation.

Listen to what God says about His Ark in 2 Samuel 7:5-6. David asked about building a "house" for God, and God told Nathan the prophet to give David His answer about building the temple:

"Go and tell My servant David, Thus says the Lord: Shall you build Me a house in which to dwell?

"For I have not dwelt in a house since I brought the Israelites out of Egypt to this day, but **have moved about with a tent for My dwelling.**"

The longsuffering of God that He might be with us! So this Ark of the Covenant traveled with the Israelites for about 900 years. The

Old Testament scriptures are written to “make us wise unto our salvation.” And “all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:15-16). There is so much to meditate on concerning the Ark of His Presence, even the fact that the God of the Universe said, I haven’t even dwelt in a house for thousands of years but I’ve had to move about with a tent for My dwelling. “Wise to our salvation” here can mean wise to our knowledge on having the Presence of God, who is our salvation, so we know how to relate to Him.

Before the dedication of the temple, maybe 10 years or so, Solomon took with him captains of thousands and hundreds, judges, princes in Israel, the heads of the fathers’ houses and went to Moses’ old tabernacle, also called “The Tent of Meeting of God,” and he went up to the bronze altar that Bezalel had made in Moses’ day. He then offered 1,000 burnt offerings on it. I had forgotten that until researching this. It had to be out of respect for the past and the whole building of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness with its history, and that a whole new temple was being built to house some of the vessels that were still left in Moses’ tabernacle.

The Ark Moved To Solomon’s Temple

After they assembled everyone for the big moment of the dedication of Solomon’s Temple they took up the Ark of the Covenant from the tent of David on Mt. Zion to bring it into the Most Holy Place in the temple. At this time there were just the two tables of stone in it with the 10 commandments. It’s not known when Aaron’s rod that budded and the pot of manna were removed, unless by Solomon, but we do know the original stones with the ten commandments were still in existence.

The priests carefully took the Ark in its staves to the Most Holy Place in Solomon’s Temple. It was only a few hundred yards from David’s tabernacle to Solomon’s Temple. The priests took the Ark into its place, finished arranging the furniture, and left, never to

enter again, except for the visit of the High Priest once a year. “Then the temple was filled with a cloud so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God” (2 Chron. 5:13-14).

This glory was a symbol of the divine Presence of God, which had been promised before the Ark was begun (Ex. 29:43), and had filled Moses’ tabernacle when it was finished. This reminded me of Jeremiah 9:23-24:

“Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches:

“But let him that glorieth glory in this, that **he understandeth and knoweth me**, that I am the Lord which exercise **lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth**: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.”

He said for us to understand and know Him, and the study of how He acted, how He interacted with His people in the Old Testament, what He did to deliver them, and how He loved them so much that He would dwell in a tent and fellowship with a High Priest once a year, should alert us to His character. We also see not only his love for His people but the judgments He showed if they didn’t hear and obey. We should glory in these truths about Him. They should be dear to our hearts. We should be highly interested in His Presence, how He uses it and how He displays it to His people and to the nations round about.

So God went from a tabernacle to a tent to a temple. The Most Holy Place was a place of darkness, as Solomon said “The Lord has said He would dwell in thick darkness. I have built You a house [in which the dark Holy of Holies seems] a [fitting] abode for You, a place for You to dwell in forever” (2 Chron. 6:1-2). At this long planned for dedication, there was great rejoicing, 120 priests with trumpets, harps, psalteries, saying, “For He is good; for His mercy

endureth forever.”

When they carried the Ark from David’s tabernacle to the temple, the whole route was bathed in blood as they sacrificed sheep and oxen, so many “they could not count them.” The route from one tabernacle to another, from one experience of His Presence to another, is bathed with great personal sacrifice, yet that is what is required to experience the glory of the Lord. This truth presents us with a type of the total brokenness of man. Solomon’s temple is a type of rulership, dominion, and kingship. To move to a place of intimacy with God to a place of dominion and reigning in this life takes great sacrifice, it takes the death of who I think I am, and is paved with great blood.

King Solomon himself offered a sacrifice of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep as he beheld the glory of God. The more we see God as He is, the more compelled we are to give Him our all. Many know God intellectually, yet few know Him in His glory. Churches can be sanctuaries of formality, not of the Divine Presence. If we’re part of that sector of Christianity that departed from ritualism, what we offer in its place can be merely varying degrees of informality. Where is God, with His creative, unlimited power in our gatherings? When was the last time we or our pastors could not stand to minister because the glory of God overwhelmed us? Such was the God of the Old Testament, the Holy One that Christ revealed.

The glory of God’s Presence filled the temple. One of the meanings of “glory” is “to multiply Himself.” “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Cor. 3:18). So as we behold and are conscious of His Presence, God’s glory—His splendor, honor, prevailing power—comes to change us, to make us like Him. In that process of changing from one degree of glory to another, God multiplies or increases the Presence of His glory within us. As a result, His glory can permeate our lives that even before we have said anything, people can sense His Presence when they are in our presence.

When you behold your ugly old self it seems impossible, but it’s

not, His glory is greater than your ugliness. He can and would like to overwhelm us with Himself. He wants us to carry His Presence to the world around us. As we yield or respond to Him, He will release His glory through us. An overflow has to come out. The degree to which we allow the glory to overflow *in* us is the degree to which the glory can flow *out through* us.

The Ark of God was in **Solomon's Temple** for 400 years until the temple was destroyed by the invading Babylonian army (2 Ki. 24:10-13). Ezekiel and Jeremiah lamented, prophesied, and warned of the impending destruction, but the people refused to repent of their sins, and their temple and holy city were first plundered by Nebuchadnezzar in 597 B.C., then burned by Nebuzaradan, his general, in 587/586 B.C.

Temples Are Important in Jewish History

A remnant later returned to rebuild the temple. The decree of Cyrus, the king of Persia, in 538 B.C. permitted the Jews to return from the Babylonian exile with the temple vessels that had been taken. This was led by Ezra and Nehemiah who rebuilt the city and the temple. Their great challenges in rebuilding the temple and walls are good reading, and here again it shows that having a tent, tabernacle, or temple was vitally important to Jewish culture. From the first plans given by God to Moses on the mountain for a tabernacle, Jewish people have risked their lives to have one. This temple was known also as Zerubbabel's Temple and served as the focus of Jewish worship for the next few hundred years.

In 19 B.C. Herod the Great began to rebuild the derelict temple, making many great additions, but this temple stood for less than 100 years. Six years after its completion, in A.D. 70, it was destroyed by Roman legions under Titus. Herod's temple was the last Jewish temple to stand on this sacred site in Jerusalem.

What a Shame

God is certainly going to straighten this out, but in 638 A.D. the Muslims conquered Palestine and occupied the temple site, building the Dome of the Rock at the center of the Temple Mount in 691 A.D. The Temple Mount is today still controlled by the Muslims, for whom it is also a sacred place, if sacred is the word.

It's sad that Solomon's beautiful temple with the Ark of the Covenant in it on Mt. Moriah has this Dome built on it in the Old City of Jerusalem right on the land that belongs to Israel. Anyway, that's another subject, one that *Pastor John Hagee* is a specialist in. This has little to do with the ending of this chapter, but John Hagee reminds me of the mighty men of David in the Bible in 2 Samuel 23 and 1 Chronicles 11. One of these was *Adino* who used his spear and went against 800 men who were slain at one time. Some of the other mighty men stood and defied the Philistines until their hands clung to the sword (the rest of the Israelites in the army had run away). Another one stood and defied the Philistines on a "piece of ground full of lentils" (don't you love the Bible?), and most of the Israelities ran again (not that I blame them, the Philistines were mean).

There are other mighty men being raised up today, *Jay Sekulow* of the ACLJ (American Center for Law & Justice), and other well-known ministers and organizations, like *Jewish Voice*, *Rod Parsley*, *Kenneth Copeland*, *Perry Stone*, etc., who are standing up against great odds to defend Christians and America; and other brave Christians, not so well known who are standing for righteousness. They're using the sword of the Word and risking their lives at times to preach against sin, and they're crying in the streets like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and are present day Christians who are heralding the warnings of the times we're in, crying in the T.V. studios for us to be ready to meet the Lord.

We better listen to their cries even though they're not dressed in sackcloth and ashes. Even those that are wearing expensive suits have hearts of sackcloth and ashes, as the cries to awake and

repent, the Lord is coming, be prepared or be destroyed are the same cries of God today and throughout the ages. The cries nowadays come in all different outfits from Prada to Penney's to the Second Time Around, it's the message that counts, and if we don't listen the enemies will come in and tear down our temple or nation or community, even while we think we're "dwelling securely."

Christians around the world need to be watching the Jewish nation to see what the signs of these times are, just like the Philistines and other nations would stand on hillsides to watch and see "how much" God was with them, and do they dare attack God's people. But everyone seems to sense there is something different about this little nation of Israel, but they don't learn from the realities of what is happening to them to apply it to their personal lives now.

I like *Benaiah*, one of David's mighty men, who slew two lion-like men of Moab, and went down and "slew a lion in a pit on a snowy day." This same great warrior "slew an Egyptian, a handsome man. The Egyptian had a spear in his hand, but Benaiah went down to him with a staff, snatched the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and slew the man with his own spear." I love it that God said the Egyptian was handsome, another version saying of great stature, but I like the word handsome.

Anyway, I guess thinking of the temples and the Jewish people made me think of John Hagee because of all he is doing as the National Chairman for CUFI, Christians United for Israel to help save them from their enemies, and his honoring, love and concern for Israel. Also his strong outspoken stand against homosexuality and sin in general. We have some mighty men in America and in the world who are slaying thousands of enemies with their ministries, and raising up thousands of warriors with the Sword of the Spirit to save others. Support them with your prayers and finances so the Presence of God may be felt in America in blessing rather than judgment.

11 Chronicles 5-7 also relates the dedication of Solomon's Temple, and is where that familiar prayer is that we often quote in 7:14, "If my people, which are called by **My Name** will humble them-

selves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” God says as you’re humble, seek after Me, and get rid of the wickedness, then when you use My Name I’ll show up with My Presence and go to work for you. You can see the importance of not using or taking His Name in vain.

“My Name” and “My Presence”

I got so carried away I forgot to bring out the following about God’s Presence at the dedication of Solomon’s Temple.

In 1 Kings 8, ampl., it’s interesting to note the following from Solomon’s inspired prayer, and how often the Presence of God is mentioned.

“The Lord chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel in which to build a house that **My Name** and **My Presence** might be in it, but I chose David to be over My people Israel” (vs. 16).

“...build a house **for the Name, the Presence, of the Lord**” (vs. 17).

“...shall build it **to My Name, and My actively present Person**” (vs. 19).

“I have made there a place for the Ark, the token of **His Presence**” (vs. 21).

“...You have said **My Name, and the token of My Presence, shall be there**” (vs. 29).

“...for the sake of **Your Name, and Your active Presence**” (vs. 41).

“For they will hear of your **great Name, Your revelation of Yourself**” (vs. 42).

“...so that all peoples of the earth may know **Your Name, and Your revelation of Your Presence**” (vs. 43).

“...this house which I have built is called by **Your Name**, and contains the **token of Your Presence**” (vs. 43).

“...and the house that I have built for **Your Name**, and **Your revelation of Yourself**” (vs. 44).

“...I have hallowed this house which you have built, and I have put **My Name** and **My Presence** there forever” (I Kings 9:3).

This shows when they used God’s Name, His Presence showed up with it. If your child needs something and calls your name, you show up don’t you? Sometimes you may not know what to do or how to help, but God always knows and does the perfect thing for us when He shows up.

In Ephesians 4:17-19, Paul said some interesting things about His Name and His Presence:

“So this I say and solemnly testify in **the Name of the Lord**, as in **His Presence**, that you no longer live as the Gentiles do in their perverseness and emptiness of their souls and the futility of their minds. Their moral understanding is darkened and their reasoning is beclouded. They are self-banished from the life of God with no share in it.”

Here this same thought is transferred to the New Testament, and Paul said when I testify to you in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and use that Name, I’m actually in His Presence and can say what His Presence is speaking to me about.

That Name of Jesus is not just a word that conjured up the image of Him speaking the Beatitudes and holding children on His lap: It has the power and glory in it, when you use it in faith, to minister power, deliverance, and judgments.

Where Is The Ark Now?

The Heavenly Tabernacle has the Ark of the Covenant now. Revelation 11:19, “Then the sanctuary of God in heaven was thrown open, and the **Ark of His Covenant** was seen standing in His sanctuary; and there were flashes of lightning, loud rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and a terrific hailstorm.”

The Heavenly Tabernacle also has the Golden Altar (Rev. 9:13), the Candlestick (1:12), and the Altar (6:9).

Hebrews 9:24, “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear **in the Presence of God for us.**”

Revelation 15:5, “And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened,” a second time.

I don't know when or how it got there, but it's the perfect place for it. Maybe there is another one there, as the earthly pattern was to fit the heavenly pattern. Anyway, I like to think of it there. Other writers have also said it was taken there. Let's continue with the journey of God's Presence.



CHAPTER 5

The Path of His Presence From the Garden to Your Spirit

In the very beginning as we know it in the book of Genesis, God was personally concerned about His creation, especially the one little man He had carefully formed and breathed the breath of life into. That was His man of the hour, so to speak, and He wanted the best and most beautiful for Him, and He also wanted someone to fellowship with. In Genesis 2:8:

“And the Lord God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden (delight) and there He put the man whom He had formed.”

Do you think of God planting gardens? To me He seems more of a throne-person than a gardening-person. Who did He plant it for? The man that He had lovingly made. He created a beautiful, delightful garden, and because He had made man to work, He told him to tend the garden. That was probably a fun job as there were no weeds yet and “a river went out of Eden to water the garden.” Adam had to be fellowshiping with God in that garden because there was no-one else to fellowship with, and as he tended he must have been thinking of God and how wonderful the garden was that God had personally planted for him. It reminds me when

God personally wrote the ten commandments for Moses with His very own finger. God loves personal touches (and hugs!).

Walking through a beautiful garden and fellowshiping with God is still a blessed time for many as the colors and flowers are so reminding of God, and you can breathe Him in and thank Him for the way He is and that you can know Him. A run in with a snake can distract for a minute as they're still hanging around in gardens, in homes and churches trying to get your attention off of what God has said. Snakes come in numerous forms.

It was a creative time for God as “out of the ground the Lord God formed every wild beast and living creature of the field and every bird of the air. He then brought them to Adam to see what he would call them; and whatever Adam called every living creature, that was its name. Adam gave names to all.”

Here is another time of fellowshiping between God and just one man. He personally brought every creature, freshly created, to see what Adam would call them. He was relating to him and teaching him. When I get my three year old granddaughter *Luca Adalyn* a doll I always ask her, What are you going to name her? She'll say a name right away, or she'll ask me if there is a name on the box the doll came in, if someone has already named it. If they have she'll usually accept that name. I didn't realize I did that automatically when I gave her a doll or animal or bird until reading about God bringing all his live “presents” to Adam. But it's like everything has to have a name to identify it, especially in a personal way.

As parents we always want to give our kids something and God is the same way, then we fellowship in the giving and taking of it. My granddaughter always says, oh thank you, grandma, this doll is so beautiful, it's so lovely, and kisses and hugs her and then me. Where did we get that? From our Creator. There is great fellowship in giving and receiving.

God personally formed a helpmate for Adam because He knew how it felt to want fellowship. Because of what had been established before in their relationship in the naming, Adam must have felt free to name her “Woman.” I wonder what the exchange of con-

versation and feelings was about this, the first woman being created for the first man. As parents we're totally excited to see our child born and see them for the first time, and the first thing we do is name them if we haven't already done so! We have to read between the lines in these stories, but in the not too distant future in heaven we can find out the emotional atmosphere in all these happenings in Genesis and the Bible.

God shows much communion and love in Genesis chapter 2. He treated Adam tenderly and intimately and wanted his life to be pleasant and whole. It reminds me of the verse in 2 Peter 1:3, "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."

After they sinned in the garden by disobeying God and obeying the snake, God came to the garden and called for Adam, Where are you, I want to see you, I want to talk to you, I'm interested in what has been happening with you. It was a bad day for the only couple in existence, so they then had to endure a judgment fellowship, and their lives were never the same. Neither was God's! Or ours! God must have felt so sad knowing the long pathway ahead to redeem mankind and all everyone would have to go through to enjoy His garden again. We were all thrown out of the garden that day. I would think that all the creatures in the garden would have missed their gardeners as they must have been close to Adam and Eve.

That's one reason I appreciate being a deliverance minister, you can get the snakes (spirit, demon, curse, binding) out of the garden that God has given you to tend so you and others don't suffer the consequences. If you leave things around you or in you, they start talking to you and get you to doubt God. Snakes are still talking in many different forms to get you tossed out of the vineyard or inheritance that God has given you.

God spoke to individuals throughout the Old Testament, to lead, guide, and protect and create a lineage to bring His Christ forth to die for every person who listened to the snakes and did what they whispered to them. Anyone who wants to be delivered from snakes

in their garden can call the exterminator, the Holy Spirit, and have them removed.

In Exodus He commanded Moses to build the tabernacle with the Ark of the Covenant in it so they could have His Presence as a whole nation with them. Here again, He's saying, Let me go on the trip through life with you, even if it's in a box, I need all you guys and you need Me for sure. He especially needed some for His Christ to be born through.

During the centuries in the life of the Ark, God spoke to different leaders of His people, particularly when they were in battle, which they usually were. He relayed His messages and expressed His desires and judgment through them. Battle time in their life and ours means victory or defeat, depending on our relationship with the Lord. I guess once in a while they would have a period of rest, but even with rest there were temptations. Those old temptations never go away!

Fast forward to the New Testament when John the Baptist was born. His lineage had to be carefully protected and tended by God, and his mother Elizabeth was a daughter of Aaron. She "was barren and they (mom and dad) were well-stricken in years." After John was born he later became a "voice crying in the wilderness" to announce that Christ was coming, another highly protected lineage. Of course that was God's voice or spirit crying through him warning men to repent. Throughout the whole Old Testament God was always speaking, moving, adjusting, pronouncing judgments, crying, burning with anger because of sin, and in essence very emotional over His people and their welfare.

So God was moving through nations, families, individuals, reproductive organs, hearts and minds, to bring forth our Savior. Why? **To bring us back to God's Presence!**

Then, the **very Presence of God Himself came to earth in the form of Jesus**, our Ark of safety, *Emmanuel*, meaning "God With Us." Jesus was now the Ark of God's Presence, but He wasn't on a box that had to be carried around, He was alive and well, and we could approach Him and commune with Him because He was like

us. I think the minute His little feet first touched the ground the curse that was put upon the ground vanished. I know, it was actually when He became a curse upon the tree for us. We still have to work our way out of those curses because of sin by finding out what is hindering us and confessing those hindrances, but we can do it because of His feet and Presence on our earth making it possible for us to be delivered.

But Jesus, in His humanity, could only be in one place at a time, although by faith He sent His healing spirit to heal from distances at times. The very Spirit of Christ came into us when we accepted Him as our Savior—a separate individual box, better than gold, for each of us. We didn't have to always follow a group or individual around to have access to His Presence: He now was a servant to our faith and life and followed us around everywhere we went.

Then Jesus promised His disciples (and everyone) that His Presence was leaving the earth and He was going to send His Spirit. He said you're going to receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and you'll be My witnesses. In other words My Presence is going to come into you as a Spirit, it will be holy, it will have power, and it will have a voice crying in you to witness, to be holy, to be gifted, and allow the Trinity in us to be His Presence throughout the earth, not to mention our neighborhood.

So He ordained the Day of Pentecost and told the apostles and everyone where to meet, and then left for heaven. Those who wanted His Presence in a new way were there; many more had been invited but didn't show up for the Spirit-giving event. That wasn't the best one to miss. Why didn't many of the people come who knew about it? It had to be unbelief, cares of this life, disinterest in spiritual things, or as people say, I forgot to mark it on my calendar! Or the sales going on in the marketplace coincided and were too good to pass up, after all, God gives us bargains.

From the beginning of time God has wanted to communicate with His people as much as we could stand it and want it, and He's used different methods and people that we would hear and obey. He couldn't approach us directly as His Presence would overwhelm

us because of our sin and His holiness. In fact, it can get worse than that, at times His people were so naughty that He said He was going to give His strength over to their enemies. Think of that, He is not only not going to deliver you, but the strength and power He wanted to use on your behalf was going to be given to your enemies to defeat you. God has a power He wants to use *for* you that is peculiar to your situation and tailor-made just for you. Don't ignore it or waste it.

You can follow the Presence of God from the moment He created Adam and Eve to walk in fellowship with Him down through the years to yourself—His chosen dwelling place.

Battles won or lost, kingdoms raised up or torn down, your baby getting healed, the curses of suffering or the blessings, are all dependent on His Presence and the amount of His Presence we have allowed in our hearts, because “Keep and guard your heart with all vigilance and above all that you guard, for out of it flow the springs of life” (Prov. 4:23).

God Is There, Are You There?

These victories are not only dependent on His Presence, but *your* presence, and how much you offer Him of yourself, how many times you enter into the Most Holy Place to fellowship with Him. Recently I was seeking God about writing this book and had a lot of facts but couldn't put it together, and as you may know, it's hard to write a book when you're at a loss for words. I thought, I need some serious help here.

I was reading in Isaiah 63:9 where it speaks of the “Angel of His Presence,” and thought that's the answer, I'll just ask for this Angel and he'll kind of write the book instead of all the hard thinking I'm going through. Jack, the husband, and I asked God about it, and He spoke to us through tongues and interpretation on June 23, 2006:

“And the Lord says to you that the Word is there for your blessing, and those things that you see in the Word you may pray, and you may say that because of that which you see in the

Word I do this or I do that. And the Lord will honor this. But the presence of God is **always up to you**, and the presence of God is with you, but to enjoy and to feel that nearness you **need to be sure that you are there.**”

Very well said. We’re always looking for God’s Presence, but He said I’m always there, how about you showing up? The Lord does have a way of saying things. I’m straining to get His Presence and want His Angel to help write this book, I can ask because it’s in the Word, so of course God is there and will be there, but I need to be sure I’m there. Am I really there in my spirit and soul wanting His Presence or do I just want some easy help? How earnest are we to have Him in everything we do and say? That would be a good question at the end of a test.

God wanted to do things for Moses without Him being there, and we want God to do things for us without us really being “there.” The path to God is simple, accept Him as your Savior; the road to being close to Him is filled with rocks (& rock music), snakes, golden calves, determination with no commitment, and the ever-present cares of this life. God presents life with Him as being easy, but all the things we allow in us and around us make it pretty oppressive, if not deadly, at times.

So He leads us through all the Wilderness of Sin, the world, the flesh, and the devil, using every means He can to let us know He’s there and He cares. His Presence has never stopped flowing towards us and He has never stopped inviting us to travel with Him through our short life here, which means more to Him than us. And then He gives us supernatural experiences, gifts, visions and dreams, which are tokens of His Presence with us, and the wonderful “I’ll write My law in your heart and mind, and you’ll all know Me from the least to the greatest” (Heb. 8:10).

The gifts of the Spirit, many times shunned in the church, are our road map to a successful life. Hello, church, we need the gifts, every one of them talked about in Romans and Corinthians, and elsewhere, and Christians need to be taught how to operate them.

The feeling in some churches is we got plenty going on, ignore the gifts and maybe they'll go away (true), they're too much bother. So now we have people coming to the altar for the 20th time for the same thing while loud music is playing, you can't hear what they're trying to tell you much less what I'm trying to tell them, and they don't get personally delivered from their physical and emotional ailments. They then give up, thinking God doesn't want them healed and maybe leave the church that should be delivering them. Now that's a bother!

So His Presence from the Garden of Eden down through the centuries, and finally into our very own spirits that He created in the first place to house His Spirit came into reality for us through Christ. So our spirit is the Ark of the Covenant that we carry around with us. You won't forget the previous experiences people had when they didn't handle His Presence in the proper way, will you?

After our life is through here, He invites us, or takes us, into His Eternal Presence in heaven. That's quite a journey and pathway, and it takes a certain focus and single-mindedness to determine how far you get into the Most Holy Place.

“Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left; remove thy foot from evil” (Proverbs. 4:25-27).



CHAPTER 6

God Has Always Wanted to Be WITH His People

God has always wanted to be with His people, whether one man, Adam, in the Garden; a banished couple that He loved, one made from the other one, Adam and Eve, or Noah left on the earth to practically single-handedly build a never before thought of Ark in the face of mockery and laughter. To Abraham, called out of his homestead to a place he had never heard of, and without a map; and you know the stories of Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Joshua, Samson, and David. We can't forget the women: Esther, Deborah, Ruth, and Mary the mother of His Presence.

One person can be dangerous to society if they're on the wrong side of the law, and one person that God is *with* can be instrumental in shaping history for good, and God *with* you can cause many people to be delivered.

In the New Testament Jesus called 12 disciples to spread the works of His Presence among His people. Paul, the writer of most of the New Testament, was called alone; John the Revelator was by himself and **in the Spirit on the Lord's day**, and saw great revelations of God.

The Lord is so powerful, look what He did when He was "just"

with people. I took a little travel through the Old Testament of some of the experiences of those who had God with them. Remember, these were just little guys like we are, but they had a big God with them. Meditate on the great things that happened because of the Presence through just one man who had faith in God. Yes, God can move through *You!*

Lists aren't scintillating to read, but when the Word is laid out in front of you with the facts, it helps your faith. We need to realize how God acted when He was "just" *with* one person under the Old Covenant. If you want, skip ahead a few pages to the *Chocolate Cake Principle* in chapter 7.

God *With* His People—The Effects On Them and Their Nation

"God is *with* thee in all that thou doest." (Gen. 21:22)

Abimelech and Phichol, the chief captain of his host, to
Abraham (Gen. 21:22)

"Sojourn in this land, and I will be *with* thee and bless thee."

God to *Isaac* (Gen. 26:3)

"We saw certainly that the Lord is *with* thee."

Abimelech to *Isaac* (Gen. 26:28)

"Behold, I am *with* thee and will keep thee in all places, and I will bring you again into this land, for I will not leave thee."

God to *Jacob* (Gen. 28:15, 20)

"Return to the land of thy fathers and to thy kindred, and I will be *with* thee."

God to *Jacob* (Gen. 31:3)

"God was *with* me in the way which I went."

Jacob to his household (Gen. 35:5)

"I will go down *with* thee, I will surely bring thee up again."

God to *Jacob* re going to Egypt
and returning (Gen. 46:2-4)

“And the Lord was *with Joseph* and he was a prosperous man.”

“And the Lord was *with Joseph* and shewed him mercy and gave him favor.” (Gen. 39:2, 21)

“And the patriarchs sold *Joseph* into Egypt: but God was *with* him and delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh.” (Acts 7:9)

“Certainly I will be *with* thee.”

God to *Moses* (Ex. 3:12)

“God said, My Presence shall go *with* thee, and I will give you rest.”

God to *Moses* (Ex. 33:14)

“Are not these evils come upon us because our God is *not* among us?” (Deut. 31:17)

“God gave Joshua a charge, be strong and of a good courage, bring children into the land, and I will be *with* thee.”

God to *Joshua* (Deut. 31:23)

“There shall not any man be able to stand before thee. As I was *with* Moses so I will be *with* thee. I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.”

God to *Joshua* (Joshua 1:5, 9)

“This day will I begin to *magnify* thee in the sight of all Israel that they may know as I was *with* Moses, so I will be *with* thee.”

Lord to *Joshua* (Joshua 3:7)

“Surely I will be *with* thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites.”

God to *Gideon* (Judges 6:16)

“Do right, keep My commandments, that I will be *with* thee.”

God to *Solomon* (1 Ki. 11:38)

“Be strong and of good courage. Fear not, the Lord God, even my God, will be *with* thee. He will not fail or forsake thee.”

David to *Solomon* (1 Chr. 28:20)

“Solomon was strengthened in his kingdom, and the Lord his God was *with* him, and magnified him exceedingly.” (2 Chron. 1:1)

Asa: “The people came to him in abundance when they saw the Lord his God was *with* him.” (2 Chr. 15:9)

“Hezekiah clave to the Lord, and did His commandments, and the Lord was *with* him; and he prospered wherever He went forth.” (2 Ki. 18:7)

“Be not afraid of their faces: for I am *with* thee to deliver thee. They shall not prevail against thee, for I am *with* thee to deliver thee.”

Lord to *Jeremiah* (Jeremiah 1:8, 19)

“But the Lord is *with* me as a mighty terrible one.” (Jer. 20:11)

“And Samuel grew, and the Lord was *with* him, and did let none of His words fall to the ground.” (1 Sam. 3:19)

“And David went on and grew great, and the Lord of Hosts was *with* him.” (2 Sam. 5:10)

“And Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was *with* him and departed from Saul.” (1 Sam. 18:12)

“Be strong and of good courage. Fear not, the Lord God, even my God, will be *with* thee. He will not fail or forsake thee.”

David to *Solomon* (2 Sam. 7:3,9)

“Go, do all that is in thine heart for the Lord is *with* thee.”

“I was *with* thee whithersoever thou wentest, and have cut off all thine enemies and have made thee a great name.”

Nathan to *David* (2 Sam. 7:3, 9)

“I will fear no evil, for thou art *with* me.” (Psalm 23:4).

“We know that you are a Teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be *with* him.”

Nicodemus to Jesus (John 3:2)

“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was *with* him.” (Acts 10:38)

It's obvious in glancing over this list that evil will try to befall men and cause death and destruction, but when God was on the scene with a person, great things happened, prosperity, healing, deliverance from enemies, and people coming to them because they knew that God was *with* them. That's how they should see us.

And like I say in my writings, if what you read in the Word is not happening to you, be diligent to check out the reason why God's Word is void in that area(s) of your life. It's essential that you look inside yourself, seek God, repent and turn from the bindings, whether caused by yourself, your enemies, your inheritance, or the devil, or God just letting you go your own way because of not hearing His voice (lots of options there!).



CHAPTER 7

The Chocolate Cake Principle

Great Fellowship In Resisting!

We're good at saying and singing that we want "more of Jesus." The hard part of that is then there has to be less of us. We should be singing about that too. With that old song, "More, More about Jesus," I should also sing, "Less, Less about Nancy, Less, Less about Nancy...."

Fellowship with God is not separate from obedience. You can't disobey God by speaking or doing what you want, and then deceive yourself that you're then going to have close fellowship with Him. But when you resist every wrong word or wrong action, in that very moment you are fellowshiping with God. When you resist sin or weaknesses, you are having fellowship with God because He is in that resisting and fellowshiping with your resistance. **There is great fellowship in resisting.**

It may not *feel* like fellowshiping—it may feel like the strain of self-denial—but self-denial is fellowshiping with God, and in that instant of a right choice there is fellowship between you. Being in a battle and leaning on God in that time of resistance, and loving Him more than what you want to do or have or eat (sorry I threw that in there) is communing with Him.

When my words are idle or false, is He with Me, or is He afar off?

The Lord told us one time that when there is strife He leaves. He can't stick around. So if I'm arguing with someone can I say God is with me, or has He withdrawn Himself afar off until I repent and turn? If His Presence stays and we continue on in sin, that sin might burn us alive. We deceive ourselves into thinking He will fellowship sin because we're so good in other ways. We forget that our God is not only nice and longsuffering, but He is also a consuming fire.

One of the gravest (good word!) errors we can make is to think God is like us and we treat Him accordingly and mess around with our eternal life like it was a toy. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." That's a big stretch so we need to find out what He's thinking, and the only way to do that is by reading His Word which are His Thoughts and His Ways, and relying on His Presence to instruct us through His Spirit.

We might be able to manipulate others to think the way we do in situations, but God can never be persuaded to think like we do, and we can't cajole Him by our charm and good works, much less good looks. Like Moses, you have to climb the mountain to where He is, and climbing takes some effort and supplies, especially the supply of the Holy Spirit.

Give Us This Day Our Daily Cake

To speak on a really lower level, if I eat three pieces of chocolate cake, is He with me, or did He have to leave for a while because He's not a glutton? Can He join me in this and stand by approvingly, or did He have to withdraw? If He doesn't approve, in fact, it would be against His Word if I've learned that too many sweets are detrimental to my health, do I have His Presence? Can I turn around after devouring that good yummy stuff and make supplication if an emergency comes up? Yes, but maybe after just walking in the flesh, the supply of the Spirit may be hindered.

Perry Stone of *Voice of Evangelism* tells the true story of a woman

who wanted this preacher to please come and cast demons out of her son who continually stayed in his room listening to rock music and acted strangely. The preacher went, knocked on the door, told the boy he had come to cast the demons out of him. One demon said, “You can’t, you’re too full.” So the preacher went home, fasted for three days, came back, and cast the demons out of the boy.

This chocolate cake principle may sound like I need to go to *Weight Watchers*, but I’ve always been slim, some more, some less, but you can be slim and still have a love of sweets. In fact, being slim can be deceptive because it *feels* like you’re getting by with it, but you’re not. The blessing I’ve always had of eating whatever I want and not gaining weight can be abused and I can take advantage of that blessing from God. So, how much do I want to please God to give up some daily comforts, whether food or other things that would draw me away or distract me from His Presence? Even skinny people should nudge away the fudge.

We may rationalize it away, it’s o.k. this time, I haven’t had any sweets for three hours, and you hardly ever get cake this good, and I’ve had a hard day, and it was on sale, and everybody else eats more sweets than I do. That frosting is so good I think it’s spiritual, an angel actually brought it to me as a huge blessing just when I needed it and I’m sure this cake is my present-day manna with real sugar and real white flour instead of the old-fashioned wafers with honey. Can you imagine the kids of America eating wafers and honey every day for a while? The collective murmuring would rattle the trees in every state, and God would finally rain down chocolate cake instead of quail until they all gagged.

There are many Spirits of Gluttony, and even Spirits of Fat, Spirits of Excess, and Spirits of Nervous Eating, to name a few, that make it harder to lose weight (that’s where you need deliverance information). And of course we can’t blame those irritating spirits for our lack of self-control, but they do interfere and come in where they’ve been passed down in families, or came in at our invitation when we continued to overeat. But that’s another subject and another book.

We can apply the chocolate cake principle to other pastimes: gossip, dishonesty, procrastination or downright laziness, pride and the rest of the flesh, I make God sick, list. Stop and think if you're speaking against someone: Is God right here? Did I force Him to remain at a distance until I repent? We have to get so hungry for God that the thought of Him leaving us even for a few minutes makes us feel faint. I think that's why it says to "keep God in all our thoughts."

Oh, but He will never leave me or forsake me. That's true, but many are sick, dying, unsuccessful, and jerks, yet He's with them. But is the person and His God close, are they communicating, are they doing the works of God? I'm sure God is communicating with them, but the problem is they can't hear. So how close are we to God in our everyday situations, and how do we get His power working in us? You better find that out for your own life, and much of it depends on desire and hunger (for God, not the cake).

There are mounds of idolatry of food cruising around everywhere, and a curse of overeating. Remember, this is just the *Chocolate Cake Principle*—but do we accept these weaknesses that don't seem like outright sin, after all you can't compare eating chocolate cake to adultery. Can you? Whatever causes you to lose the Presence of God is a problem. In our daily life, how many times are we saying to God, "go" or "stay" by our actions, words, and pardon the word, eating.

You may be thinking, well I'm overweight and I hear from God. Well of course God speaks to overweight people, and probably tried to warn Eglon (look it up), but we all need to fine-tune our relationship with Him so we can help people because our relationship with God is close. If we push Him away, we have to take time to draw Him back, and someone may need us to be at our spiritual best to help them in that gap.

So, do my actions and words draw Him or repel Him? Am I a good companion for Him to want to spend *real* time with? God created my mind. What do I allow my mind to think of? God made my eyes. What do I allow them to look at? Is He so important to me

that I'll earnestly seek help to get delivered from the things that keep me below the mountain dancing around my golden calves and maybe deceived into thinking I'm looking and doing good, after all, my friends all think I'm cool and my parents think I can do no wrong.

Paul said, all things are lawful for me, but not all things are expedient (necessary or advantageous). Advantageous to what? To God and I becoming one so I can finish the call on my life. Yeah, I can do a lot of things and not lose my salvation, but many of the things I could do are not necessary, in fact they waste the precious brief time I have on earth. You might say, do my choices draw His Presence? "Whether you **eat**, or drink, or whatever you do, **do all to the glory of God**" (1 Cor. 10:31).

God has given us His all by giving us His constant Presence. The High Priest could only go in the Most Holy Place once a year to "see" God, and if he wasn't ready for that brief Presence, his family got the news that dad, the High Priest, had to be dragged out this morning, and they probably wondered the rest of their lives what he did wrong, or what his sin was that the bells on his garment stopped ringing. Nowadays the family would sue for his death and say it was someone else's fault or sue the family of Moses because Moses built the tabernacle that caused the problem. And if possible, sue God with a wrongful death suit, for being so holy that it caused a death in their family.

God Will Build On The Foundations He's Given You!!

God's Presence is always available, so if I'm doing my housework, and God has ordained housework (yes, you younger generation who hate housework), God is with me, in me, around me as much as when I pray or read my Bible because I'm obeying Him in this. In fact it's not always what you do or eat, but what you don't do or eat that repels Him. Hating housework (a good natural example) is not pleasing to God because we can help our families so much by at least learning and improving with it rather than denying it.

You're always going to be living in a home, and unless you can afford a housekeeper and a cook, fellowship with God by learning to love it because yes, He is in housework just like He was in the garden that He gave Adam & Eve to tend. If you think you're too good to do housework, then have prayer for pride and haughtiness and self-centeredness. Keeping our homes is as important, more so, to our families as streaking our hair and keeping up with that world of beauty that is out there. Well I'd rather get a pedicure than make a casserole, oh, we're getting so sidetracked here.

No, you don't have to be Cinderella scrubbing floors in soot-torn clothes, but if God has given you a home, give it a shot to build on that foundation because it's part of the life He's given you for now, even if you're working outside your God-given home. If it's house-building time, kid-building time, husband-building time, or working out time too, you may say, I can't do all that. If you have all those foundations under you, you can learn to do your best and improve it all, and not ignore that which doesn't interest you.

After the kids are older you can pitch a tent somewhere, sit cross legged and chant if you want, but for now it's foundation building time.

To have the Presence of God we have to build upon the foundations *He* has put in our life, and what our life is *now*. You grow where you're planted. "A wise woman builds her house, but a foolish woman tears it down" by not paying enough attention to it or not appreciating it. If we have kids we need to pay attention. We can't go running off paying attention to everything but what God has given us to pay attention to. If we have a husband or wife, we need to help them in their job(s) because two of you have the same foundation and if you're both building on it, it gets more solid. That's why God says for a man or woman to leave their household and parents and cling to their mate, otherwise you're trying to build on two separate foundations, your past life with your family (or even other activities) and your new life with your mate.

But it's the same in business or other situations where you have a daily life, if you're doing it to His glory and for His kingdom with

that attitude of heart, it's not a waste of time, He's *with* you. Don't waver around trying to serve two masters, your own desires, and the desires that God has for you to accomplish for those around you.

If He is with you, it means He's agreeing with you, what you're doing, and only victory and good things can happen, from a new vacuum cleaner, or a revelation from God while you're doing housework, to a revelation from God while reading your Bible. There's great power in the agreement of two, witnessed in the Old Testament and the New, so if you and God are agreeing at the same time about the same thing, you got it going on.

During a deliverance meeting with someone I had been thinking about this subject, and while we were praying for this person—and getting a person delivered can be considered work—I was conscious that of course God was with me, and I had His agreement because He's called me to a deliverance ministry. That sounds simple, but when you consciously think, He's in this, He's in what I'm doing, I don't have to see a cloud right now, this is it, He and I are tight, I'm working and He's working for the same outcome. If you're aware of God in a situation He's aware of you.

Instant Choices Make For Close Or Distant Fellowship

If we say we don't have time enough for God, then that means we have no choice but to leave the presence of other things and take up the Presence of God in that time frame. We have to back up from the Presence of that hobby, activity, surfing the web, gourmet cooking, and turn around into the Presence of God who is waiting for our attention.

So to gain more of His Presence (there again, how much do we want it!) we have to withdraw from other things, and they may be fun, interesting, stimulating, and certainly not sin, but add all these up at different times compared to your actual spending time with God and you may be surprised to find how “unspiritual” you really are, no matter how many good works you produce and how popular you are. Nothing you can do replaces time with God in God's

eyes, and if you're not doing this you're not impressing Him with other things. He wants to communicate personally with you and has made Himself available in this time frame of eternity, and once that time is over, it's over. So weigh your life in the light of how much time do you earnestly spend with God?

So, the presence, fellowship, communion with God isn't laying in sackcloth and ashes on our knees half the day (if you do that, more power to you), but it's a natural, daily life of many "instant" fellowships Monday through Sunday, morning, noon, and night. The instant fellowship is saying no to one thing and yes to God. I'm working on this principle, and trying to improve my communion with God. When my mind is wandering, I say, no, I choose you, I choose your thoughts, and deliberately focus on Him. If my husband and I are in the car and could listen to many things, we choose spiritual tapes. In the evening, how about a few minutes of news and then some spiritual DVD's or channels? Sometimes I want to pick up a news or nutrition magazine, and say, No, I choose you God and read a spiritual book. Feed your hunger for Him. I'm not saying live like a monkette, but make more choices *for* Him. There's something about saying, "I choose You Lord in this instant of life" that feels good and makes you more determined to do it more often.

Don't think I'm getting too law-abiding here, of course you can read and do other things, but adjust your choices to lean towards God, and especially if you feel distant from God, start making choices that will draw you into His Presence. I don't think you're going to get out of balance making more choices for God! In these dangerous times we have a small window of opportunity to seek and really find Him!

Essential & Non-Essential

Sometimes I want to take off and run around town (not the block) a little for no particular reason (not a sin, but maybe a waste of time), and then say No, Lord, I'm staying home to write, help me.

It's not a few big choices during the day but maybe hundreds of instant choices. Those right choices will add up at the end of a week, month, year, lifetime, and you'll find that you have absorbed much more of God while His Presence is available to you. Of course I run around town with friends for a while, but it's the *place* we give pieces of our life to, and are we open to letting God choose what we do?

For years my husband and I have made the choice to get up early in the morning and spend time with the Lord before we start our day. We praise the Lord, are quiet before Him for a while to see if there is anything He wants us to know, then pray for the people that have requested prayer, and all the other needs that we all know about, our families, finances, country, nations, President and so forth. I've dragged out of bed more than once as we have very few exceptions for this, but it's important, in fact vital, to both of us, and to those we minister to.

The other morning I didn't set my alarm, and at 5:39 was awakened by a loud knock three definite times on the bedroom door. I was sleeping so sound (you know how you do in the morning when you're supposed to get up), that I had to force myself to arouse. I didn't know what it was but felt it was from God so started speaking in my prayer language, still half-asleep, but got up. We asked the Lord 45 minutes later when we got together for prayer what it was, and the Lord spoke in tongues and interpretation:

“And the Lord says to you, this was your subconscious awakening you. For it is your desire to wake up and spend time with the Lord, and your subconscious was doing this even though your flesh was not.”

God will help you make the right choices, even if you're sound asleep! (Actually, at times that might be better!). I loved that, and I can still hear those knocks. It was the Presence of God knocking on my door saying I know you want to get up and spend time with Me, I'll help out that choice you've made!

Recently a friend of ours who was an extremely busy woman, doing many things, had a dream. In the dream there were many people and many things going on and everyone busy but the dream didn't have any sense to it, and nothing went together. She asked us to interpret the dream, as follows:

“And the Lord says to this dreamer that the Lord shows her much disorder that is in her dream is also in her life. And she needs to reach out and ask the Lord for an order, that she would find out what is non-essential and that which is essential, and then she would do only that which is essential.

For life can be passed through with many things that are done and accomplished that have no bearing or meaning on anything but your own desires.

And so the Lord says to you, examine your life and find out from the Lord that which is needful and that which is beneficial, not only to you, but to others, and do that, and allow some of these other things that are non-essential to slip by.”

I include this dream because it's good advice for me and maybe you. We always learn lessons from what the Lord is teaching others so I asked the Lord to forgive me for doing and accomplishing things that have no bearing or meaning except for my own desires.

But as they say, the best is yet to come, in fact the best is here right now, so read the next chapter. And don't forget the chocolate cake principle!!

Note: One person told me they didn't think the connection between chocolate cake and the presence of God was clear enough. So I read chapter 7 over, and in my wisdom didn't think it was too obscure if you consider it's a principle, not a black and white (my favorite cake) knowledge.



CHAPTER 8

God Has Always Wanted to Be IN His People

When I felt to write a book on His Presence, all kinds of doubts came with the unction. I thought, I'm so presumptuous, what right do I have to write about such a sacred topic, the very Presence of God? What could I teach people who were far closer than me to the Lord? Christians are sometimes inclined to think everyone is more spiritual than they are, and yet we all have our own unique giftings to help even the most super-spiritual. We all need each other. It's a big temptation to compare yourself with others, and you either come up short and fall back, or you come up better and get prideful.

When we asked the Lord about this book before I started (because I didn't know how to start!), the Lord said: "And the Lord has much in mind concerning this, and you need to spend time with the Lord, just you and the Lord in fellowship and you will know for the Lord will reveal. Do not give up, and take heart that the Lord is leading." So always trudge on (with joy!) if you think God is leading you to do something, and have faith that His anointing will teach you all things.

I have a friend, let's call her Dorothy, who for years never knew her exact calling, even though she served in churches and did what she knew to increase her fellowship with God. She was always

saying, I just feel like there's something else, I don't have a definite calling, kind of like a lamentation. I kept telling her that just the way she was with her cheerfulness and disposition was a calling, partly meaning it and partly to make her feel better.

Recently when we were asking about this, the Lord spoke to her through the gifts of tongues and interpretation in those praying for her. The interpreter didn't have a clue that anything had ever been said to her that just her personality was part of her calling. But the Lord told her to "be content where she was and that she was called to bear perfect fruit and she had been bearing fruit, and so the Lord says to her, good and well done."

The interpreter didn't know that I had been telling Dorothy this, that her calling was to just be herself. So Dorothy wasn't just called to bear fruit, as all of us are, but her *calling* was to bear fruit. That was a specifically named calling to concentrate on without the doubt hanging over her that she wasn't *doing* anything for the Lord.

So it isn't always your work and gifts, but the fruit that is so attractive (ask Eve!). I told Dorothy when people ask what her calling is to say (with authority), I'm called to be a fruit-bearer, and to always bear fruit in all manner of season, day and night. There's something about knowing that definitely that will give her a power to bear even more fruit. We saw that fruit-bearing in her, but now she accepts that as her full-time calling and her work for the Lord.

We all have bouts of doubt and insecurity, and I had to get over my insecurity or unsureness about writing on the Presence of God. My security came to write this as I read the Word:

"In Whom (Christ Jesus our Lord), because of our faith in Him, we dare to have the boldness [courage and confidence] of free access [an unreserved approach to God with freedom and without fear]" (Eph. 3:12).

Think about the following verses:

"That you may really come to know [practically, through experience for yourselves] the love of Christ which far

surpasses mere knowledge [without experience]: that you may be filled [through all your being] unto all the fullness of God [may have the richest measure of the divine Presence, and become a body wholly filled and flooded with God Himself]!

“Now to Him Who, by the [action of His] **power that is at work within us**, is able to [carry out His purpose and] do super-abundantly far over and above all that we [dare] ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams]” (Eph. 3:19-20).

There is a power at work in us to experience the Presence of God, know His voice, do His works, bear His fruit, deliver ourselves and those around us. If this is not happening God may be in us, but we’re not allowing Him free access to our lives, to correct and discipline us, to point out sin, to give us the answers we need.

We are supposed to be experiencing everything in the Bible God has promised us. Yes, it may take a while, even a lifetime, but we should always be making progress, always be stronger, and seeing answers to prayers. Every morning, when my husband and I meet before our work day starts, we water the seeds of every prayer that we have made, until we see the full fruition of them.

So God is not just around you, over you, with you, but now, because of Christ and the New Covenant, He is **in** you, not just sitting there idle because we don’t use Him, but using the “power that is at work **within** us.”

If we are powerless, then sin, ignorance, self-deception, carelessness, or just not pressing in, is at work in, around, or over us. To say, well I just don’t feel God, He seems far away, is to doubt practically the whole Bible. He wants us, He desires us. Find out why you’re not experiencing God in you. Don’t be deceived, find out, and don’t be satisfied with a so-so Christian life that is good or fun or social, but only be satisfied with what God is satisfied with: deliverance, freedom, and liberty to the captives. Press in to God, “call upon Him while He is near.” His nearness is the dearest

possession you have.

When the apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, the Holy Spirit said:

“Do you not discern and understand that you [the whole church at Corinth] are God’s temple [His sanctuary], and that God’s Spirit has His permanent dwelling in you [to be at home in you, collectively as a church and also individually]?”

“If anyone does hurt to God’s temple or corrupts it [with false doctrines] or destroys it, God will do hurt to him and bring him to the corruption of death and destroy him. For the temple of God is holy [sacred to Him] and that temple **you** are” (1 Cor. 3:16-17).

I really need to meditate on verses like this, because God’s Presence **within** me is almost incomprehensible, and the more faith I have in this the more exploits would come out of my mind, spirit, and hands. Let’s do it readers! Let’s put aside all the cares, vanities, love of the world, defilements of His temple, and realize who we are, what we are, and Who we have!

The following verses are ones the “old-time” church used to preach constantly. Some of this “tough” preaching has stuck with us for years and I’m glad we heard it. We were a little out of balance and “separated” too much trying to keep ourselves in good holy standing with God. But true holiness keeps itself separated and yet still gets out in the fray to win and help people.

“What agreement [can there be between] a temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God; even as God said, I will dwell *in* and *with* and *among* them and will walk *in* and *with* and *among* them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

“So come out from among [unbelievers] and separate [sever] yourselves from them, says the Lord, and **touch** not any

unclean thing; then I will receive you kindly and treat you with favor” (2 Cor. 6:16-17).

So what were you thinking when you read that? And what were you thinking you were “touching” that would cause an uncleanness to attach itself to you, even in your thought life. As brought out, if anyone even touched the Ark of the Covenant where God dwelled among His people, bad things happened to them, mainly death.

One of our “favorite” and most used prayers at the end of a day, or during the day too, is “Lord, cleanse me, or us.” We need cleansing from where we’ve been, who we’ve talked to, and the residue of the world. It only takes a few seconds to say and believe, and it will definitely help to keep you clean. This doesn’t mean if you go to skid-row, but “things” are everywhere, the angelic looking people you may be talking to can be involved in heavy pornography, the sweet grey-haired lady may be an alcoholic. You’re in the world and the residue from everyone is everywhere, and it’s easy to say Lord cleanse me. It’s not done in suspicion and looking at everybody that way, you’re not even thinking that way but you’re loving people, but I’ve learned the hard way, a simple prayer of “cleanse me” is well, cleansing. We ask the Lord to cleanse our food at every meal, why not ourselves?

It would be awesome to see the clouds, fire, thunderings, and lightnings that the children of Israel saw, and I’m not saying we won’t, but the main presence of God now is not so distracting, but can be a “still, small voice,” like in Isaiah 30:21-22 whispering:

“And though the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide Himself any more, but your eyes will constantly behold your Teacher,

“And your ears will hear a word behind you, saying, This is the way; walk in it, when you turn to the right hand and when you turn to the left.”

Clouds don't talk, thunder doesn't talk, lightning doesn't have a voice, but the Presence of God within us speaks words to us. The Holy Spirit sprang His life of gifts and power in us when we asked for the baptism of the Holy Spirit and He started speaking in a language through us that we had never learned or heard. He is still speaking to our hearts in our prayer language and in our natural language. The main message is the same: Hear and Obey!.

The children of Israel had the outward manifestations of God through miracles and signs of nature, but now the Holy Spirit is our cloud by day and our fire by night. He is the Token of His Presence like the Ark was the token of His Presence. Almost every morning I thank the Holy Spirit for what He is doing in me, leading and guiding me in all truth, and that the Spirit of Truth is giving me wisdom in every situation of life.

“You have said, Seek My face [inquire for and require My presence as your vital need]. My heart says to You, Your face (Your presence), Lord, will I seek, inquire for, and require [of necessity and on the authority of Your Word]” (Ps. 27:8).

So our spirit is now the Ark of the Covenant that God has chosen to dwell in. You can see the necessity of keeping your heart and life in good order like they had to with the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, and even though our New Covenant is a renewed covenant with better promises, our excuses for not living a godly life have no merit because “to whom much is given, much is expected,” and we have been given the highest, the only high honor that exists: **God in us. Christ in us! The Holy Spirit in us!** God has given us His Son, His Word, and His Spirit.

We say we want to please Jesus and we want to walk with Him, and sing His praises; but if that's true to us, we need to act like it's true to us, and that we're always aware that He is in us, and that He died not only to save us from our sins, but so we could walk in His Presence all day long.

Don't fall into a stale relationship with God. The secret place

is secret every time. A certain song or verse will move us and we try to imitate that again, but that secret Presence of God is secret every time. There are fresh moves of God upon us and He wants to do things differently, so He moves the door so that our relationship doesn't deteriorate into ritual. He wants us to pursue Him. He wants to give us a new song. But sometimes people would rather live off the crumbs of the old encounter than trying to make ways for new encounters.

I'm the High Priest of the ark of my spirit, I approach God with the incense of prayer, with the offering of clean hands and a pure heart (after confession!). If we don't start preparing ourselves now to enter into His Presence. eventually His Presence will not be natural and familiar to us and we won't hear His voice in a life and death situation.

When Uzzah touched the Ark (to steady it, a natural thing to do) that touch was his last act on this earth. We should be careful how we approach Him, and treat Him with honor, respect and reverence and do all we can to press into Him for a deep, abiding, everlasting fellowship that spills over to bless everyone around us. He desires it with His whole heart, and so should we, and common sense tells us it's a lot more to our advantage than His!



CHAPTER 9

The Lord's Appearance to Me

As stated previously I was studying about the tabernacle in latter 2000 and early into 2001. I guess drinking it in would be a better word than study. It was so interesting, especially the Ark of the Covenant in the Most Holy Place. I had notes on it I was always giving to people who probably weren't that interested at the time. I was your average Christian, but I did love the Word, and every morning I felt like my life depended on it and that it was totally necessary to spend time with Him. I wasn't doing anything great, spectacular, noteworthy, or supernatural at the time. I was just holding my own, and trying to help others hold their own. We hadn't started our own ministry until a few years later.

But early in 2001, January 14, about 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, I was working in the kitchen before leaving for church at 6:30. No, I was not bowed in deep prayer or praising the Lord, in fact I had the evening news on. I was doing two things I had been doing for many years: cooking, cleaning, and getting ready for church.

As I was facing the sink I became aware of a presence in back and over to the side of me across the kitchen counter by the kitchen table. It was an almost invisible form like a soft cloud in the area around Him, yet around the area also, more of a consciousness

than a strong form. I turned that way and knew it was the Presence of the Lord, and then saw His form, not His face because it was in soft clouds, but His form with soft white around.

He had on a white garment with a light aqua tunic diagonally from shoulder to waist. The tunic was about 9" wide and He seemed of medium build or more. I had the wherewithal to turn off the TV (it was right there on counter, I didn't leave the room!) and walked toward where He was. But for some reason He had moved across the space between the counters and stood over in back of the other counter, our counter being U-shaped.

I said His Name *Jesus*, and when I walked toward Him, I kept saying, *Lord Jesus* and thanked Him for visiting me—I was so glad. I was standing maybe 3-4 feet from Him. He spoke. I didn't hear a voice, I just knew what He was saying. It seemed like I was breathing Him in and the whole atmosphere seemed unreal. I asked Him if there was anything He wanted to say to me. (I later thought maybe I should have waited for Him to take the lead!)

He said, "I'm going to anoint you to live victorious in every area of your life."

Then, "Come up hither. Come up hither. Come up to the mountain to meet with Me."

I waited. Then He said, "That's all you can take for now, I have told you a great thing."

I praised Him and continued working in the kitchen. That's a woman for you, we always have our work to get done.

If I had not been absorbed in the study of the Presence of the Lord, I don't think I would have experienced this appearance. I had the mountain experience of Moses on my mind, and had it in my spirit to always keep climbing toward God in spite of the mountains of affliction (some of my own doing). Even when I fell down to the bottom of the mountain I instinctively knew I had to always get up and climb, by confessing my sin, turning from it, studying the Word, and mostly calling upon Him. I think that's why Jesus said to come up to the mountain to meet with Him, He wants us to be in high places with Him and above all the non-essential activity and pleasure

going on down around the bottom of the mountains.

I didn't feel victorious in every area of my life, that's for sure, but not too long after a prophet-type preacher called me forward at a church meeting, and spoke words to the effect that things I never thought would be overcome in my life would be overcome and things I had wanted accomplished would be done. We soon started our own ministry of deliverance, and God ministered deliverance to us in many ways to be overcomers and to deliver others. So the Lord did anoint Jack and I with gifts of the Spirit to overcome obstacles in our life, and it took the gifts and truth to set us free. I loved those words, "I'm going to anoint you to live victorious in every area of your life." I've thought about them many times since. The anointing does break the yokes of bondage. And I'm still working on the "victorious in every area."

The older I've gotten the richer my fellowship with God, and the quality of that fellowship determines the quality of my (or your) aging, what we become when we age; and my need for Him intensifies as I get older. That fellowship and sensing the nearness of His Presence far exceeds the problems you face, and older age, like any age, has its own set of problems.

Because of the gift of discernment He has allowed me to see many things that are needed for people's deliverance, and even things for our own comfort and edification, but I have never seen His physical presence again. But I encourage you to think and learn about His Presence, and even if He doesn't show up while you're cooking, you will at least draw Him towards you in fresh ways.



CHAPTER 10

Presence Thoughts

What Christ Did For Us

Most Christians are aware that when Christ died the thick curtain that separated the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place in the tabernacle was rent in two. This was to show that there is no “curtain” or obstruction between God and man any more, that we can enter in to the Most Holy Place, come boldly before the throne of grace, talk to Him and personally receive from Him. The freeway is now open, no more roadblocks and detours! This veil was torn from top to bottom, allowing us direct access to God. Thank you Jesus!!!

When Jesus died for us on the cross, Matthew 27:50-51 tells us:

“And Jesus cried again with a loud voice and gave up His spirit.

And at once the curtain of the sanctuary of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; the earth shook, and the rocks were split.”

When Jesus gave up His spirit on the cross, the first thing that happened, “at once,” the veil or curtain that separated the Holy Place and Most Holy Place was torn in two pieces. What was God telling us by this miracle? That every believer now could have **personal access to God’s Presence**. We can walk or run into His throne room

in heavenly places and behold Him by faith, and fellowship with Him and make our petitions to Him. God abolished the barrier.

I wish “**We have access to God through Christ’s Death**” could be written in skywriting above us during the day and with stars at night to remind all of us what this life is all about, and what we should be concerned about.

The other two gospels that relate what happened directly after He died are:

“And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed out His life. And the curtain of the Holy of Holies of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.” (Mk. 15:37-38).

“Darkness enveloped the whole land, and the curtain of the temple was torn in two, and Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and said, Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.” (Lk. 23:44-46).

Only Matthew relates that the “earth shook and the rocks were split.” The other two gospels only relate that the veil of the temple was torn in two. It’s interesting that two of the gospel writers didn’t mention that the earth shook and the rocks were split. I think if I were witnessing that and writing about it I would first mention that I saw the dead come out of their graves and walking around in Jerusalem, as that would impress me the most, and then relay the great miracle of rocks being torn in two, and oh, I also heard that the veil was rent in half. But the Holy Spirit writes first things first, immediately the veil was torn.

But here is our Ark again, still giving us messages on how and when to approach God and how available He is. Hebrews 10:19-20:

“Therefore, brethren, since we have **full freedom and confidence to enter into the Holy of Holies** by the power and virtue in the blood of Jesus,

“By this fresh, new, and living way which He initiated and dedicated and opened for us **through the separating curtain**, that is, **through His flesh.**”

Hebrews 6:18-19 tells us that “we can flee to Him for refuge and find mighty indwelling strength and strong encouragement to grasp and hold fast the hope set before us, and that hope is an anchor to our soul that **reaches farther and enters into the very certainty of the Presence within the veil.**” Meditate on that scripture-lovers.

His Presence is the Breath Of Life

The Presence of the Lord is His Breath, His Life (He is the only source of Life) continuing to breathe upon everything that is still alive on earth and in heaven. The wind blowing is His presence, the life in the air we breath is His Presence. Every bird is receiving breath from God daily. Every animal, every tree, every blade of grass, every cloud overhead, every raindrop, every snowflake, every flower, every time you inhale and exhale it's because of the Presence of God upon this earth and in the atmosphere. “In Him was life and the life was the light of men” (Jn. 1:4).

This same life in the Father was given to His Son who came physically for us, breathing the same words and giving forth the life of the Father, and this Son gives life to His sons and daughters, His inheritance, and even breathed His Holy Spirit into us. This breath produced a supernatural language that we breathed back to Him. In Him is Life. Out of Him is Life.

When we breath Him in through all the different sources He has given us, and we breath out the amount we breath in, everything and everyone around that breath increases in life and the fruit of the Spirit, whether in words, actions, expressions, or attitudes.

His Breath And Presence Is Action & Needs Response

His Presence is a consuming fire, a still small voice, an earthquake, and always has action even if it's to create peace and quiet. God knows better than anyone that "faith without works is dead." There is always a motion, a movement, a desire, to make things better because the Best can only give His Best. He has nothing less to give. "In Him we live and move and have our being." It also says in that section that "we should seek God until we find Him because He's not far from each one of us, and that we are also His offspring. And since we're His offspring let's not think that Deity is like gold or silver or stone, because **now He charges all people everywhere to repent**" (Acts 17:27-30).

You can spread His Presence around, as the action of His Presence will show you who to pray for, you may even see the person in your mind. The Lord went into action when He showed you this need, you should go into action and pray for the person, the person goes into action by being healed or set free, then they go into action to tell others, and word (life) spreads out a little further to drive back the darkness that was covering the situation before the Action. Life begets life.

His Presence always brings good action, even if it's judgment against a person or nation—it is for everyone's good and benefit. Even after His body died and laid in the grave for three days, the eternal life in His soul went into action down in death and hell for us. If we will allow Him more access to our life, the light of that access will be a light to those in our circle. We aren't required to go to the whole world unless He asks us, but we are required to be a light to everyone in our circle.

Draw Out of Him What You Need

His Presence with us today is our inheritance, and we need to have the eyes of our understanding open to the greatness of the privilege we have to experience and fellowship with the God of the Universe.

The richness of our fellowship with Him will follow us into eternity, but for now is being offered for a shadow of time to us, and the shadow of that opportunity is invaluable to the quality of our life now and for eternity.

This inheritance of His Presence now will give us the same things He has, just like you give your kids the same things you have, now, or in your will. He gives us access to whatever and Whoever He is and has: If you are feeling heavy and need joy, right then draw that joy out of His Presence with and in you. You can even say, Lord, joy is my inheritance because it's part of You, so right now I draw it out of You and into Me. Even reach out your hands for it, if it helps.

Lord, I'm nervous and anxious right now, I draw peace out of You, because I know as a Father you want to give it to your offspring, and I'm a child who needs it, not later, but right now. If His children ask for bread, will He give them a stone? If you ask for peace, will He give you stress? Lord, right now I'm sick, I draw healing promises out of You, wholeness is part of My inheritance.

Lord, I want another piece of chocolate cake right now, so I draw temperance out of You, I draw moderation out of You, I draw a desire out of you to me to eat an apple and not the cake right now. (It's a faith walk!)

The most rewarding part of His Presence is hearing His voice, the No. 1 advantage to being close to Him, because in Him dwells every gift and every success. Hear (because you spend time with Him), Obey (because you love Him) = Success. Every time. There is no failure in Him so we can't draw failure out of Him, we can only draw success.

The most devastating part of sin is that it keeps God's Presence away from us, and then we're wandering in the wilderness of that sin, upset at God or others that we're not successful. If that's the case we need to improve our communion with God so we can hear what He wants us to do about it. He's filled with success, wisdom, knowledge, understanding, and love, so we can draw those wells of living waters out of Him.

God Spends His Time With Us! That Should Make Us Bow Our Knees!

Do you ever feel sorry for God? Do you ever think of all He has to see and hear and feel, because He's touched by the feeling of our infirmities? Do you think of the agony and sorrow He has to go through day and night because He has to see every hurt, every rape, every killing and the anguish of the family; He has to listen to every evil, corrupt, cursed word, knowing how it is affecting people. Sometimes I've heard in the spirit the cries of different people asking and wanting help, and the cries of babies, and it's hard to hear. You may think well God is God, He can take it. But He's the Creator of feelings and emotions, and He has taken it upon Himself to choose to see and hear us so He can help us.

Well, why doesn't He do something about my need or my life? He would love to if He's truly and honestly invited, but He doesn't interfere with our decisions. Our free will is very important to Him, and He doesn't go against the wills of His creation. If people hear and obey they're blessed and their children are blessed, if not, the opposite is true.

Many say, well I don't have time for God, or at least much time, I'm so busy, but the reality is, I think there are many more things in my life that are more interesting than God. God has spent His whole life watching you, taking care of you, trying to win you to fellowship with Him so your life and eternal life will be better. He has probably spoken to us thousands of times that we didn't hear, and always has time for us whenever we call upon His Name. Whatever time we give God is the time and attention we'll get back.

We have God's attention for a vapor of time left. Reach out for it. Let God know you want it.



CHAPTER 11

Absorb His Presence By Absorbing His Word

The Word Of The Lord To Us Is:

“Seek the Lord and His strength; yearn for and seek His face and to be **in His Presence continually!**” (1 Chronicles 16:11).

* * *

“All who keep His commandments, who obey His orders and follow His plan, live and continue to live, to stay and abide in Him, and He in them. [They let Christ be a home to them and they are the home of Christ.] And by this we know and understand and have the proof that He really lives and makes His home in us: by the Holy Spirit Whom He has given us” (1 John 3:24).

* * *

“We know [absolutely] that any one born of God does not [deliberately and knowingly] practice committing sin, but the One Who was begotten of God carefully watches over and protects him [**Christ’s divine Presence within him** preserves him against the evil], and the wicked one does not lay hold on him or touch him” (1 John 5:18).

* * *

“But what we are setting forth is a wisdom of God once hidden [from the human understanding] and now revealed to us by God—that wisdom which God devised and decreed before the ages for our glorification to **lift us into the glory of His Presence**” (1 Corinthians 2:7).

* * *

“The secret of the sweet satisfying companionship of the Lord have they who fear, revere and worship Him, and He will show them His covenant and reveal to them its deep inner meaning” (Psalm 25:14).

* * *

“The distance around the city shall be 18,000 measures; and the name of the city from that day and ever after shall be, **The Lord is There**,” Hebrew, *Jehovah-shammah*, (Ezekiel 48:35).

* * *

“You have made known to me the ways of life; You will enrapture me [diffusing my soul with joy] with and in **Your Presence**” (Acts 2:28).

* * *

“The Lord waits and longs to be gracious to you; and therefore He lifts Himself up, that He may have mercy on you and show loving kindness to you. For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed are all those who earnestly wait for Him, who expect and look and long for Him [for His victory, His favor, His love, His peace, His joy, and His **matchless, unbroken companionship**]!” (Isaiah 30:18).

* * *

“In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the **Angel of His Presence** saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He lifted them up and carried them all the days of old” (Isaiah 63:9).

* * *

“So repent, turn around and return to God, that your sins may be erased, that times of refreshing (of recovering from the effects of heat, of reviving with fresh air) may come **from the Presence of the Lord**” (Acts 3:19).

* * *

“Our forefathers were all under and protected by the cloud in which **God’s Presence went before them**, and every one of them passed safely through the Red Sea” (1 Corinthians 10:1).

* * *

“I count everything as loss compared to the possession of the priceless privilege (the surpassing worth, and supreme advantage) of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord and of progressively becoming more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him [of perceiving and recognizing and understanding Him more fully and clearly]. For my determined purpose is that I may know Him [that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and understanding the wonders of His Person more strongly and more clearly], and that I may in that same way come to know the power outflowing from His resurrection, and that I may so share His sufferings as to be continually transformed [in spirit into His likeness even] to His death” (Philippians 3:8,10).

* * *

“For the perverse are an abomination to the Lord; but **His confidential communion and secret counsel** are with the righteous” (Proverbs 3:32).

* * *

“Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people restored? Because Zion no longer **enjoyed the Presence of the Great Physician!**” (Jeremiah 8:22).

* * *

“And this includes you, called of Jesus Christ and **invited to belong to Him**” (Romans 1:6).

* * *

“And because He loved your fathers, He chose their descendants after them, and brought you out from Egypt with **His own Presence**, by His mighty power” (Deuteronomy 4:37).

* * *

“Honor and majesty are found in **His Presence**” (1 Chronicles 16:27).

* * *

“You will show me the path of life: **in Your Presence is fullness of joy**: at Your right hand there are pleasures forevermore” (Psalm 16:11).

* * *

Other verses speak of “the heavens poured down rain at the **Presence of God**; Sinai quaked at the **Presence of God**; the mountains flow down at **Thy Presence**; will you not tremble at **My Presence**?”

The greatest punishment ever, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9:

“Then the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in a flame of fire.

“To deal out retribution upon those who do not know or perceive or become acquainted with God, and upon those **who ignore and refuse to obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

“**Such people will pay the penalty and suffer the punishment of everlasting ruin and eternal banishment** from the **Presence of the Lord** and from the glory of His power.”



CHAPTER 12

Absorb His Presence By Absorbing His Words Through His Gifts

These are words the Lord has spoken to us through the gifts of tongues and interpretation and the gift of exhortation, from a proven source, to our church.

(We specifically asked for more of God's Presence and read about Moses asking for God's Presence in Exodus 33): "And the Lord says to you, even as my servant Moses asked of Me, you need to ask of Me, which you have done, but he kept his heart and mind right and fixed on Me. And that which you need to do is to keep your heart and mind fixed on Me so that you are filled with Me, and that your thoughts are always on Me.

"For the Lord says that you need to be sure that every moment that you're awake you feel My Presence, and the way that you feel My Presence is that you continue to keep your heart and mind fixed upon Me and the way of the Lord. And if you will do this, you will find that My Presence permeates you." (5-22-06)

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“And the Lord says as you continue to walk in that which the Lord has called you to walk in, the glory of the Lord shall shine upon you, and that glory of the Lord shall shine forth from you as you continue to walk in the ways of the Lord. But the Lord says further to you that you need to always keep your hearts and minds fixed and stayed on the Lord, and you need to consider all that you do and all that you say, and what effect it will have on keeping your heart and mind fixed and stayed on the Lord.” (9-13-02)

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(While waiting in silence upon the Lord): “And the Lord says that even as you wait upon the Lord you realize there are things and darkneses and evils that would try to distract you from waiting upon the Lord. To wait upon the Lord, to be benefited by the waiting, you need to remain focused on the Lord and you need to keep all of your thoughts on the Father. The cares of this life and the distractions of this life try to keep you from being focused and from thinking upon the ways of the Lord.

“But the Lord says to you that to learn to wait upon the Lord there are great blessings and there are treasures forevermore as you learn to wait upon the Lord and to allow the Lord your God to minister to you in truth, and to show you the truths that you need. For the Lord knows your needs before you, and I am a God that fills the needs of My people. You need to show faith and you need to show the Presence of the Lord, for the Presence of the Lord drives away all fears and all anxieties.” (3-29-03)

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“And the Lord says to you that the Lord rejoices in your desire to know the Lord and that you seek the Lord and have the desire to know more fully the Lord in all of His ways. In that Day you shall

see that glory of the Lord, and you will realize that the glory of the Lord illuminates light. And you shall see the brightness of the Lord your God in all His glory, and the Lord desires that you see this and that you be prepared to see this.

“And as you go on with the Lord, the Lord shall open to you the light of the glory of God in this world, and you shall see to some degree the glory of the Lord, and you will come to that recognition that God fills this whole universe, and that you cannot go here nor there without God being there.

“The Presence of the Lord is everywhere, and the Presence of the Lord is everywhere for the enjoyment of His people and that they may be strengthened in the way of the Lord. There is much to learn about the glory of God and the Presence of God, but as you continue to seek and as you continue to desire to draw closer to the Lord, the Lord shall reveal Himself more to you as you go on in the way of the Lord. And the Lord speaks strength to you to go on, and the Lord says to remember that it will be worth it all.” (2-08-03)

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“And the Father says to you that it is the desire of the Father to take you on and to reveal Himself more to you and to show you part of the glory of God. But you must yield in every way. You must not hold on to the world or hold on to the cares of this life. For the Lord wants you to know the Lord in a deeper way, but you need to yield yourselves and you need to yield yourselves completely to the Lord your God.

“For it is the desire of the Lord to lead and direct and show you the way, and if you will walk in that way you shall know the Lord deeper and you shall know the love of God more intimately in your hearts and in your lives.

“For the Father desires to have those that seek Him to know Him and to know the ways of the Lord in every aspect of their life. You must yield yourself to the Father in every way, and the Lord shall show you the glory of the Lord. Few people see the glory of the Lord in their lives in a real way because they fail to yield themselves to the Lord.” (5-12-02)

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“And the Lord says to you that the preparation of the Lord has begun upon you. If you hold fast and sure to the things of the Lord you shall see this preparation multiply in your lives. The Lord prepares you to do the things of the Lord, but you must also prepare your hearts for the Lord does not force, but the Lord uses vessels who are willing, who come to Him in obedience desiring to please the Father.

“And if you will continue to yield yourselves and continue to seek the face of the Lord, the Lord shall reward you with His Presence in your lives. And you shall go forth and the Name of the Lord shall be glorified as you hold up the banner of holiness unto the Lord.

“For the Lord says you need to keep your hearts and minds fixed on the goodness of God, for the goodness of God will take you through and the goodness of God will be your strength and the goodness of God will be your protection, and as you look upon the Lord you will have safety for the Lord is good. Look to the glory of the Lord for the glory of the Lord will keep you and the glory of the Lord will take you from place to place and you need to look upon the glory.” (3-09-02)

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(While being quiet before the Lord): “And the Lord shows you how hard it is sometimes and the difficulty that you face when

you seek the Lord. The Lord wants to remain in your hearts and minds, but the cares of this life and the different things that you allow your heart to become attached to come in and crowd out your determination to walk in the way of the Lord.

“But if you will continue on in the way of the Lord the Lord shall be your help and the Lord shall be your strength, and you shall see that the help and the strength of the Lord is all you need. If you will do this you shall be flooded with the goodness and the Presence of God and all darkness and all cares and distractions of this life will be set aside and you will feel and you will know the Presence of the Lord, and you shall know that the hand of the Lord rests upon you and the hand of the Lord draws you to the Father.

“For you shall see the Presence of the Lord in your heart and in your mind as you continue to seek the face of the Lord and all these cares and all of these distractions will not be allowed to take you from the Presence of the Lord.” (5-26-02)

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(After praising the Lord): “And the Lord says you do well to praise the Lord, for as you praise the Lord the Presence of the Lord comes upon you. In the Presence of the Lord there is great victory and you shall know the victory because of the Presence of God.” (3-19-03)

* * *

“And the Lord says to you, My little children, that as you desire to know the Lord and the truth of the Lord you can see that truth comes, not because you desire it, but because you seek it. And as you seek the ways of the Lord, because you’re seeking, the Lord will show you the truth.

“You do need to have the desire for truth, but desire in itself is not enough. You need to seek the truth and the truth will be found by those that seek it. And lives will be changed by those who seek to have their lives changed. Yes, it takes more than the desire: it takes to seek to know the way of the Lord and what it takes to seek to come into the Presence of the Lord.

“There are many children whose desire is to know the Lord, but their desire is not enough that they will seek. And the Lord says to seek the Lord you need to spend time with the Lord and you need to draw into the Presence of the Lord that you can be saturated with the Presence of God, and that saturation will strengthen you and make you whole so that you give not in to the cares of this life, and you give not in to walking in sin.

“For many do desire to know the Lord but there are few that seek the Lord and to know the way of the Lord, to spend time with the Lord, to come into the Presence of the Lord so that their lives might be changed. So the Lord says to you, learn to seek the Lord, learn to spend time in that seeking, and there shall be great reward.

“And the Lord says further to you that because of the way you were created and because of the falling of man there is a truth, that in the flesh there is no complete satisfaction for it is hard to rest in the flesh because the desire of the flesh is always a desire to consume and to go on. But in the Spirit there is complete satisfaction and there is complete rest, and that is why the Lord says to you, you cannot be satisfied in the flesh, but you can be satisfied in the Spirit.” (3-22-03)

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“And as you go on with the Father there are many lessons you must learn, and the first lesson you must learn is to yield to the Spirit of the Living God. As the Spirit of God moves upon you

and in you, you need to yield and you need to recognize that the Spirit of God moves to bless you and to cause you to come into the Presence of the Lord.

“And as the Spirit of God moves upon you and moves in your hearts and minds, you need to yield. And though you will in time yield, you need to do it at the first urging, for you rob yourselves of the blessing of God by delaying. So as the Spirit of God moves upon you, yield, confess, and turn, and you will find that you are richly and greatly blessed by the moving of the Spirit of God.” (2-16-02)

* * *

“And the Lord says to you, My children, that you do well to spend time in the Presence of the Lord for in the Presence of the Lord lives are changed, decisions of truth are made, healings are wrought, and love is increased.

“You do well to spend this time seeking the face of the Lord, and the benefits that you are receiving in time will be manifested and show forth to the praise of God, for your life will change, your thinking will change, your health will change, and in all areas of life the life of Christ will be shining forth. And yes, you do well to dwell and to stay in the Presence of the Lord.” (3-25-04)

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“And the Lord says that there is nothing as important as the time that you spend with the Lord. For out of that time come the benefits of life. These benefits are not only that you prosper financially, but that you prosper in your relationships and in your fellowships. For great are the blessings of the people that spend time seeking the face of the Lord, for yes, they live in the benefits of life.

“And their lives are filled with joy and hope, and their lives are a pleasure not only to themselves but to others. But all of this comes from you spending time with the Lord, seeking the face of the Lord, and realizing that life is short, but you have an eternity and in this eternity there will be blessings flowing continually.

“But even in this life, if you spend time with the Lord, those blessings will start, even now.” (12-12-04)

* * *

“And the Lord says to you, My children, that out of the Lord flow the issues of life, and the Lord gives you a truth and if you will attain to this truth you truly will have life and you will have it more abundantly.

“All of your life depends upon your relationship with Me. Every joy, every success, every contentment, every happiness, depends upon your relationship with Me. And as that relationship with Me grows in you, you will reach out to others, and they too will be touched by your life. Success, prosperity, happiness, contentment, joy, all that men reach out for, depend upon the relationship with the Lord.

“The Lord is good and in Him dwells all goodness, and if you desire to have a good life, if you desire to be content and satisfied, it all depends on your relationship with Me. For in that relationship with Me the Lord drives out all darkness and the Lord drives out all dissatisfaction so that you may be filled with Me and feel fulfilled.” (4-03-04)

* * *

“The Lord says that there is much that the Lord desires that you do, and there is much the Lord desires to show you. For the Lord desires that you know the truth, for the truth will set you free. But this truth that the Lord wants to give to you, it is precious, and you need to remember that it is precious, and because of its preciousness others will be delivered and set free. For the hand of the Lord is upon you, and the desire of the Lord is that you are delivered, and that those that are in your sphere be delivered also. The Lord in moving in your midst, in your hearts and in your lives that you would be that which the Lord has called you to be, and that you would see the people of the Lord delivered, for this is the will of the Lord.” (5-20-04)

Note: Yes, these long interpretations came flowing out of the mouth of the one gifted to interpret, without hesitation or change. Remember, the gifts are supernatural. This is why we encourage you to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the gift following. If this seems hard to you, it is much easier than giving birth!



CHAPTER 13

The Presence Ending

I hope this encourages you to be a Presence-Seeker, and makes you more aware of the vital necessity to seek Him for Who He is, not Who we think He is or others think He is, but Who He wants to be in *our life*, a communion no-one else has between them but God and you. Psalm 63:8 says, “My whole being follows hard after God.”

If you’re not hungry or thirsty for God, that can be changed. Just start little by little, read a verse every day and think about it a minute, then start reading a chapter, make a point to talk to Him a little more often. Make the first baby steps and it will turn into giant steps. Hunger for God isn’t going to come like an arrow into your heart, but it will come as you want it and allow it

The cares and distractions of life are the biggest hindrance to spending more time with God, even the cares of a calling or church or ministry. The following is a true story, and it’s in one of my other books, but when I think of it, it settles me down to what is really important in my life:

“A missionary was sent to the Amazon, and he got so discouraged because of all the hardships that he was processing his anger with God, that God had dumped them there, didn’t care if they lived or died, and he railed and

raged at God for sending them to such a place and expecting his family to serve Him under such conditions. He wept his disappointment with God.

Later that day he sensed the Presence of God filling the little cabin and a great stillness came upon him. He heard God speak clearly and distinctly in his heart: **Above all, I desire your friendship. If serving Me interrupts and disrupts our friendship, I would rather you go back to your business and continue to be My friend. Your friendship is more important to Me than all your acts of service.”**

So, from following the story of the Ark, can you see the utter audacity in thinking God doesn't know you, that He's not with you, that He's afar off instead of near, that He is not particularly interested or aware of you, that He has somehow failed you in some area? How many verses, chapters, books of the Bible would we have to deny and refute to think that way?

“For God Who said, Let light shine out of darkness, has shone in our hearts so as [to beam forth] the Light for the illumination of the knowledge of the majesty and glory of God [as it is manifest in the Person and is revealed] in the fact of Jesus Christ the Messiah.

“However, we possess this precious treasure [the divine Light of the Gospel] in [frail, human, chocolate-cake eating] vessels of earth, that the grandeur and exceeding greatness of the power may be shown to be from God and not from ourselves” (2 Cor. 4:6-7).

His Presence brings with it everything He is!

His Presence brings with it everything we need!

Love you readers, Nancy



Nancy has authored:

“Get a Better Life”—mainly for women on how to obtain a better family, home, and social life.

“Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”—mainly for women on how to appreciate and be fulfilled in their own life.

“The Chocolate Cake Principle: Feasting on the Presence of the Lord”—will help you appreciate and obtain the presence of the Lord. Published by Xulon Press.

“Multiplying the Bread of Life”—expanding & enriching your prayer life.

“Remember Love”—good advice on love (which never fails!).

“Christ in Hell”—treasures about Christ’s burial in hell after the Cross.

“Get the Hell Out So Heaven Can Come in”—deals with deliverance from spirits and curses.

“Victory is the Eye of Every Battle”—how to avoid battles and get through them.

“The BLESSING—What did God Speak?”—The Blessing Spoken to Man.

“Bad Sex Stuff”—this booklet title speaks for itself.

“Don’t Wake up in Hell Thinking You Were on Your Way to Heaven”—scary.

“Life in the Death Rattle” - a real death and life family experience.

“Angels” study - everyone is interested in angels

