

Worship Ye Afar Off

Exodus 24:1 – 25:9

~ Our Spiritual Safari social legislation program, which God continued in our previous report from our expedition through the entire Word of God, covers a great deal more than just the Ten Commandments. We have been establishing this legal system for the last four chapters; and that legislation continues in chapter twenty-four. If you have not read our last report and, indeed, all twenty-three previous reports from the Book of Exodus, then I highly suggest you go back and do so now. We are seeing the Lord deal with the everyday lives of the children of Israel according to His Personally prescribed legal system. This begins with a striking contrast between the closeness to God of being delivered on eagle's wings and God now commanding them to stand afar off. God says we are made close to Him by the Blood of Christ. Under law, however, they are commanded to stay away from Him....

XXIV

1 And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off.

2 And Moses alone shall come near the LORD: but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him.

3 And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.

~ This is their second demonstration of self-confidence and self-sufficiency as they blindly agree to whatever might be demanded by God in His law. It's almost arrogant as they have no counter terms – they just say “all” the words they will do. Well, they don't have all of the law yet; and yet they think they can keep it. I am truly puzzled how they could have been so self-

deceived. I think many of the children of Israel - just as many people do today - truly and honestly think they ARE living by the law and keeping it. The problem is: they do not know the Word of God and they have no idea what they worship or what they profess, in vain, to keep.

Self-deception to the point where you think you are meeting God's standards is spiritual suicide, my beloved. I don't think there's any heresy in the world quite like that, personally. John said, "... if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." We can't deceive our friends, though; and we sure can't deceive our family. They know all about our sins; but it's sure easy to deceive ourselves! Now, perhaps you are the only one deceiving yourself - so, that seems to mean that you would have some truth in you, right? Well, John just said there's no truth in you. I didn't say that - don't blame me! John actually repeats this, just in case you missed it, as he says again elsewhere, "... if we say we have no sin then we make Him a liar and the truth is not in us." If you say you keep the law of God, then you say that God is a liar; and because God is no liar that means you are really a blasphemer! I wouldn't want to get myself into that position with God if I were you. These people said they would do all that God had commanded. They believed they could keep the law and yet they DID NOT do or keep His commandments at all....

4 And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

5 And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD.

6 And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar.

7 And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.

~ Okay, finally, the children of Israel have now at least heard all the Words of the Lord - and they still agree to keep them - but they don't - because they can't. This is, as we have said, abject and unmitigated self-deception. The natural man honestly thinks he can be obedient to and please God; but we are all members of a disobedient race that is totally and completely depraved towards God. If you doubt that, then you simply aren't up to date on current events. There is exceeding lawlessness and confusion in this world, not to mention atheism; God says, "... none are righteous, no, not one...." Well, even before Moses reveals all of this, he sprinkles them with blood to let them know that the shedding of blood for the remission of sins is what we are talking about. God will repeat this over and over again as we go. Life must be forfeited, and a penalty must be paid with God if you and I are to see the inside of the New Jerusalem! ~

8 And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words.

9 Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel:

10 And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.

~ There is some confusion in unfortunate translations because this says they saw the God of Israel. However, God is a Spirit, so they did not see God, per se; because that would be impossible. No man hath seen God at any time. They saw the representation of God; and when we get to Revelation and John is called up into Heaven he saw a Throne....and in the midst of the Throne....and we think we are at last going to see God, but, no. It's still all symbolic representation of the Lord God. There's no need dissecting this portion of Scripture; but, I, personally, doubt that we will see God the Father in eternity. The closest we will get is the Lord Jesus Christ and, of course, He is the only way we can know God today; but we don't know how He looks, and we don't know how He thinks or feels. His

thoughts are way above my thoughts and His ways are WAY above mine - and yours; so, God must reveal Himself to us if we are to ever know Him.

These people at the time in which we are studying saw only a representation of God in verse ten, and I know that because this passage doesn't tell me a thing about God at all! If they had seen God, we would have a description - no question about that. Moses even asks later to see Gods Face - because all Moses saw at this time was this likeness of God. Remember the plea of Philip in the upper room when he says to Jesus, "... show us the Father and it sufficeth us." Jesus replied, "... he that has seen Me hath seen the Father!" If you want to see God, friends, you're going to have to know the Lord Jesus Christ; more specifically: He is going to have to know YOU! Verse ten says "... as it were" and that is only "like" something else – never the real thing.

One of the biggest fallacies I hear in the church today is the Christian lay person who says they can come into Gods presence any time they feel like it. I don't know where in the Bible they get that idea. There is One Mediator between God and man. If you don't know the Lord Jesus Christ, you'll never know God the Father - or anything about Him. We don't crash the doors of the Throne Room of God and go prancing in making demands of Him; we need Christ to intercede and plead our cause for us - or we won't even get close enough to see Him. We simply must recognize that! ~

11 And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.

12 And the LORD said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them.

13 And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua: and Moses went up into the mount of God.

14 And he said unto the elders, Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you: and, behold, Aaron and Hur are with you: if any man have any matters to do, let him come unto them.

15 And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount.

16 And the glory of the LORD abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud.

17 And the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.

18 And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights.

~ During this time period Moses received the instructions given in the remainder of this book. What we have next is a blueprint for the tabernacle given to Moses up there on the mount. God also gives the pattern for the garment of the high priest. After the construction of the tabernacle the glory of the Lord will fill it with His presence. The very heart of the camp was the tabernacle because it is the place that they will now approach God. The children of Israel are now fresh out of the slavery of Egypt and one of the first things God commands them to do is to give Him an offering so they can construct the tabernacle. Amazingly, the contribution that is made is more than enough! Remember, this is what was borrowed from the Egyptians. It was really back pay for slave labor as we looked at previously that these people are bringing. Well, Moses will soon have to ask them to stop bringing offerings because they have too much stuff. I've never heard that from anyone in any church. I doubt you have, either? ~

XXV

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.

3 And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass,

4 And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair,

5 And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood,

6 Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense,

7 Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate.

8 And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.

9 According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.

~ All of these colors and fabrics represent remarkable meaning for us in Scripture. The tabernacle was portable, so it was rather small; but it was highly ornate, and jewel encrusted, as we shall see. God never says He is going to live in the tabernacle; in fact, God said He would dwell between the cherubim. Israel has finally become a theocracy at this time. When they crossed the Red Sea, they sang the song about Jehovah being King! Now, these people are to be ruled directly by God. The ark represents God's throne. God does not sit on that Throne because it is between the cherubim. Outside of Jesus, I doubt God ever even touches the earth. For us to preconceive these ideas that God lives in our man-made buildings are not only ridiculous - it's just not Biblical.

Psalms says, "... the Lord reigneth; let Him sit between the cherubim." When the tabernacle is built, the ark is the most important article of furniture in the Holy of Holies. The tabernacle is a shadow pattern of the one we will have in Heaven. I believe there is a literal tabernacle in Heaven. I am sure the writer to the Hebrews makes it more than clear that the tabernacle will be very real in Heaven. Those of you traveling along our Spiritual Safari know by now that I take the Bible quite literally; if God says something in here, I take it that God means what He says. Naturally, sometimes we must pay attention to translations and consider the difference in the meaning of words as they change and become variant in a particular language. Many people call me naïve; and perhaps I am - but I

know we'll all get straightened out on this whole matter soon enough. So, our Spiritual Safari deals with the ark of God and the articles of furniture for the inside of the tabernacle in our next report. I hope you can continue with us ~

^^^