

STAND STILL AND I WILL HEAR

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~ **Our Spiritual Safari** operates solely in the Light of our Blessed Hope, the Lord Jesus Christ, and for His glorification forevermore. The purpose of the Bible study program we are undertaking is to find Christ on every page of Scripture as we traverse our own wilderness in this world. We're following Him – in His Word! This is an educated, sincere, systematic, proper, complete and correct consideration of all doctrine, truth and wisdom found in the Word of God. This safari requires some effort on your part - and a lot of reading the Bible. If you put that effort into it, then this so-called safari will become a study for your life. If you participate by asking the Holy Spirit to bring you understanding, then reading the text from your Bible, then read these reports, then read the Bible text again, then God will make it all real and meaningful to your heart by giving you the wisdom, judgment and discernment that passes all worldly knowledge, philosophy, conjecture, speculation and theory – THEN an examination of the Word of God might actually mean something in your life and change your heart. THAT is when you become capable of learning spiritual truth!

The children of Israel who wanted to serve God and follow Him had to be clean on the wilderness march. In this report, we pick up out in the desert with the cleansing ceremony of the priests after a four-verse command interlude is given concerning the lampstand - which seems so out of place. We would have expected this back in Exodus. Well, if we examine the specific wording closely, we see it is not out of place at all. This was a beautiful and magnificent article of gold, you will recall. It was not poured or molded gold – but beaten, carved and engraved of pure gold. The light from the lamps is the most perfect and accurate picture of Christ that we have in tabernacle symbolism. The Holy Spirit is represented by the light and that light reveals the beauty of Christ all around! It also reveals the beauty of the lamp stand itself! Christ upholds the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit takes the things of Christ and shows them unto us. Christ sent the Holy Spirit of God into the world to comfort us and to reveal Christ to us.

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Our previous report included a list of the gifts from the princes; so, the lamp stand command comes directly between that and the cleansing of the priests in the tribe of Levi. That means everything must be done in the light of the Holy Spirit revealing the resurrected Christ from the Word of God. This should show through in all we do or offer down here in our giving. The four marks of the true early church were that they (1) continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine (2) in the breaking of bread and (3) in prayer and (4) in fellowship with each other. These are the fingerprints of the true and visible church body of Christ. The church must walk in the light and receive instruction from the Word of God and the Word of God only; not from some book of church order or some other book revolving around the Bible – but only from the Bible itself. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Lamp Stand that is the Light of the world, and He reveals Himself to man ONLY in Holy Writ. Everything that the children of Israel did was to be done in the light of His presence! And my friends, the only place you're going to discover any of these truths is in the Bible by the light of the Spirit of God....

VIII

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto Aaron, and say unto him, When thou lightest the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light over against the candlestick.

3 And Aaron did so; he lighted the lamps thereof over against the candlestick, as the LORD commanded Moses.

4 And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold, unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, was beaten work: according unto the pattern which the LORD had shewed Moses, so he made the candlestick.

5 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

6 Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and cleanse them.

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~ Beginning in this section of Scripture and running through the end of chapter eight, we have cleansing at the laver. The priests have already been to the brazen altar, which speaks of the cross of Christ. The laver speaks to the way in which God keeps His servants clean! Friends, if God is going to use you, then you are going to get cleaned up first; and God has His own way of doing that! Well, from here we see the instructions that were used to cleanse the priests in the wilderness....

7 And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean.

~ There are profoundly deep spiritual messages for us throughout the Book of Numbers. The Levites had to be cleansed for service. If you drop back to Genesis chapter forty-nine at verse five, you will see Levi was described as 'instruments of cruelty in thy habitations.' Friends, these people needed to be cleansed, you may be sure. Here, we see the Levites at the laver. The important thing for a Christian today is not how you walk, but where you walk. If we walk in the light as He is in the light, then we have fellowship with the Father. That is when the blood of Christ is continually cleansing us from all sins. The light and the laver belong together because when you get in the proper lighting, the imperfections of your life begin to appear. Only when you can see those imperfections can you clean them up. That cleansing occurs when we confess our sins.

Verse seven outlines four steps; and step number one is sprinkling with water. Remember, Christ washed the disciples feet. Christ told Peter that if Peter weren't washed by Him, then he would have no part with Him. If you walk in the light, you are going to notice you have a spot or two; you're going to notice things that are wrong in your life. The blood of Christ cleanses us continually from all sins. When we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If you have any notion of serving God, this is all-important because, without confession, He isn't acknowledging your service, friends. This passage is for believers only. The laver is the place where unbelievers can keep out of until they have dealt with their sins at the brazen altar.

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The second step a priest was to take was to shave clean. The Word of God is quicker and more powerful than any two-edged sword. It moves right in to divide bone and marrow, soul and spirit; and it will shave you clean, too. God will dig down in your psyche and find things you didn't even know were wrong with you; and then He will cut them out. John said, "... IF we walk in the light as He is in the light..." Remember, the Bible got "iffy" in Leviticus. That carries throughout Scripture. Do you want unconditional love from God, friends? That's always an excuse to do whatever you want to do and call yourself saved. You can have it that way, but you cannot serve God that way; because that's not His way. You're going to have to be washed and shaved and get all cleaned up if you want to serve the Lord. If you think you're ready for that, then come into the light of the lamp stands for inspection. Then, you can serve God by using His sharp razor and the washing of the Word to help clean someone else up. I hear this uneducated pious talk that declares one doesn't need anyone to teach them because they just follow the Holy Spirit. May I say, friends – that's just plain ignorance of the Bible - and an excuse for an unwillingness to actually study it in a meaningful manner.

The third thing a priest was to do was to wash his clothes. Garments in Scripture speak largely to our habits in life. Uniforms are also called habits, by the way. The correlation is no accident. There is a riding habit and a walking habit, and a lot of people need to put off their old habits and put on the new garments that Christ offers. Many of the old habits people wear today wreak of filth because they haven't been washed in years, and they turn other people away from hearing sound doctrine because they repulse them.

Then, there is a fourth command for the priest to execute: he was to take a meal offering and a bull for a burnt offering and another young bull for a sin offering. All of these offerings and their specific meaning have previously been considered in Leviticus - and they each speak of Christ. The burnt offering speaks of WHO Christ is. The peace offering speaks to the fact that He made peace with God for us by His blood on the cross. The Meal offering speaks of feeding on Who He is; and the sin offering speaks to

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what He has done for us. Everything that is done, and all the representations that are made or implicated, speak of the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ did all of this that we might serve Him! ~

8 Then let them take a young bullock with his meat offering, even fine flour mingled with oil, and another young bullock shalt thou take for a sin offering.

9 And thou shalt bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the congregation: and thou shalt gather the whole assembly of the children of Israel together:

10 And thou shalt bring the Levites before the LORD: and the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites:

11 And Aaron shall offer the Levites before the LORD for an offering of the children of Israel, that they may execute the service of the LORD.

~ Now, let me be perfectly clear here. You can sing in the choir or play the bass guitar for the church, and you can be an officer or a deacon or you can preach a sermon and teach a Bible study every day of the week - but you aren't effective until you can honestly tell yourself that you walk in the light of the Word of God. For that, you will be cleansed, shaved, sober and all the other things God commands – or – you simply will not be used of God! You must see yourself in the light of the Word of God and see that you have come short by your own methods and sins. Then, if we make confession, Christ forgives us and cleanses us, and He gets out the razor. Yeah, it gets a little up-close and personal. We must put on the right spiritual garments and habits, though. The clothes make the man, in this case. Many men have let bad habits ruin their testimony; and it can get you put out of the Lord's service. This all rests on the Personal work of the Lord Jesus Christ and we MUST keep that in recognition as we consider this....

12 And the Levites shall lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks: and thou shalt offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, unto the LORD, to make an atonement for the Levites.

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13 And thou shalt set the Levites before Aaron, and before his sons, and offer them for an offering unto the LORD.

14 Thus shalt thou separate the Levites from among the children of Israel: and the Levites shall be mine.

15 And after that shall the Levites go in to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation: and thou shalt cleanse them, and offer them for an offering.

16 For they are wholly given unto me from among the children of Israel; instead of such as open every womb, even instead of the firstborn of all the children of Israel, have I taken them unto me.

17 For all the firstborn of the children of Israel are mine, both man and beast: on the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for myself.

18 And I have taken the Levites for all the firstborn of the children of Israel.

19 And I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and to his sons from among the children of Israel, to do the service of the children of Israel in the tabernacle of the congregation, and to make an atonement for the children of Israel: that there be no plague among the children of Israel, when the children of Israel come nigh unto the sanctuary.

~ Jesus, in His prayer concerning you and me here on earth, said to our Father, "they are Thine, whom Thou hast given Me!" Service to the Lord does not rest upon rules and regulations or methods or law. That just isn't the way we further the cause of Christ and bring Him glory. We serve Him because we love Him and because He has brought us into a new relationship with Himself. It should be a tremendous joy to know we are serving Him and not a set of black and white commands that none of us can

possibly abide by. Christians have been brought to a very high place, where our number one desire should be to glorify Him....

20 And Moses, and Aaron, and all the congregation of the children of Israel, did to the Levites according unto all that the LORD commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so did the children of Israel unto them.

21 And the Levites were purified, and they washed their clothes; and Aaron offered them as an offering before the LORD; and Aaron made an atonement for them to cleanse them.

22 And after that went the Levites in to do their service in the tabernacle of the congregation before Aaron, and before his sons: as the LORD had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so did they unto them.

23 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

24 This is it that belongeth unto the Levites: from twenty and five years old and upward they shall go in to wait upon the service of the tabernacle of the congregation:

~ Here we come across something that is interesting to me. I don't want to be overly dogmatic, but Chapter one told us that Jewish men served in the army beginning at age twenty. Here, a priest begins at age twenty-five, but does not begin to fully function as a priest until age thirty; Moses began his ministry at age forty. The point is: I believe this reveals that the age of accountability is much higher than most people think it is. I'm sure it's also different for different people. The little child whom the Lord calls home is not responsible to account for their sins, because they never reached the age of accountability. What a beautiful lesson....

25 And from the age of fifty years they shall cease waiting upon the service thereof, and shall serve no more:

26 But shall minister with their brethren in the tabernacle of the congregation, to keep the charge, and shall do no service. Thus shalt thou do unto the Levites touching their charge.

IX

1 And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying,

2 Let the children of Israel also keep the Passover at his appointed season.

3 In the fourteenth day of this month, at even, ye shall keep it in his appointed season: according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it.

4 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the Passover.

5 And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.

6 And there were certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the Passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day:

7 And those men said unto him, We are defiled by the dead body of a man: wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer an offering of the LORD in his appointed season among the children of Israel?

8 And Moses said unto them, Stand still, and I will hear what the LORD will command concerning you.

~ Now, we come to the observation of the Passover on the wilderness march. Our Spiritual Safari is well familiar with Passover after our

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examination of Exodus. This chapter holds a previously unrevealed truth that is quite significant concerning Passover, however. The children of Israel were instructed to keep the Passover in the wilderness, but they failed to do so for a long time. Some scholars have called this example the “little Passover” – where a man who had been prevented from keeping the Passover for various reasons could reserve observing it at some later time. Well, when asked about this, Moses appeals to God. Moses doesn’t huddle with Aaron, and Moses doesn’t look to the Book of World Church Order. He receives his direction straight from God....

9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

10 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you or of your posterity shall be unclean by reason of a dead body, or be in a journey afar off, yet he shall keep the Passover unto the LORD.

11 The fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

12 They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it: according to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it.

13 But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and forbeareth to keep the Passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he brought not the offering of the LORD in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin.

14 And if a stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the Passover unto the LORD; according to the ordinance of the Passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he do: ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land.

15 And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony: and at even there was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire, until the morning.

16 So it was always: the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night.

17 And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents.

18 At the commandment of the LORD the children of Israel journeyed, and at the commandment of the LORD they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents.

19 And when the cloud tarried long upon the tabernacle many days, then the children of Israel kept the charge of the LORD, and journeyed not.

20 And so it was, when the cloud was a few days upon the tabernacle; according to the commandment of the LORD they abode in their tents, and according to the commandment of the LORD they journeyed.

21 And so it was, when the cloud abode from even unto the morning, and that the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they journeyed: whether it was by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed.

22 Or whether it were two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel abode in their tents, and journeyed not: but when it was taken up, they journeyed.

23 At the commandment of the LORD they rested in the tents, and at the commandment of the LORD they journeyed: they kept the charge of the LORD, at the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

~ And with that passage, our Spiritual Safari observes the Shekinah Glory! The cloud leads them by day and the fire leads them by night. Paul mentions eight distinct differentiations that separate Israel from all other nations round about them in the ninth chapter of Romans. One of them is the "glory" – meaning this cloud, the Shekinah Glory! This is the only nation

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that has ever had - or ever will have - the visible presence and physical leading of God amongst them.

At the commandment of the Lord, they moved; Moses didn't just say, "... let's go!" God decided their moves. We need to recognize that God wants to decide, dictate and lead our every move in this wilderness of a world where we are strangers and pilgrims, also. The Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church. Christ should be the one to lead; but He can't even keep up with the church today - because He is too busy cleaning up their messes. The church is going its own way. This is what happens when men begin to make their own decisions. People think this business of following Jesus is just some little theory that only makes spiritual sense. Well, my friends – this thing should be as real as the food you have for dinner tonight, spiritually speaking. God's children are going to follow Him. Sometimes they stayed in a camp for several days, sometimes weeks and even months – or years – but when the pillar lifted, the children of Israel packed up and moved. In our next report, we will move with them ~

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