

To Dwell with God II

(Feast of Tabernacles-Day 2)

The mystery of God's will: God living *in* us through the Holy Spirit;

WE are the Temple of God!

Fred R. Coulter—October 4, 2020

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Day 2 of the Feast of Tabernacles!

- the tabernacle of God
- to dwell with God
- God dwelling with His people

All of those are a part of the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles!

We've come to the place where God began dealing with the children of Israel. He gave the proposal to them, gave them His laws and commandments, then He made a covenant with them.

Even though they didn't want to listen to the voice of God anymore, they said that they would listen to Moses. God understood that they were well-intended in that. So, in the parallel account in Deut. 5, where it talks about the giving of the Ten Commandments, here's what the children of Israel said:

Deuteronomy 5:25: "Now, therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us...." *This was a great and awesome event and it really terrified them!*

"...If we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, then we shall die" (v 25). *No! Because God was not always going to deal with them in His glory!*

But He did this so that they would know the power of God, He's Creator of everything that there is, and how things are going. That's quite a thing to understand, and to know Who would be their God! This way God was hoping that even in the letter of the Law they would be obedient to Him.

*Here's what they told Moses; v 27: "You go near and hear all that the LORD our God shall say. And you speak to us all that the LORD our God shall speak to you, and **we will hear it, and do it.**"*

Whenever you say something to God, He's going to hold you accountable for it. *You need to think on that!*

Verse 28: "And the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me. And the LORD said to me, 'I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken to you. They have well *said* all that they have

spoken."

In other words, *they were well-intended!* Isn't that the way people are? *They have good intentions!* But the truth is, without the Spirit of God—which He didn't give to them in the covenant with Israel—it's difficult to follow through. However, if they did it in the letter of the Law, God would bless them and be with them!

Verse 29: "Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would **fear Me** and **keep all My commandments always** so that it might be well with them and with their children forever!" *That's what God wanted!*

Moses went back up on the mountain and got all the things from God: all the statutes, judgments and ordinances. He gathered all the people together and here's what God said to Moses, because there had to be those who would see and witness what God said. Here was another phenomenal, one-time event. God was preparing them so that He, through the temple or tabernacle, would dwell/tabernacle with them.

Exodus 24:1: "And He said to Moses, 'Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and worship afar off.'"

All of those witnesses could say, 'We saw the outline of God! We know that it's real! They could all come back and tell all the children of Israel, all 12 tribes, that this was really the real thing!

Verse 2: "'And Moses alone shall come near the LORD, but they shall not come near. Neither shall the people go up with him.' 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 has said, we will do.' And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and built an altar? (vs 1-4)—and sacrificed!

Verse 6: "And Moses took half of the blood, and put *it* in basins, and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the Book of the Covenant, and read in the ears of the people...." (vs 6-7).

Verse 8: “And Moses took the blood and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, ‘Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD has made with you concerning all these words.’”

After that was done and the people agreed to it; the v 9: And Moses went up, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. 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 heavens in clearness**” (vs 9-10). *That was a sea of glass!*

Verse 11: “And upon the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay his hands. Also they saw God, and ate and drank. And the LORD said to Moses, ‘Come up to Me in the mountain, and be there. And **I will give you tablets of stone, and the Law, and commandments, which I have written, so that you may teach them**” (vs 11-12)—*and Moses went up!*

The first thing that God did was to begin to give Moses *the instructions for the tabernacle*, and later we will see *the temple!*

Then God said that the first thing that your going to build, after you take up an offering for everything to build:

Exodus 25:9: “According to all that I show you, the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments of it, even so you shall make *it*.”

Moses had to have the skilled workmen in able to do it, and we find that in Exo. 35-36 and so forth.

The first think that He starts out with is the Ark of the Covenant. Why is that important? *Let’s see what God said:*

Verse 8: “And let them make Me a sanctuary so that I may dwell among them.” *That’s what God wanted, to put His presence in the tabernacle!* Though that presence, God would be dwelling with them.

Verse 9: “According to all that I show you, the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments of it, even so you shall make *it*. And they shall make an ark *of* acacia wood. Two and a half cubits long and a cubit and a half wide and a cubit and a half high. And you shall overlay it *with* pure gold. You shall overlay it inside and out, and shall make on it a crown molding of gold all around *the top edge*” (vs 9-11).

Then He gives all the instructions for it! ***That was to be in the Holy of Holies!*** God started with the most important part—the Ark of the Covenant—which would be in the Holy of Holies.

Then God gave instructions on how to build the rest of the tabernacle, and the coverings that would go over it and the fence that would go around the courtyard. This would be in the center of Israel while they were traveling to the Holy Land. *Quite a profound thing!* God was really making it known to them!

You know what happened. When Moses was on top of the mountain getting all of the instructions from God on how to build all of this, let’s read the final instructions and see something very important.

This is just before Moses comes down off the mountain after receiving all the instructions to make everything:

Exodus 31:12: “And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, ‘Speak also to the children of Israel, saying, “Truly you shall keep **My Sabbaths**... [plural] ...for it... [the keeping of them] ...*is* a sign between Me and you throughout your generations to know that I *am* the LORD Who sanctifies you.”

It’s the same way today, only added with the Holy Spirit of God ***in us!***

Verse 14: “You shall keep the Sabbath, therefore, for it *is* Holy to you. Everyone that defiles it shall surely be put to death, for whoever does *any* work on it, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.” *They will not receive the blessings of God!*

Verse 15: “Six days may work be done...”

Verse 16—*this is something all the Protestants ought to read:* “Therefore, the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, **to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant**”—*a never ending covenant!*

When God gave them the manna, what happened? *It continued for the 40 years!* Same way with the Sabbath, a perpetual covenant!

Verse 17: “It *is* a sign between Me and the children of Israel **forever**...”—*also between God and the people of God—the Church of God—today!*

We’re going to see that this is very important because before God is going to come and dwell with all the people on the earth, He’s got to prepare a people through the Church! We will see what that is like and how that is done.

“...for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.’ And He gave to Moses, when He had made an end of speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, **written by the finger of God**” (vs

17-18).

You know what happened! The children of Israel convinced Aaron to make a golden calf. The first thing they did was *forget* what they saw, what they heard, and because of that sin a great number of them had to die. Moses intervened to keep the children of Israel and Aaron alive.

So, they did make the tabernacle and everything associated with it. Then it was setup. This was done so that the presence of God would be in the tabernacle. None of the people had the Holy Spirit of God except Moses and some of the 70 of the elders of Israel and Aaron. *That's was about it!* None of them had the Holy Spirit of God. The people had to obey in the letter. Their whole lives were to be centered around the tabernacle, later the temple, ***because that's how God dwelt with them!***

Exodus 40:1: “And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘You shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation on the first day of the first month’” (vs 1-2).

Then God gives Moses all the instructions. He anointed Aaron and his sons to be the priests. The Levites were all set to go.

Verse 31: “And Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet there. When they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they came near the altar, they washed, even as the LORD commanded Moses. And he set up the court all around the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the screen of the court gate. And Moses finished the work” (vs 31-33).

Now notice what happened, because God gave a demonstration to start, that yes, He put His presence there in what is called *the Shekinah!* Not that He dwelt there, but He dwelt with the people through the temple and the Shekinah. Notice how that came:

Verse 34: “And the cloud covered the tabernacle of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tabernacle of the congregation **because the cloud stayed on it**, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle” (vs 34-35). *Notice that it stayed there!*

Verse 36: “And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel journeyed on in all their journeys. But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not journey until the day that it was taken up; for the cloud of the LORD was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel in all their journeys” (vs 36-38)—*for 40 years!*

That's quite a thing! That is tremendous, indeed! The children of Israel wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. God never really intended it to be that long, but when they rebelled and didn't want to go into the land when God said to go in to the land, coupled with all their other rebellions. ***Right in the presence of God***, with the tabernacle in the center where all the tribes of Israel were surrounding it when they weren't traveling. Then God made them wander for 40 years.

They setup the tabernacle at Shiloh. Shiloh was up in the northern ten tribes, close to where Ephraim was. It wasn't in Jerusalem, that took place later on. But again, the children of Israel—you can read in Judges, 1st & 2nd Samuel, 1st & 2nd Kings that they sinned. God had to punish them and they were sent off into captivity, the Ark was stolen in the days Eli because of the sins of the people. The Philistines had the Ark and finally they sent it back and it was at the house of Kirjath-Jearim.

Then Saul was made king and he didn't do what God wanted him to do. So, all of this was the ups and downs of the children of Israel and everything that they were involved in. They kept leaving God going to the gods of the nations around them. All of this caused them to really stray from God.

However, God finally raised up a man to bring them together, and that man was David! David was a man after God's heart, and he did the things that God wanted.

Now, he had one great sin with Bathsheba and killing her husband, Uriah the Hittite. That caused David a lot of trouble until the end of his life. However, God appointed Solomon to succeed David.

God had given to David all the pattern and plan for building a temple, because David wanted to build a temple for God. But God said he couldn't do it because David was such a 'bloody man' with so much war. ***‘So, Solomon you son will build a temple for Me, and I will dwell in it.’*** Solomon was chosen and David gave great commands to Solomon in what he should do. Let's see what Solomon was given by David in the way of what he should do. David had brought all the commanders of all armies and all the important people to Jerusalem, and said:

1-Chronicles 28:2: And David the king stood up on his feet and said, ‘Hear me, my brethren and my people. I *had* in my heart to build a house of rest for the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God, and had made preparations for the building. But God said to me, ‘You shall not build a house for My name, because

you *have been* a man of war and have shed blood.” However, the LORD God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel forever....” (vs 2-4).

He did that; that was a special covenant. Please note this, *in spite of David’s sin with Bathsheba*, God kept that covenant.

“...For He has chosen Judah to be the ruler, and of the house of Judah the house of my father. And among the sons of my father’s house He was pleased to make me king over all Israel. And of all my sons (for the LORD has given me many sons), He has chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel” (vs 4-5)—*all 12 tribes!*

First time all 12 tribes were together, but that didn’t last very long.

Verse 6: “And He said to me, ‘Solomon your son shall build My house and My courts, for I have chosen him *to be* My son, and I will be his Father. And I will establish his kingdom forever if...’” (vs 6-7)—*right back where we started in the Garden of Eden*, independent free moral agency. That applies to us today as well. With everything that we do.

- **IF** we love God
- **IF** we are faithful
- **IF** we are true

God has a great plan for the whole world, of which we’re going to be a part. But in order for that to happen, He’s got to have complete those who will be converted and resurrected to help rule with Jesus Christ. That’s for tomorrow, but for today:

“...**if** he continues resolute... [not half way] ...in keeping My commandments and My ordinances, as he is today.’ And now in the sight of all Israel, the congregation of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God...” (vs 7-8). *Solomon is right there with David!*

“...keep and seek for all the commandments of the LORD your God, so that you may possess this good land and leave *it* for an inheritance for your children after you **forever**. And you, Solomon my son... [think about this, because we know what happened to Solomon] ...acknowledge the God of your father **and serve Him with a perfect heart...**” (vs 8-9)—*not double-minded*, like James wrote: *a double-minded man is unstable in all of his ways!* Surely, Solomon did become double-minded, as we will see later.

What’s important is that in order for God to dwell with His people, ***His people have got to***

understand that they must:

- love God
- keep His commandment
- obey His voice

That’s really pretty simple when you come down to it!

“...and **with a willing mind...** [not being forced to do it] ...for **the LORD searches all hearts**” (v 9).

- What do you think God is doing with us today?
- Is not God trying and testing us, as well?
- To is **IF** we will continue with all God wants us to do?

God’s plan for us is awesome and fantastic; far different from this! Far greater than this, even as great as this was!

“...and understands all the imaginations of the thoughts...” (v 9). *That’s a marvelous thing to understand*, but also a fearful thing to know **IF** we willfully transgress and go against God!

“...**IF** you seek Him, He will be found by you. But **if** you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever” (v 9)—*quite a warning!*

Here’s Solomon, about 16 at that time, and David is standing up there and Solomon is right there in front of him, and David is saying these words to him. This is recorded in the Bible, because this is a great lesson for us.

Verse 10: “Take heed now... [pay attention to yourself] ...for the LORD **has chosen you** to build a house for the sanctuary. Be strong and **do it.**” *Think about that!*

We know what happened. Solomon built the temple and it was dedicated. Let’s read about the dedication, which was very similar to what it was in the dedication of the tabernacle.

1-Kings 8:1: “Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel...”

Verse 2: “And all the men of Israel were gathered to King Solomon at the Feast in the month Ethanim, which *is* the seventh month.” *This has to be the Feast of Trumpets!*

Verse 3: “And all the elders of Israel came in, and the priests took up the Ark. And they brought up the Ark of the LORD and the tabernacle of the congregation and all the Holy vessels which *were* in the tabernacle—even those the priests and the Levites brought up. And King Solomon and all the

congregation of Israel, who had assembled to him *were* before the Ark sacrificing sheep and oxen which could not be counted nor numbered for multitude” (vs 3-5).

What happened was that Solomon setup all around the court of where the temple was, other altars of sacrifice, because there were so many people and so many sacrifices. This was one of the most magnificent events to happen in the history of the world.

Verse 6: “And the priests brought in the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD into its place, into the Holy place of the house, into the Holy of Holies under the wings of the cherubim, for the cherubim spread forth *their* two wings over the place of the Ark... [they were also built into the sides of the walls of the Holy of Holies] ...And the cherubim covered the Ark and the staves of it above. And they drew out the staves, so that the ends of the staves were seen out in the Holy *place* in front of the Holy of Holies. And they were not seen outside. And there they are to this day” (vs 6-8). *When this was written, probably by Hezekiah, this part of it!*

Verse 9: “There *was* nothing in the Ark except the two tablets of stone, which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made *a covenant* with the children of Israel when they came out of the land of Egypt.”

The presence of God called *the Shekinah*, which appears as a cloud was not the Holy Spirit given to the people. The Holy Spirit could not be given until after Jesus Christ came, completed His ministry, gave Himself in sacrifice and was raised from the dead.

Verse 10: “And it came to pass when the priests had come out of the Holy of Holies, **the cloud filled the house of the LORD**.... [just like with the tabernacle] ...And the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD had filled the house of the LORD. And Solomon said, ‘The LORD said that He would dwell in the thick darkness’” (vs 10-12).

Then Solomon goes on and gives a magnificent prayer! Quite a wonderful prayer in all of 1-Kings 8 & 9. It was so great, and Solomon’s attitude was so good, which is another lesson: ***we must maintain a right relationship with God through prayer and study every day!***

If we do not then it could very well be that something like this that happened to Solomon could happen to you!

Even after God spoke to Solomon in vision the second time... Remember the ***ifs*** that David gave

to Solomon concerning being the one to build the house for God. Let’s see what took place, and what a magnificent thing this is. Always remember that it’s never *who you are or what you are as a person!* ***It’s your relationship with God and how you maintain it!***

After the temple is finished and the great prayer that he gave, it pleased God. Here’s what happened:

1-Kings 9:1: “And it came to pass as Solomon finished the building of the house of the LORD, and the king’s house, and all Solomon’s desire which he was pleased to do, the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon. And the LORD said to him, ‘I have heard your prayer and your cry, which you have made before Me. I have made Holy this house which you have built to put My name there forever. And My eyes and My heart shall be there perpetually. And ***if you will walk before Me as David your father walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness***, to do according to all that I have commanded you; ***and if you will keep My statutes and My judgments, then*** I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever as I promised to David your father, saying, ‘There shall not be cut off from you a man upon the throne of Israel’”” (vs 1-5).

Notice how important all of these conditional statements are, because when we get to the New Testament, those are all magnified.

Verse 6: “***If*** you shall at all turn from following Me, you or your children, and will not keep My commandments *and* My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, ***then*** I will cut off Israel from the face of the land, which I have given them. And this house, which I have made Holy for My name, I will cast out of My sight. And Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all people” (vs 6-7). *Just like with us; think about it!*

Verse 8: “As to this house, *which now* is exalted, *then* everyone who passes by it shall be amazed and shall hiss. And they shall say, “‘Why has the LORD done this to this land and to this house?’ And they shall answer, ‘***Because they left the LORD their God*** who brought out their fathers from the land of Egypt, and have taken hold of other gods and have worshiped them and served them. On account of this the LORD has brought upon them all this evil’” (vs 8-9). *And it happened!*

We know what happened because Solomon sinned; God took away the ten northern tribes. Solomon’s son Rehoboam took over the southern

kingdom, which was part of Benjamin, Judah and the priests and Levites. Jeroboam—one of the generals of Solomon—took over the ten tribes of the north. God offered to give him a dynasty like David, **IF**... [same proposition as with Solomon] ...he would keep God's commandments, serve the people and do what was right, but he didn't. He made two golden calves:

1. one in Dan in the northern part of the tribes of Israel
2. one in Bethel right near the capital of Ephraim

The ten tribes were carried off into captivity because of their sins!

Then after that there was left the southern kingdom of Judah and Jeremiah was raised up as a prophet to warn them because of their sins and following the ways of the pagans again and again.

Without the Spirit of God it's virtually impossible to avoid corruption and apostasy! It got so bad that God was ready to destroy the whole city of Jerusalem in 586_{B.C.} and the temple as well. But God gave one final chance, because God is merciful, kind and forgiving **IF** *there's repentance!* Know this for sure: ***no one is going to dwell with God if they don't love and obey Him!*** That's the key important thing!

King Zedekiah^[transcriber's correction] of Judah at that time wanted to know what was going to happen, because there were several invasions of the Babylonians coming in and attacking the city of Jerusalem. So, God sent

Jeremiah 38:14: "And Zedekiah the king sent and had Jeremiah the prophet brought to him, into the third gate in the house of the LORD. And the king said to Jeremiah, "I will ask you a thing. Do not hide anything from me.... [here's God giving a chance]: ...Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, 'If I declare *it* to you, will you not surely put me to death? And if I give you advice, you will not hearken to me.' Zedekiah the king swore secretly to Jeremiah, saying, 'As the LORD lives, Who made for us this soul, I will not put you to death, nor will I give you into the hand of these men who seek your life.' Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel, "**If** you will surely surrender to the king of Babylon's princes, then your soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire. And you shall live, and your house'" (vs 14-17).

So, he was to surrender as a vassal king! Nebuchadnezzar would have put him back on the throne, but subject to Nebuchadnezzar.

Now, God give him a choice; think about the choices that we're faced with, too.

Verse 18: "But if you will not surrender to the king of Babylon's princes, then this city shall be given into the hands of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and you shall not escape out of their hand."

What happened? Zedekiah thought he would escape and leave with his sons. So, he escaped and the Babylonians captured him and killed his sons, gouged out the eyes of Zedekiah and burned the city, sacked it and destroyed it.

Then 70 years later God raised up Ezra and Nehemiah to rebuild a temple. It was dedicated. Here's a little mystery: *no one knows where the Ark of the Covenant is!* When they came back from Babylon and dedicated the temple, they didn't have it to put into the Holy of Holies. But the temple was there. They did not have a king, they only had a governor.

That's how it went with the ups and downs through the times of the governors, and down through the times of the Maccabees and through the times until we come to Jesus Christ.

(Break)

Let's look at one of the prophecies of Jesus in Deut.18. Since men could not dwell with God in the way that God would want them to, with love and obedience. And God knew that they didn't have the heart to do so, then God gave a prophecy of the coming One Who is called in the New Testament ***that Prophet, Who was Jesus Christ!*** The reason is that God came to this earth as a man.

Deuteronomy 18:15: "The LORD your God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren, **One like me**. To Him you shall hearken."

Moses was judge, ruler, prophet and lawgiver. That's what Jesus Christ was in the flesh when He came.

Verse 16: "According to all that you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, so that I do not die.' And the LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well what they have spoken. **I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren**... [flesh and blood] ...**One like you, and will put My words in His mouth**. And He shall speak to them all that I shall command Him.'" (vs 16-18). *That's exactly what Jesus said of His ministry and what He would do!*

Verse 19: “And it shall come to pass, **whatever man will not hearken to My words**, which He shall speak in My name, I will require *it* of him.” *Individual judgment against every person that goes against Christ!*

So, we know that Jesus divested Himself as being God (Phil. 2) and took upon Him the likeness of men, came to this earth, and was born of the virgin Mary.

John 1 tells us all about it. The One Who Creator God humbled Himself to become a man **to live among men, to dwell among them**, because men could not dwell with God! So, in His mercy, God came in the person of Jesus Christ, and John explains Who He was.

Sidebar: Every time someone brings up a false doctrine, they’ve got to go against the nature of God and the nature of Christ.

John 1:1: “In *the* beginning was the Word...” *What do you read with the prophets?*

- the Word of God came to Jeremiah...
- the Word of God came to Ezekiel...
- the Word of God came to Isaiah...

The Word! Some say *Spokesman*, but the manifestation of God in the flesh **to bring the Word of God to men personally!**

“...and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in *the* beginning with God” (vs 1-2). *This tells us that in the Godhead there are **two!***

There are never three. Guess who the third one wants to be? *That’s Satan who wants to be counted into the Godhead!*

Verse 3: “All things came into being through Him, and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him. In Him was life, and the Life was the Light of men. And the Light shines in the darkness...” (vs 3-5)—*and darkness is what this age is all about!*

That’s why the Apostle Paul said that he was called to bring people out of the darkness of Satan the devil and His authority into the Light of the Truth of the Lord God. Darkness fills the earth!

“...but the darkness does not comprehend it” (v 5).

Verse 9: “The True Light was that which enlightens everyone who comes into the world.”

The birth of Jesus is very interesting. The most important birth in the history of the entire world. The Jews thought the Messiah would come

and embrace them, and that they would jointly rule with the Messiah. But they didn’t comprehend that He would come in the flesh.

Although they did expect a man to be the Messiah, but not Jesus. Why? *Because Jesus never embraced them religiously or politically, because He knew that they were of darkness and Satan the devil, when they should have been light from God!*

When Jesus was conceived, God sent Gabriel the angel to Mary in Nazareth, not in Jerusalem; **someone that the authorities never knew about!** The only two who knew that she became pregnant: Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist and Joseph her husband. They came together after Jesus was born.

The prophecy was that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem, but this began in Nazareth. However, Jesus was born in Bethlehem because they had to come there for the tax, and that’s when Jesus was born.

He was born in a stable, not some great house with a lot of attendants! He was wrapped in swaddling clothes and placed in a manger, not like the Christmas scene that Catholics and Protestants have. By time the Magi came they were in a house.

So, **no one** except Joseph and Mary—and if she had a midwife to help her—**knew that this child was born!** Only Joseph and Mary knew that this was an impregnation from God.

To show how God does things, what happened? *There were two shepherds out in the field watching the sheep!* The angels came and sang glorious things, ‘*glory to God in the Highest.*’ The told them a Son was born in Bethlehem, and ‘go and you’ll find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes.’ And the went and found Him, *and none of the officials—priests, princes, Levites or governors—knew of Jesus’ birth!*

They didn’t know until the Magi from the East came. Then Herod wanted to kill Him. Now you know why that Jesus came the way that He did. Then they had to escape to Egypt and later came back to Nazareth.

Verse 10: “He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, but the world did not know Him.” *The only ones who knew Him were the disciples whom He called!*

Verse 11: “He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him... [now the plan of God begins to be revealed a little more] ...but as many as received Him, to them He gave authority to become *the* children of God...” (vs 11-12).

The whole purpose of the New Testament is **how you become the children of God!**

“...even to those who **believe** in His name” (v 12)—*believe to obey*, not only in His name but Who He is and all about Him, etc.

Now then, something happens in the New Testament that did not happen before in the Old Testament.

Verse 13: “Who... [those who believe in His name] ...were not begotten by bloodlines... [not who you are, king lines or prince lines or priest lines] ...nor by *the* will of *the* flesh... [not something that men do] ...nor by *the* will of man, **but by the will of God.**”

Sidebar: In order for the plan of God to be fulfilled so that the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles can come to the whole world, it must begin **with us and all of those who preceded us** down through history who were of the Church of God, who had the Spirit of God.

The only way that the plan of God is going to be reaching its fullness is if **we** yield ourselves to God and are resurrected from the dead, born again from flesh to spirit to rule with Christ. This is what is so important.

Now it's entirely different and the stakes are much higher.

Verse 14: “And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us... [temporarily dwelt with men; God in the flesh] ...(and we ourselves... [the apostles] ...beheld His glory, *the* glory... [and they saw the Transfiguration as well] ...as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth.” *That's an amazing thing!*

Here now God was going to set the standard with Jesus in the flesh, Who would be the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all mankind: *past, present and future!*

Verse 16: “And of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.” {note sermon series: *Grace Upon Grace*}

I'll just summarize it for you: It means that ***each one of us with the Spirit of God and a humble attitude, converted mind, yielding to God have direct access to God the Father in heaven above through His Spirit!*** That's what's so important, that we:

- grow
- overcome
- develop
- have the mind of Christ

- do the things that God wants

*Because that is God's plan to save the world and all of mankind, except for those who totally rebel and refuse! **That's our calling, brethren!***

Let's see what God did to show the change after Christ was resurrected from the dead. The apostles saw Him after He was resurrected and they handled Him, saw Him, and He taught them for 40 days and 40 nights all of the things in the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms. Now the New Testament teaching and Church was ready to begin and ready to go.

So, on the 40th day Jesus ascended back into heaven to sit at the right hand of God:

- to be Head over the Church
- to guide and direct things in the Church
- to prepare a *spiritual people* for God to rule the world when Christ returns

That's all about the Feast of Tabernacles.

That means that when this event occurred at the temple on Pentecost (Acts 2), God sent the Holy Spirit. He didn't send a cloud to go into the temple. He sent the Holy Spirit so that when there's repentance ***it would be within the individual!***

It was demonstrated right there. I won't go through that whole thing on that day of Pentecost and speaking the different languages, and the very powerful sermon that Peter gave and caused 3,000 to repent and be baptized, *on that day!*

He said that **you**—every one of us—***have crucified Him!*** Isn't that something? ***Our sins killed Christ, and God was willing to give His only Begotten Son to be that Perfect Sacrifice for us!*** Now to teach and preach for the firstfruits, which is the Church.

The command was to ***repent and be baptized*** everyone in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ***you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit!*** ***That gift of the Holy Spirit is a begettal from God!*** That's the important thing! ***A begettal from God!*** That Holy Spirit within us is to lead us and guide us, but we must yield to God because we're going to be spirit beings.

It's not a religion in the world to make you a better citizen of whatever country you live in. ***It is to change you! The Spirit of God!***

This is what is also important, because this begettal comes from God to give us of the Holy Spirit in our own mind so that we are connected directly with God the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit. That is necessary.

- there is no other way that there can be the developed the character of God within us
- there is no other way that we can have the love and obedience to God without His Spirit

That's why He has done it!

Now Peter, who gave that great sermon there in Acts 2, let's see what he says in 1-Peter 1, and it explains it very thoroughly.

1-Peter 1:1: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to *the* elect strangers scattered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia; **who have been chosen according to the predetermined knowledge of God the Father...**" (vs 1-2).

I want you to understand that! God the Father is the One Who draws us to Christ, and Christ is the One Who gives us of His Spirit along with the Father to be in our very mind! This is what we will see about God dwelling today **in** us through the Holy Spirit. That is necessary before we can become the spiritual sons and daughters of God.

"...by sanctification..." (v 2)—*set aside and made Holy*, and that is the character that God is developing in us, the Holy character of God!

"...through the Spirit..." [must have the Spirit of God] **...unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ..."** (v 2)—*through His sacrifice! All of that is necessary first!*

"...Grace and peace be multiplied to you. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...(vs 2-3). *Notice what you have received when you were baptized!*

"...Who, according to His abundant mercy..." (v 3).

Think about this: *the Spirit of God comes from the Father **and** Christ so that we can become the children of God!*

"...has begotten us again unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; unto **an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and unfading, reserved in heaven for us**" (vs 3-4). *Christ is going to bring that when He returns!*

Now, I want you to think about this in 1-John 3, because with the Spirit of God in us, ***God is dwelling in us!*** I will show that in a little bit. That's what's so important! With that, we will dwell with God at the resurrection.

1-John 3:1:1: "Behold! What *glorious* love the Father has given to us..."

Think about that! To receive the Spirit of God is to receive the greatest blessing of His love. But we also have to remember the **IF** clauses!

- **IF** we are faithful
- **IF** we are true
- **IF** we endure

"...that we should be called the children of God!" For this very reason, the world does not know us because it did not know Him. Beloved..." (vs 1-2).

Think on this statement and I'll show you how we got to it:

"...now we are the children of God... [not yet born] ...and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be... [completely] ...but we know... [and we'll know a little bit more, but when John wrote this, it wasn't] ...that when He is manifested... [at His return] **...we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him exactly as He is.** And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure" (vs 2-4).

We are to practice righteousness, v 9: "Everyone who has been begotten by God **does not practice sin,** because His seed *of begettal...* [I want you to understand that, we'll see that even more] ...is dwelling within him, and he is not able to *practice* sin because he has been begotten by God. **By this standard are manifest the children of God...**" (vs 9-10).

- let's see how that comes to us
- let's see who is involved in our lives

I want you to know and understand that all of this is necessary in order for the Feast of Tabernacles to come to pass. Also, understand that God is directly involved in our lives with His Spirit.

- God the Father has drawn us
- God the Father has chosen us
- God the Father and Christ have given us of Their Spirit

Ephesians 1:2: "Grace and peace *be* to you from God our Father and *the* Lord Jesus Christ." *Directly!*

Not to a temple where there's a *presence* of God, ***but from the Throne and Temple of God in heaven where God the Father is, and His Spirit given to us and God choosing us for the great role of ruling the world!*** That's why we have the Feast of Tabernacles!

Verse 3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with

Christ”—*some now, most at the resurrection!*

I want you to understand the closeness of God in this operation with us, to you, me and all the brethren everywhere!

Verse 4: According as He has personally chosen us... [God Himself] ...for Himself...”

This was a plan before the foundation of the world! Now you understand why Satan and the angels rebelled! They would be demoted and we would be promoted.

“...before *the* foundation of *the* world **in order that we might be Holy**... [God is Holy] ...and **blameless before Him in love**; having predestinated us **for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ**, according to the good pleasure of His own will” (vs 4-5). *Isn't that something?*

Verse 9: “Having made known to us the mystery of His own will...”

You know something that the world does not know; that is through God’s Spirit, Jesus Christ, the Sabbath, His laws and commandments and Holy Days. That’s why it’s so great what God has done!

“...according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself; that in *the Divine* plan for the fulfilling of *the* times, He might bring all things together in Christ, both the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth” (vs 9-10).

Verse 13: “In Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the Truth, the Gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, **you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.**”

John 14 shows us all about God’s plan, how He works with us and His Holy Spirit, which He has given to us. This becomes important and we need to understand that every time you get on your knees to God:

- *you know* that your prayers are going to God
- *you know* that God is going to hear
- *you know* that God has called you to something profound, fantastic and wonderful

To help rescue the whole world!

John 14:21: “The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me...”—*it’s all based on love!*

- we love God
- we keep His commandments
- we love Jesus Christ
- we keep His Word

“...and the one who loves Me **shall be loved by My**

Father” (v 21).

Jesus Christ and God the Father—Who control the whole universe—***love us, His people, begotten with the Spirit of God the Father for sonship at the resurrection!***

“...and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.’ Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’” (vs 21-22).

This is perhaps the most important verse in the entirety of the Bible; v 23: “Jesus answered and said to him, **‘If anyone loves Me...’**”

- the love of God is keeping His commandments
- the love of God is with all your heart, mind, soul and being

“...**he will keep My Word...**” (v 23)—*not just the commandments, but everything that Jesus said!*

“...and My Father will love him, and **We...** [the Father and the Son] ...**will come to him and make Our abode...** [dwelling place] ...**with him**” (v 23).

Think about that! The one who does not love Him does not have that! That’s why it’s so important.

Let’s see what we need to do, because this becomes very important for us in our relationship with God, ***and God dwelling in us!*** And for the purpose of ***bringing us into the Family of God through the resurrection, so that we can save the world!***

Now, here’s why we are not to compromise with the world, and we are not to compromise with the fake Christianity of this world, ***because they believe the same lie that Satan told Eve!*** Satan told Eve that what God said He really didn’t mean. But Satan says:

I will tell you something else, and if you eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, which He’s hiding from you, but will come to you if you do what I [Satan] say.

The sum of the lie of Satan was that God didn’t mean what He said. If you’re a Protestant out there, ***listen up!*** All Protestants believe that God did not mean what He said when He said, ‘Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy.’ They say that you can keep Sunday. ***That is a satanic lie! No man can change what God has said!*** That’s why:

- we keep the Sabbath

- we keep the Holy Days
- we love God

We have to keep ourselves unspotted from the world! Here's how we do it:

2-Corinthians 6:14: "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers...."

Protestants are partial believers! They fall into the category that Jesus said, 'Those who are not against us are on our part.' But they don't believe God to keep His Sabbath and Holy Days. Therefore, ***they don't have salvation!*** There's no way possible, because ***unless you keep the commandments of God, you don't have the Holy Spirit of God—that's what Jesus said!***

"...For what do righteousness and lawlessness have in common? And ***what fellowship does light have with darkness? And what union does Christ have with Belial? Or what part does a believer have with an unbeliever?*** And what agreement *is there between* a Temple of God..." (vs 14-16). ***WE are the Temple of God!***

1-Corinthians 3:16: "**Don't you understand that you are God's temple...**" *Just like Jesus said that 'We—God the Father and Jesus Christ—will come and make Our abode with him.'* ***We are the temple!*** Not a building where there is an essence of God in a Holy spot, but God's Holy Spirit united with the spirit of our mind that we are the children of God.

"...and ***that the Spirit of God is dwelling in you?***" (v 16).

2-Corinthians 6:16: "And what agreement *is there between* a Temple of God and idols? For you are a temple of *the* living God, exactly as God said: **'I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.'**"

That's what God wants! Think about the great blessing of what it is that God has in store for us, to rule and reign with Christ and save this entire world.

Verse 17: "'Therefore, come out from the midst of them and be separate,' says *the* Lord, 'and touch not *the* unclean, and I will receive you; and **I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,**' says *the* Lord Almighty" (vs 17-18).

One more verse to tell us the work that we need to do now:

2-Corinthians 7:1: "Now then, beloved, since we have these promises, we should purge

ourselves from every defilement of *the* flesh and *the* spirit..."

We have work to do to change and overcome! Remember that Jesus said, 'The one who overcomes I will give authority over the nations.' *So, we have things to overcome:*

- our own human nature within us
- the things around us that come against us

"...**perfecting Holiness in the fear of God**" (v 1).

Rev. 20—let's see the promise given to us. This is after Satan is put away, which we saw on the Day of Atonement.

Revelation 20:4: "And I saw thrones... [of various degrees of authority]...and they that sat upon them, and judgment was given to them; and *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus..."

Yes, some of us are going to have to give our lives, but that will be annulled at the resurrection, so we don't need to fear anything.

- we don't need to fear man
- we don't need to fear death
- we don't need to fear any of those things

"...and for the Word of God, and those who did not worship the beast or his image, and did not receive the mark in their foreheads or in their hands; and **they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years**" (v 4).

We will see the Millennium as pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles ***is just the beginning of greater things into all eternity!***

Verse 5: "(But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were completed.) This *is* the first resurrection. Blessed and Holy..." (vs 5-6).

- that's how God looks upon us
- that's why we repent everyday because of whatever sins may occur in our lives

As long as we have *the law of sin and death*—and we're delivered from it through God's Spirit—we have to repent as these things take place in our lives (Rom. 7 & 8).

Verse 6: "Blessed and Holy is the one who has part in the first resurrection..." *That also tells us that **IF** this is the first one when Christ returns, **THEN** there has to be a second one!*

"...**over these the second death has no power. But they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand**

years” (v 6).

Brethren, that’s why God has called us! The Millennium is going to be a fantastic time of conversion, greatness and bringing many sons and daughters into the Kingdom of God. We will be working with Jesus Christ to do that!

All of that is to the glory of God the Father! This is why we keep the Feast of Tabernacles! Tomorrow we will begin to see how we will rule with Christ!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Deuteronomy 5:25, 27-29
- 2) Exodus 24:1-4, 6-12
- 3) Exodus 25:9, 8-11
- 4) Exodus 31:12-18
- 5) Exodus 40:1-2, 31-38
- 6) 1 Chronicles 28:2-10
- 7) 1 Kings 8:1-12
- 8) 1 Kings 9:1-9
- 9) Jeremiah 38:14-18
- 10) Deuteronomy 18:15-19
- 11) John 1:1-14
- 12) 1 Peter 1:1-4
- 13) 1 John 3:1-4, 9-10
- 14) Ephesians 1:1-5, 9-10, 13
- 15) John 14:21-23
- 16) 2 Corinthians 6:14-16
- 17) 2 Corinthians 3:16
- 18) 2 Corinthians 6:16-18
- 19) 2 Corinthians 7:1
- 20) Revelation 20:4-6

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Exodus 35; 36
- Philippians 2
- Acts 2
- Romans 7; 8

Also referenced: Sermon Series: *Grace Upon Grace*

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