

The War Is On Where Do Your Loyalties Lie?

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We left off with Moses and the nation in the wilderness. God provided for the nation all that they needed. Moses, as instructed, struck the rock and God has supplied, Moses gets it right, this time.

The fallen ones mount a counterattack using Amalek which in the Bible is a type of the flesh. We see that the fallen divine beings are responding to the huge loss they just sustained at the Gulf of Aqaba when their chosen army became fish food. That is simply one battle among many more to come before the ultimate defeat for the fallen ones which will take place on a hillside near Jerusalem.

We see the various battles taking place, some will be overt, but some will entail nothing more than misinformation and propaganda. Until then, because we are already but not yet in the Kingdom, we continue to engage the enemy.

Ephesians 6:12–13

“For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. Therefore, put on every piece of God’s armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm.” (NLT)

In Amalek the heathen world commenced that conflict with the people of God, which, while it aims at their destruction, can only be terminated by the complete annihilation of the ungodly powers of the world. . . . (Constable 2003, Ex 17:14)

Again, spiritual warfare showing up in the physical realm. After the victory over Amalek, over the flesh, time to worship.

Exodus 17:15–16

“And Moses built an altar and called the name of it, The LORD Is My Banner, saying, “A hand upon the throne of the LORD! The LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.”” (ESV)

But how do we know that the basis of this warfare is spiritual in nature? There is a bit more behind this in the Hebrew of chapter 17 verse 16. Let’s look at the ISV

Exodus 17:15–16

Moses built an altar and named it “The LORD is My Banner.” He said, “Because a fist has been raised in defiance against the throne of the LORD, the LORD will wage war against Amalek from generation to generation.” (ISV)

Rephidim was pointed out by YAHWEH to Moses by the Angel of YAHWEH standing on the rock.

Exodus 17:5–6

“Then the LORD told Moses, “Go over in front of the people and take some of the elders of Israel with you. Take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. **I’ll be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb.** You are to strike the rock and water will come out of it, so the people can drink.” Moses did this in front of the elders of Israel.” (ISV)

This area is adjacent to where YAHWEH will meet with Moses and the nation. Where His throne is located. Remember, where YAHWEH is, that is where His Divine Council is. Amalek being drawn out to attack was a direct attack on the throne of YAHWEH and the Divine Council.

“If the hand refer to Amalek (Kalisch), the sentence runs thus—‘because his (Amalek’s) hand was against the throne of Yah (the Kingdom of God, which includes His people), &c.’ The meaning is here simple and easy; the connection with what goes before is sufficiently plain; and the reason assigned for perpetual war until Amalek be extirpated, is intelligible and suitable.”—(Murphy). (Adamson 1892, 315)

God is about to cut a deal with the nation, and He is going to use the same kind of contractual setup as He did before with Abraham. In fact, the only reason He brought the people out of Egypt is because of a covenant He has with Abraham and promises He made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Genesis 15:1–6

“After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, “Do not fear, Abram, I am a shield to you; Your reward shall be very great.” But Abram said, “Lord GOD, what will You give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” Abram also said, “Since You have given me no son, one who has been born in my house is my heir.” Then behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, “This man will not be your heir; but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir.” And He took him outside and said, “Now look toward the heavens and count the stars, if you are able to count them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.” Then he believed in the LORD; and He credited it to him as righteousness.” (NASB 2020)

God is dealing with His portion. He is dealing with those people He specifically chose after the events of Genesis 11.

Deuteronomy 32:7–10

“Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you. When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But the LORD’s portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage. “He found him in a desert land, and in the howling waste of the wilderness; he encircled him, he cared for him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.” (ESV)

God has brought the people to His mountain, the same place that Moses encountered the bush that burned but did not burn. This is the place God has chosen to meet with His people and reveal Himself to them. He will be cutting a deal with them, something that is commonly called, at that time, a Vassal Contract or Treaty. These types of treaties typically had witnesses as part of the deal, and we shall see that here as well.

The basic stipulations of the covenant relationship were what we know as the Ten Commandments (Exod 20), though there are other laws in Exodus 20–23. As with the earlier, Abrahamic covenant (Gen 15:9–10), a sacrificial ritual was performed to ratify the covenant (Exod 24:3–8). After the ritual there was a sacrificial meal between the parties involved. This was the divine council scene in Exodus 24:9–11 that we’ve already briefly noted. (Heiser 2015, 168)

Exodus 24:1–4

“Then He said to Moses, “Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and you shall worship at a distance. Moses alone, however, shall approach the LORD, but they shall not approach, nor shall the people come up with him.” Then Moses came and reported to the people all the words of the LORD and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice and said, “All the words which the LORD has spoken we will do!” And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. Then he got up early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain with twelve memorial stones for the twelve tribes of Israel.” (NASB 2020)

In terms of biblical theology, the imagery has a distinct meaning. God is starting his intended Edenic rule with Israel. Israel will have a single earthly leader (eventually the messianic king, the ultimate offspring of Eve) and a council of seventy. The number telegraphs that, as the kingdom of God is re-established on earth, the seventy nations will be reclaimed, a process that began with the ministry of Jesus and will continue to the end of days. (Heiser 2015, 157)

The number seventy is significant. There will be seventy elders just as there were seventy nations referenced in Genesis 10. It was these seventy nations which were divorced by God as a result of the rebellion at Babel. Just as there were seventy people who came into Egypt after Joseph had already been there. There will be seventy elders, later called the Sanhedrin. The nation will be in exile for seventy years. The number of weeks that Daniel was told about were seventy, and one of those weeks remains to yet take place. When Jesus entered into ministry, He sent out seventy and that number was specific and points back.

Jesus sent out seventy disciples. The number is not accidental. Seventy is the number of nations listed in Genesis 10 that were dispossessed at Babel. The seventy “return with joy” (Luke 10:17) and announce to Jesus, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!” Jesus’ response is telling: “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven” (10:18). The implications are clear: Jesus’ ministry is the beginning of the end for Satan and the gods of the nations. The great reversal is underway. (Heiser 2015, 280-281)

Everything in the scriptures ties together. Our challenge, as we read and study, is to understand it as those who it was written for, to have their worldview and mindset. To have the sense of past and future and realize that everything is being attended to supernaturally. They did not see the world as we see it.

There is no such word as “religion” in the languages of the ancient Near East. Likewise, there is no dichotomy between sacred and secular, or even between natural and supernatural. The only suitable

dichotomy is between spiritual and physical, though even that would be a less meaningful distinction to them than it is to us. In the end, there is a distinction between the heavenly realm and the earthly one, but events in the two were often intertwined or parallel. It would be difficult to discuss with ancients the concept of divine intervention, because in their worldview deity was too integrated into the cosmos to intervene in it. For the most part, deity is on the inside, not the outside. All experience was religious experience, all law was spiritual in nature, all duties were duties to the gods, all events had deity as their cause. Life was religion and religion could not be compartmentalized within life. (Walton 2013, 87)

Back to the elders and the picture we have been shown. We see that the elders will go up to the Mountain of God and take part in a meal, this is part of the covenant being cut. Remember this too, where God is, His Council is. The Council is also there as witnesses. We know that it is a reference to the Divine Council. That too will come up again. Remember, believers will be on that council. We have a picture of that in Isaiah.

Isaiah 24:19–23

The earth is utterly broken, the earth is split apart, the earth is violently shaken. The earth staggers like a drunken man; it sways like a hut; its transgression lies heavy upon it, and it falls, and will not rise again. On that day the LORD will punish the host of heaven, in heaven, and the kings of the earth, on the earth. They will be gathered together as prisoners in a pit; they will be shut up in a prison, and after many days they will be punished. Then the moon will be confounded and the sun ashamed, for the LORD of hosts reigns on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and his glory will be before his elders.” (ESV)

Of course we know the rest of the story, Israel failed and Jesus Christ came to planet earth to begin the recovery process, already but not yet. At the end of the Tribulation, we see the ultimate end. We learn though that the loyal members of Yahweh’s council are called elders. Fast forward to Revelation 4 and 5 where we see the divine members of the heavenly council have been replaced by faithful and loyal members of God’s family, the church.

Revelation 3:21

“To those who win the victory I will give the right to sit beside me on my throne, just as I have been victorious and now sit by my Father on his throne.” (GNB)

Galatians 3:26–29

“It is through faith that all of you are God’s children in union with Christ Jesus. You were baptized into union with Christ, and now you are clothed, so to speak, with the life of Christ himself. So there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles, between slaves and free people, between men and women; you are all one in union with Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are the descendants of Abraham and will receive what God has promised.” (GNB)

2 Peter 1:4

“Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and **may become participants of the divine nature.**” (NRSV)

Already we are sharing in the divine nature of our Savior. But someday very soon, we will be like Him.

1 John 3:1–3

“See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God’s children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, **we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.** And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.” (NRSV)

Do you see it? As believers our destiny is to be ranked higher than the angels, to be a part of God’s Divine Council. After all, as believers, we are already family.

1 Corinthians 15:35–49

But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.” (ESV)

Exodus 24:9–11

“And Moses and Aaron and Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel went up. And they saw the place where the God of Israel stood and what was under his feet just like brickwork of lapis lazuli, and like the appearance of the firmament of the heavens in purity. And not even one of the chosen leaders of Israel was missing, and they appeared in the place of God, and they ate and drank.” (Lexham Press 2020, Ex 24:9-11)

Moses and the elders are in the throne room eating and enjoying God’s presence. Notice the imagery, we will see it again.

Other Views of the Throne Room:

- Ezekiel 1:1 – 28
- Ezekiel 10:1
- Isaiah 6
- Daniel 7
- Revelation 4
- Isaiah 6:8

In Isaiah 6:8, Isaiah is in the throne room before the God of the universe and before the Divine Council. In fact, we will learn that that is a pattern for those who are called to be God’s prophets, they will all come before the Council.

This is a pattern. Remember, Abram had his interview with Yahweh, later Isaac has his interview. Jacob had several interviews plus a wrestling match. Moses had an interview as well, now the elders for the nation of Israel have met with the Council. Those who God calls He reveals Himself to.

The pattern that emerges from the patriarchal sagas is that when God chooses someone to represent him, that person must first meet with God. By necessity, that meeting is with the visible Yahweh, who can be discerned by human senses. In many cases, the divine job interview occurs in a place that is described as God’s home or headquarters, the place where the divine council meets. (Heiser 2015, 236)

Exodus 24:11

“But on the nobles of the children of Israel He did not lay His hand. So they saw God, and they ate and drank.” (NKJV)

Noble as used here does not mean by birth. “The Hebrew word means deep-rooted, striking deep roots into the earth; hence metaph. sprung from an ancient and noble stock.” (Gesenius and Tregelles 2003, 74)

Literally, those who have been invited to fellowship with God are those who are deeply rooted into Him. Even as this is going on with the elders, there is still spiritual warfare going on back in the camp. The fallen know they need to make a counterattack and soon.

1 Corinthians 10:12–14

“Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.” (NKJV)

We are warned that when we think we have it all together, when we think we are spiritually strong, watch out. The people listened to the wrong voice, but it was one they were familiar hearing from. There is going to be a calf problem.

The people have seen the visible manifestation of God in the cloud by day and the fire by night. They saw His miracles and the very real spiritual warfare actually taking place in the physical realm back in Egypt. They crossed over, on dry land, the Red Sea while thumbing their noses at Baal. God has announced to the world and specifically to the fallen that these are the ones He has chosen. God will reclaim Eden establishing it on earth at the end of the age. He will reverse the curse of Genesis 3, the corruption that ensued from the incursion of the watchers at Mount Hermon and He will overturn the rebellion at Babel.

All the things that God has done for the people; He also does for us as well. Does this make us more faithful? Do we become more spiritually secure in Him as a result?

Israel will fail, but they will fail in their loyalty to Yahweh. The enemy will attack but will do so with an old lie and then double down with the lust of the flesh. This will not sound too unfamiliar to us. Notice the level of determination to sin we pick up from the LXX.

Exodus 32:6

“And rising early the next day, they sent up whole burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being, and the people sat down to eat and to drink and got up to play.” (Lexham Press 2020, Ex 32:6)

Exodus 32:7–8

“And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Go on quickly from here, go down! For your people, whom you led up out of the land of Egypt, have acted lawlessly. They have quickly turned away from the way which I commanded them. They have made a calf for themselves and have worshiped it and said, ‘These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.’” (Lexham Press 2020, Ex 32:7-8)

Exodus 32:19–28

“And when he was drawing near to the camp, he saw the calf and the dancers, and having grown angry with wrath, Moses cast the two tablets from his hands and shattered them at the base of the mountain. And after taking the calf that they had made, he burned it in the fire and ground it to powder and scattered it in the water and made the sons of Israel drink it. And then Moses said to Aaron, “What did this people do to you so that you have brought upon them such a great sin?” And Aaron said to Moses, “Do not be angry, lord, for you yourself know the impulsiveness of this people. For they kept saying to me, ‘Make gods for us who will go before us, for this man, Moses, who led us out of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him.’ And I said to them, ‘If anyone has gold, remove it.’ And they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf.” And when Moses saw the people, that they were scattered—for Aaron had caused them to scatter, a mockery for their enemies—and Moses stood by the entrance of the camp and said, “Whoever is with the Lord, should come to me.” Therefore all the sons of Levi gathered.

And he said to them, “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘Each one fasten his own sword upon his thigh, and pass through and turn back from gate to gate throughout the encampment, and each one kill his brother, his kinsman, and each one his neighbor.’ ” And the sons of Levi acted just as Moses instructed them, and about three thousand men of the people fell on that day.” (Lexham Press 2020, Ex 32:19-28)

This shows us concerning Satan’s tactics, if a direct frontal assault won’t work (Amalek) then use deception and lies to gain a foothold. Find someone who still has an attachment to that past life they have not quite eliminated yet and use that to bring others down. Look for and use the weakest link.

1 John 2:15–17

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.” (ESV)

For the OT believer, it all boils down to loyalty. God gave the law to reflect what that loyalty would look like, and what His expectations were about it. The other nations had their gods, fallen created divine beings who at one time were faithful to Yahweh, but now no longer. God demanded of His people that they remain faithful to Him and not play around with these other gods. Loyalty, faithfulness, fidelity.

The first commandment does not insist that the other gods are nonexistent, but that they are powerless; it disenfranchises them. It does not simply say that they should not be worshiped; it leaves them with no status worthy of worship. (Walton 2013, 156)

In commandments 1– 3 the Israelites are being warned not to perceive Yahweh in the manner in which the gods were perceived in the cultures around them. (Walton 2013, 159)

Salvation in the Old Testament meant love for Yahweh alone. One had to believe that Yahweh was the God of all gods, trusting that this Most High God had chosen covenant relationship with Israel to the detriment of all other nations. The law was how one demonstrated that love—that loyalty. Salvation was not merited. Yahweh alone had initiated the relationship. Yahweh’s choice and covenant promise had to be believed. An Israelite’s believing loyalty was shown by faithfulness to the law. (Heiser 2015, 169-170)

“Christianity means mainly three things, the believer’s loyalty in relation to Christ, the believer’s intellectual acceptance of Him, and the believer’s resolution to stand with him.” (Smith 1923, 692-693)

God established the very essence of loyalty through His covenant relationship with His people: “Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who maintains covenant loyalty with those who love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations” (Deuteronomy 7:9). Through His covenant, God’s people are assured of His never-ending love from which no believer can ever be separated (Romans 8:35–39). God is promising His loyalty and commitment to us. Although God’s covenants with man are unilateral—He promises to fulfill them by Himself—there is still an admonition to loyalty on man’s part. For God has made it clear that “if you ever forget the LORD your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed” (Deuteronomy 8:19). Those who prove to be disloyal are those who prove they do not belong to Him (1 John 3:24). But for believers, we have the promise that even “if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself” (2 Timothy 2:13). (Got Questions Ministries 2002-2013)

As New Testament believers, we have additional assurances, as God knows we will blow it from time to time.

Romans 8:1–14

“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from

the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” (NKJV)

Remember, earlier we discussed the fact that the type of covenant that was cut between God and Israel was in the form of a Vassal Treaty and there would normally be witnesses to both sides of the agreement. The elders of Israel, they were there as witnesses for the people. What about on Yahweh’s side?

Two sections of scripture from the New Testament give us insight.

Hebrews 2:1–4

“For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the **word spoken through angels** proved unalterable, and every violation and act of disobedience received a just punishment, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders, and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.” (NASB 2020)

Acts 7:51–53

“You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did. Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, and you have now become betrayers and murderers of Him; **you who received the Law as ordained by angels**, and yet did not keep it.” (NASB 2020)

Did you catch what it says in Hebrews and Acts? The law, declared by angels, delivered by angels. In fact, at Sinai, God was there in strength.

Psalms 68:15–18

“The mountain of Bashan is a mountain of God; The mountain of Bashan is a mountain of many peaks. Why do you look with envy, you mountains of many peaks, At the mountain God has desired as His dwelling? Indeed, the LORD will dwell there forever. **The chariots of God are myriads, thousands upon thousands; The Lord is among them as at Sinai, in holiness.** You have ascended on high, You have led captive Your captives; You have received gifts among people, Even among the rebellious as well, that the LORD God may dwell there.” (NASB 2020)

In Deuteronomy, we also get a hint of who was at Mount Sinai with Yahweh.

Deuteronomy 33:1–4

“This is the blessing Moses the man of God pronounced upon the Israelites before his death. He said: The LORD came from Sinai and revealed himself to Israel from Seir. He appeared in splendor from Mount Paran, and **came forth with ten thousand holy ones.** With his right hand he gave a fiery law to them. Surely he loves the people; all your holy ones are in your power. And they sit at your feet, each receiving

your words. Moses delivered to us a law, an inheritance for the assembly of Jacob.” (Deuteronomy 33:1–4, NET)

The Septuagint version of this section of scripture makes it clearer at what is hinted at.

Deuteronomy 33:1–4

“And this is the blessing that Moses, the man of God, blessed the sons of Israel before his death. And he said: “The Lord came from Sinai and displayed himself to us from Seir and made haste from Mount Paran together with myriads from Kadesh; from his right, **angels were with him**. And he spared his people, and all those who have been sanctified beneath your hands, even these who are beneath you, and it received of his words a law, which Moses commanded you, an inheritance of the congregations of Jacob.” (Lexham Press 2020, Deut 33:1-4)

The Septuagint has angels at the right hand of God being witnesses to the giving of the law. But another verse in the New Testament adds one more person to the mix. So, at Sinai, Yahweh is there, the Divine Council is there, and...

Galatians 3:19–20

“Why then was the law given? It was added because of transgressions, until the arrival of the descendant to whom the promise had been made. It was administered through angels by an intermediary. Now an intermediary is not for one party alone, but God is one.” (NET)

Why would Paul have to add verse 20 saying God's uniqueness was not disturbed if he was simply referring to Moses? The mediator referenced here is the preincarnate Christ.

Jubilees 1:27 – 29

And He said to the angel of the presence: ‘Write for Moses from the beginning of creation till My sanctuary has been built among them for all eternity. And the Lord will appear to the eyes of all, and all shall know that I am the God of Israel and the Father of all the children of Jacob, and King on Mount Zion for all eternity. And Zion and Jerusalem shall be holy.’ And the angel of the presence who went before the camp of Israel took the tables of the divisions of the years—from the time of the creation—of the law and of the testimony of the weeks of the jubilees, according to the individual years, according to all the number of the jubilees [according to the individual years], from the day of the [new] creation †when† the heavens and the earth shall be renewed and all their creation according to the powers of the heaven, and according to all the creation of the earth, until the sanctuary of the Lord shall be made in Jerusalem on Mount Zion, and all the luminaries be renewed for healing and for peace and for blessing for all the elect of Israel, and that thus it may be from that day and unto all the days of the earth. (Jubilees 1913, 13)

Let's take one more look at the Septuagint version of Deuteronomy 33 and see if there is language that talks about there being a visible appearance on the mountain. Remember, we already have a reference to the dinner and the elders seeing God.

Deuteronomy 33:1–4

“And this is the blessing that Moses, the man of God, blessed the sons of Israel before his death. And he said: “The Lord came from Sinai and displayed himself to us from Seir and made haste from Mount Paran together with myriads from Kadesh; from his right, angels were with him. And he spared his people, and all those who have been sanctified beneath your hands, even these who are beneath you, and it received of his words a law, which Moses commanded you, an inheritance of the congregations of Jacob.” (Lexham Press 2020, Deut 33:1-4)

So, knowing this, let's see what Moses says about what he did on Mt Sinai when he does a recapitulation in one of his sermons in Deuteronomy. I have replaced LORD with the Hebrew term to give us clarity.

Deuteronomy 9:9–10

“When I went up the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant that YAHWEH made with you, I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights. I neither ate bread nor drank water. And YAHWEH gave me the two tablets of stone written with the finger of God, and on them were all the words that YAHWEH had spoken with you on the mountain out of the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly.” (ESV)

Moses is clearly telling us he was talking to YAHWEH yet it was the “finger of God” who did the writing. These fingers also did some writing in Daniel 5. This is the Angel of the LORD, the Word of God, the Malak Yahweh, the pre-incarnate Christ.

And to show you the temerity of the fallen ones, while all of this is going on, at the top at of Mt. Sinai, they are down at the bottom of Mt. Sinai making suggestions to those who would listen.

The core of the law was fidelity to Yahweh alone, above all gods. To worship other gods was to demonstrate the absence of belief, love, and loyalty. Doing the works of the law without having the heart aligned only to Yahweh was inadequate. (Heiser 2015, 170)

The nation of Israel exists only because God supernaturally enabled Abraham and Sarah to have a child. He chose the nation and being His meant being Holy, separate, apart from the rest of the world.

The fundamental requirement of the law was that of holiness, i. e. of separation from the world in devotion to God. Jehovah spoke to Israel just previous to the promulgation of the law: “And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation,” Ex. 19:6; and, basing his exhortation on his own holiness, repeatedly exhorted the people to be holy, Ex. 22:31; Lev. 11:44, 45; 19:2; 20:26. This idea of holiness permeates the whole religion of Israel. Hence the Bible speaks of a holy person, Lev. 8:1–8; a holy family, Lev. 21:6; a holy tribe, Num. 8:14; a holy people, Ex. 19:6; and also of a holy place, Is. 27:13; a holy house, Is. 64:11; a holy city, Neh. 11:1; and a holy land, Zech. 2:12. (Berkhof 1915, 123)

The bulk of the rest of the Old Testament is the narrative of the nation and their overwhelming difficulty to remain loyal to Yahweh. From a cultural perspective, they never did understand, truly, what God was asking of them in Leviticus 19.

Leviticus 19:2

“Tell the entire assembly of Israel that they are to be holy, since I, the LORD your God, am holy.” (ISV)

We have the same struggle today, being Holy while living in an unholy world. We do not recognize, as did the Moses, that life is continual ongoing spiritual warfare. Are we loyal to the Lord, or not?

David is an example of someone who was loyal to Yahweh. Yes, he failed, over and over again by committing war crimes, murder, and sexual sin. Yet he was loyal and relied solely on Yahweh, he never moved away from that. He learned that the key is repentance.

Today, the problem is not the overt turning to false gods, yet we do that as well. Horoscopes, astrology – forbidden practices in the scriptures are still popular today, but not the goal of society.

The enemy is subtle.

2 Corinthians 6:14–18

“Do not be mismatched with unbelievers; for what do righteousness and lawlessness share together, or what does light have in common with darkness? Or what harmony does Christ have with Belial, or what does a believer share with an unbeliever? Or what agreement does the temple of God have with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, “I WILL DWELL AMONG THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. “Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE,” says the Lord. “AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS

UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you. "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty." (NASB 2020)

The evil one simply wants to distract us, get us upset over the wrong thing and then keep us in that place.

1 Corinthians 10:12

"Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." (NKJV)

Moses and Aaron have provided with an example of what that looks like.

Numbers 20:8–13

"Take the staff and assemble the community, you and Aaron your brother, and then speak to the rock before their eyes. It will pour forth its water, and you will bring water out of the rock for them, and so you will give the community and their beasts water to drink." So Moses took the staff from before the LORD, just as he commanded him. Then Moses and Aaron gathered the community together in front of the rock, and he said to them, "Listen, you rebels, must we bring water out of this rock for you?" Then Moses raised his hand, and struck the rock twice with his staff. And water came out abundantly. So the community drank, and their beasts drank too. Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust me enough to show me as holy before the Israelites, therefore you will not bring this community into the land I have given them." These are the waters of Meribah, because the Israelites contended with the LORD, and his holiness was maintained among them." (NET)

The nation has issue after issue remaining holy, separate.

They have difficulty with the loyalty thing and continually will allow the surrounding cultures to impact them. We do the same and it impacts our effectiveness

This observation brings considerable clarity to the centuries-long struggle of the Israelites to understand that Yahweh's status as state God excluded the worship of local gods, nature gods, or ancestral gods. Their native mentality would have seen no conflict. They could willingly acknowledge Yahweh as the national God and as the supreme God, but such conclusions would not require sole worship of Yahweh. State religion was an entirely different issue than family religion. The uniqueness of Israel is that here we can see an attempt to merge those two horizons. Every indication is that they were consistently syncretistic throughout the monarchy period, though the prophets had high hopes that they would recant of their syncretism and adopt covenant faithfulness to Yahweh wholeheartedly. (Walton 2013, 142)

The nation will hear the truth and then believe a lie over and over.

As a result of listening to lies, they spent 40 years wandering around the desert and even then, still developed some bad habits and ideas.

One of the things that God did, as a contrast to the surrounding nations and their gods, He wanted a relationship with His people, so He provided Moses with a set of blueprints that will reflect what the Divine Realm come to earth looks like.

For next week

Exodus 20 – 32

Leviticus 17

Matthew 3 & 4

Luke 3 & 4

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