

**Ancestry. Jesus**  
**The Exodus ~ Out of Egypt to the Promised Land**  
**Unlocking the Mysteries of the Ties to the New Testament and the End Times**

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*This book is respectfully dedicated to all who desire a deeper relationship with Father God through His Word, Jesus Christ ... and to those who soon will.*

**Foreword:**

Prepare yourself, because this book is not typical of those you may have read in your studies of the Bible.

Throughout this book ties will be made, and parallels will be drawn that will unlock the mysteries showing how the journey of the Israelites out of Egypt to the Promised Land of Canaan foreshadows our journey to the LORD's ultimate Promised Land in the Book of Revelation.

Instead of focusing only on the story so eloquently written in the Hebrew Bible, this book uniquely allows the reader to see, and draw parallels to the New Testament, specifically to the End Times of the Book of Revelation.

Throughout the text, excerpts from the New Testament that are applicable to Scripture and story line taken from the Hebrew Bible are inserted, allowing the discerning reader to explore and come to their own conclusions.

Revisiting the plagues God sent to Egypt, the journey of the Israelites through the wilderness, and finally the Israelites coming to the edge of the Promised Land, we will make ties to the End Times events of John's apocalyptic revelation. In doing so, ideas will be reinforced as to how the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament are inexplicably linked together.

Importantly, by exploring the mystery behind the ties between the Old and New Testament, we will realize that the two cannot be separated and that the LORD's Master plan unfolds gloriously between the two.

Finally, by examining in detail Scripture describing the New Heaven and New Earth, and New Jerusalem, we will make the connection between the Promised Land of the Hebrew Bible and that of the Promised Land of eternity.

We will see how The New Heaven and new earth, and the New Holy City described in the Book of Revelation will be the Believers' Promised Land – the LORD's Ultimate Promised Land as His gift to us.

Our hope, which will be fully realized after the Great Tribulation, the Second Coming of the Messiah, Judgment Day, and where God will defeat evil once and for all, making 'all things new', is promised to us as believers in God the Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ.

God's gift of the Promised Land, described in the End Times in the Book of Revelation, will be fulfilled to us as the bride of Christ.

***"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.***

***And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."***

***"Behold the dwelling place of God is with man.***

***He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.***

***He will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.'***  
***(Revelation 21: 1-4)***

### ***Prologue:***

Through Abraham and his descendants the LORD promised to bless all nations and restore His presence and purposes in the world (***Gen12:1-3***). The Lord's Divine Blessing of his covenant with Abraham will lead to people everywhere experiencing God's favor. God's speech with Abraham introduced His actions and agenda for His blessings to be mediated through Abraham. Abraham, the founding father of Judaism and of Christianity, served as God's Covenantal representative in the Hebrew Bible, which had universal dimensions to spread God's glory.

With God's words, He invites Abraham to become a source of blessing to humanity,

***'I will make you a great nation and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.***

***I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse (Hebrew: aor), and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."***  
***(Genesis 12: 1-3)***

The descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob grew into the ***people of Israel***, and will form the new beginnings of a great nation, a nation founded under the LORD, God.

However, along the road there will be bumps and twists.

Ultimately, the prophecy written in ***Genesis 12:1-3*** will be carried out despite the opposition of the greatest superpower of the ancient world, Egypt.

However, before Israel can become a great nation, and before the blessing to all of the families of the earth can arise from the descendants of Abraham, another prophecy must first be fulfilled.

That prophecy was God's promise to Abraham that his descendants would sojourn in a land that would not be their own, be afflicted for 400 years, and then come out by the LORD's hand with numerous possessions (**Genesis 15:13-14**). This promise will be fulfilled 600 to 800

***"The LORD said to Abram,  
Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years.  
But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions."  
(Genesis 15: 13-14)***

The land "that is not theirs" referred to by the LORD is Egypt, and "afflicted" described the oppression which led to the Israelites becoming slaves of the Egyptians under a new ruler of Egypt. The promise of "I will bring judgment" and "afterward they shall come out with great possessions" will be fulfilled 600 to 800 years after giving the promise to Abraham, and refers to the time of the Exodus of God's people out of Egypt.

How did they come to be afflicted in a land that was not theirs? After fleeing to Egypt because of a famine and flourishing under Pharaoh with Joseph at his right hand, both the current Pharaoh and Joseph died and as a result a new Pharaoh came to rule. This new, oppressive ruler of Egypt arose after the death of Joseph, a ruler who became increasingly resistant to the Israelites' needs. We will see how this political exchange of leadership evoked life-changing events for the Israelites who were sojourning in Egypt.

In this book, we will take a short detour away from studying Jesus' ancestors, but by understanding why and how the exodus of the Israelites occurred out of Egypt we will gain a deeper understanding of the true meaning of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross.

In studying the first Passover which led to the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, we will more fully grasp the true meaning behind Jesus when He is referenced as the sacrificial Lamb of God in the Bible and symbolically portrayed as the 'Lamb' in the New Testament.

***"Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!  
And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them saying,  
To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing, and honor and glory and might forever and ever!"  
(Revelation 5:12-13)***

By studying ties of the Hebrew Bible to the New Testament, specifically the Book of Revelation, we will come to realize that like the two pieces of Velcro fabric designed to work with each other, these ties are so strong when viewed together that they cannot possibly be ripped apart.

### ***Putting history into Context ~ Israelites in Egypt***

To fully understand the Israelites' exodus out of Egypt, let's first put the history of the Israelites' while living in Egypt into context.

For starters, all of the ***sons of Israel*** (Jacob's sons and their families/households) had come to Egypt to escape a famine in the Promised Land. While living in Egypt, the Israelites successfully flourished, and their numbers increased greatly.

Upon the death of their brother Joseph, who had been in the influential position of second-in-command to the Pharaoh, the sons of Israel still continued to live in the land peacefully for a brief period of time.

However, a new Pharaoh soon came into power who had not known Joseph, and was not familiar with how Joseph, even though he was an Israelite in origin, had helped saved the lives of thousands of Egyptians and Israelites alike. The new Pharaoh was a prideful, arrogant dictator who like many of the Pharaohs before him thought that he was a god and should be worshipped accordingly.

This new Pharaoh, never knowing what Joseph did for the Egyptians, did not respect Joseph's memory. Nor did he respect or care for Joseph's relatives and descendants, the people of Israel.

Under the new Pharaoh, the Israelites who were flourishing and increasing in number, were perceived as a threat to the Egyptians. The Egyptians feared that if a war broke out, the massive number of Israelites could fight against, and even potentially overtake them.

Essentially the people of Egypt and the Pharaoh feared the Israelites due to their numbers, their ingenuity, and their 'mysterious' way of always being able to succeed in any circumstance, even in a land foreign to them such as Egypt.

Little did Pharaoh know that this was the LORD's Masterplan – the one, true God of Israel.

Pharaoh, considering himself to be a god, refused to acknowledge the LORD and continually pushed back against Him with a rebellious, hardened heart.

In an attempt to control the Israelites, Pharaoh sent taskmasters to ruthlessly make them work as slaves of the Egyptians, physically afflicting them with heavy, hard labor. Emotional affliction was also part of Pharaoh's plan as he denied the Israelites worship of the one true God of Israel ~ LORD God, YHVH (Yahweh).

***Pearl: Pharaoh Tried to Limit the Population of Israelites in Egypt***

*Pharaoh instructed the midwives of Egypt who assisted all births to kill all male, newborn sons of the Israelite women. However, the midwives feared the God of Israel, and therefore went against the Pharaoh's mandate and let all of the Hebrew babies live. (Exodus 1)*

*These actions by the midwives caused the Pharaoh to grow more obstinate and hard-hearted, and led to him commanding all of his people to cast all sons of the Hebrews into the Nile. (Exodus 1:22)*

This is where we are in the context of the day.

Pharaoh is attempting to control and demoralize the Israelite people. By casting the Israelites into slavery and by killing all newborn Israelite male babies, Pharaoh is exerting his mighty god-like (but god-less) behavior on the LORD's chosen people.

It is in this time that one particular, very significant, Hebrew baby from the Tribe of Levi has just been born. The baby will be named Moses (***Hebrew: Moshe***).

***Act 1: Moses is Called by God***

***Ca. 1526 BC***

***Playlist: "Confidence" by Sanctus Real***

***Scene 1: Cast Into the Nile***

*Once again, God steps in.*

This time the LORD saved a Hebrew son, a very special, fine child from the tribe of Levi. (Exodus 2:1)

This Hebrew baby boy was cast into the Nile. However, his mother just didn't throw him in the water unprotected, she placed him in a basket with the hope that somehow he would survive.

Ironically, the baby in the basket was soon retrieved downstream by none other than Pharaoh's daughter. Even more ironic is that the baby ends up being raised by a Hebrew nurse, and the nurse was actually his true mother.

The child was then brought to the Pharaoh's daughter after he was weaned, and she named him Moses (***Hebrew: Moshe***), as she had "*drawn him out of the water.*"

Being saved by Pharaoh's daughter led to a very different lifestyle for this particular Hebrew young boy. As a result, the boy named Moses was raised by the Egyptians, and did not have to endure the hard life that was typical of the Hebrew people during that era.

However, even though Moses was spared from slavery, he still identified with the Hebrew people. After Moses had grown up, he had to flee from Pharaoh due to his beliefs of being sympathetic to the burdens of 'his people' under Egyptian bondage. He fled to the land of Midian.

*After Moses fled from Egypt, he received the Call of God to do an unfathomable task. Moses was called to free his people from the bondage of the Egyptians.*

### ***God Hears Israel's Groaning***

During the 40 years after Moses had fled, after the old Pharaoh had died, the people of Israel under the new Egyptian rule groaned because of their slavery and cried out to God for help.

***"Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel – and God knew."***

***Exodus 2:23-25***

***Pearl:*** *This is a reminder that the offspring of Abraham will not be defined by their current circumstances of years of slavery – but by their Covenant relationship with God! God has heard their prayers and cries for help. God sees and knows their affliction (slavery, not being able to worship God) and remembered His promises!*

*When God remembers, this means He will take action! God has made His Covenant with His people, His promises, and His peoples' cries for help will lead to action on behalf of His faithful people who God had chosen as His own, against the enemy.*

*God's Covenant, His promises that were made with Abraham (reiterated with Isaac and Jacob) are those first mentioned in Genesis 5, 12:1-3, and 17:1-14*

***Parallels to Revelation:*** *Note the parallels to the prayers of the martyrs who had been slain for the word of God under the altar in John's vision of Revelation in the 5<sup>th</sup> Seal. These souls asked God "how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" They were told to wait a little longer. Later they would receive the Seal of the Living God and God would once again hear and remember their prayers when the 7<sup>th</sup> Seal is opened. The prayers of the saints will be the source of a succession of judgments God will cast with the sounding of the 7 Trumpets in the Book of Revelation.*

### ***Scene 2: The Call from the LORD to Action ~ God Calls Moses!***

It happened one day as Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-Law, Jethro in the land of Midian at Horeb, the Mountain of God (Exodus 3:1).

**Pearl:** Horeb, the Mountain of God is one and the same as Mount Sinai and the site of many events to unfold in the narrative of Exodus – the burning bush, and the mountain where God meets Moses when Israel comes out of Egypt and gives him the law – the Mosaic Covenant (Exodus 19).

Noticing the brilliant light of a bush on fire, but the bush not being consumed by the burning flames, Moses then heard the LORD speaking to him through His angel.

The LORD warned Moses to not come near the Holy ground of His presence and went on to say,

***“I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and he God of Jacob. I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters.***

***I know their sufferings and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.***

***And now behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them.***

***Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.”***  
**(Exodus 3:6-10)**

Moses was the ideal person to receive this charge by the LORD, considering his unusual background of being raised by the Egyptians, but being a devout Israelite and offspring of Abraham. However, Moses was in exile from Egypt.

Having indeed been placed in this difficult circumstance by God, Moses had been ‘groomed’ to lead the people from Egypt out of the oppression of slavery for which they have been afflicted for four-hundred years.

**Pearl:** God heard the people of Israel as they cried out for help, and He remembered his covenant with Abraham and his sons, Isaac and Jacob.

Our God remembers and fulfills His promises and chose Moses to follow His Divine instruction. God chose Moses to lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt to the land of milk and honey, the Promised land of Canaan. This was not an easy road to follow, and God often must intervene to accomplish the Israelites’ exodus from Egypt.

But first, God had to convince Moses that he was the one to do His will. Then the LORD would need to coach Moses on how to appeal and gain the trust of the Israelite people in order for



them to follow him as their leader. The Israelites must know that their God had appeared to Moses.

Moses did not feel like he was the man to do the job God called for, as he felt unequipped and unworthy to do this lofty job justice. Incredulous about his new job that God had just given to him, Moses asked the LORD,

***“Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?”  
(Exodus 3:11)***

Pearl: Moses felt unworthy of God’s task! Why did Moses feel unworthy of his calling by the LORD? Moses felt that the Israelites would not listen to him. What were his reasons for thinking this?

For one, Moses knew that he was not a good speaker, in fact he spoke with a speech impediment. Feeling inadequate about his ability to speak well, Moses would often get anxious when trying to talk with groups of people which resulted in what we would refer to as ‘stage fright.’

He, who could not talk eloquently, and got tongue-tied in front of an audience!

Moses therefore felt unworthy for the task that God had called him to do, as he felt he could not communicate well. Without effective communication, how could he possibly first convince the Israelites of God’s plan, and then successfully lead God’s people on the seemingly ‘impossible’ mission of bringing them out of Egypt?

And furthermore, Moses was frightened at the idea of having to talk directly with Pharaoh!

Knowing that Pharaoh was the most powerful man in the land intimidated Moses even more when it came to having to speak with him – especially having to talk with him concerning something that obviously Pharaoh would not be happy about hearing.

God told Moses that he was capable because He, the Almighty said he would succeed, but Moses persisted in saying he was not worthy for the job.

Furthermore, Moses was very concerned about being able to convince the Israelites that he was the one sent by God. *How could he make the people believe he was really sent by the LORD?*

Moses asked the LORD what should he say when the people ask who is God, and what is His name?

## **God Proclaims His Name**

The LORD told Moses to say to the people,

***“I AM WHO I AM.  
This is what you say to the Israelites,  
I AM has sent me to you.”***

God then said,

***“Say to the Israelites, The LORD, the God of your fathers - the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob - has sent me to you.  
This is my name forever, the name you shall call me from generation to generation.”  
(Exodus 3:13-15)***

### ***Pearl: God’s Personal Name YHVH ~ (Yod Hey Vav Hey)***

*In this verse, God proclaimed His personal name to Moses. In Hebrew it is the first four letters of the alphabet, Yod Hey Vav Hey, and written in English as the tetragrammaton of YHVH. We pronounce it Yahweh. In Hebrew, the name is often said to mean I am the Being One, the One who brings into existence, the Creator, the same yesterday, today and tomorrow, and pronounced from the Hebrew as Ehyeh-Asher-Ehyeh. We pronounce it Yahweh.*

*The word LORD, in capitalized letters, is another way that English speaking Bibles denote the Hebrew tetragrammaton for the personal name of God. The four Hebrew letters, pronounced as Yod, Hey, Vav, Hey, are written as the tetragrammaton of YHVH, which is replaced as the word, LORD (all capital letters).*

*Of interest is that YHVH, written in English speaking Bibles as LORD, appears 6,220 times in the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible).*

*In general, God’s personal name of YHVH is not pronounced in the Jewish religion, as no one knows how to pronounce it, and also out of deepest respect for His name.*

*God’s personal name reveals some of His many attributes and character and reminds people of his promises to help his people fulfill their calling.*

*Harkening back to **Genesis 2:4**, where the LORD is described as the Creator of humanity and of all things, this significant theme of the LORD God being the Creator is paramount for understanding all of the Bible.*

***“These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.  
In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.”  
(Genesis 2:4)***

*Importantly, YHVH is God’s personal name, which is in contradistinction to Elohim, which is a general name for ‘God.’*

*In **Exodus 3:13-15**, the LORD God, upon giving Moses His personal name, associates Himself with the Fathers of Israel, as the Creator of the Universe, and with eternity, making three very significant points as He proclaims His personal name. Being He is self-existent, He is the Creator and sustainer of all that exists and he is not in the process of becoming something different from what he is, and is eternal. God promised to be with Moses and “ehyeh” can also be translated as “I will be” – a clear reminder that God is always with His people.*

Moses was reluctant to accept God’s calling, saying that he is not an eloquent speaker, and that the people would not listen to him. Even knowing that God will be with him giving him many signs and divine gifts such as the staff that became a serpent, and will also choose his words, Moses still resisted his calling by the LORD.

***“Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to you servant  
but I am slow of speech and of tongue.”***

***“Oh my Lord, please send someone else.”  
(Exodus 4: 10,13)***

The LORD therefore finally agreed to allow Aaron the Levite, Moses’ brother, to accompany him as his spokesman to help him communicate with the Israelite people.

***“He shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be your mouth,  
and you shall be as God to him.  
And take in your hand this staff with which you shall do the signs.”  
(Exodus 4:16)***

After God blessed Aaron, Moses and Aaron met with the people of Israel and spoke the words of the LORD and did the signs of the LORD in their sight.

***“And the people believed  
and when they heard that the LORD had visited the people of Israel  
and he had seen their affliction,  
they bowed their heads and worshiped.”  
(Exodus 4:31)***

### **Scene 3: Moses Talks with Pharaoh**

When trying to talk with Pharaoh, things did not go well for Moses.

God had instructed Moses to tell Pharaoh that the Israelites should be set free so that they may serve Him, as they had been created to do.

Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said,

***“Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel,  
“Let my people go, so that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness.”  
(Exodus 5:1)***

Pharaoh obstinately replied,

***“Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and  
moreover I will not let Israel go”  
(Exodus 5:2)***

***Pearl:*** *Pharaoh was definitely standing in the way of the Israelite people worshipping God. Pharaoh’s response is a central theme in the LORD’s descriptions of what the plagues are to signify for Egypt, being “that you may know that I am the LORD”*

*The sense of the word ‘know’ is similar to the LORD knowing the Israelites’ suffering. Pharaoh’s use of the word that he does not know the LORD is as much about defiance against the LORD’s claims as it is about ignorance of the LORD’s identity.*

Moses’ initial request was for Pharaoh to allow the Hebrews three days off from hard labor so they may journey to the wilderness to hold a feast to the LORD and to make a sacrifice in His Holy Name.

Pharaoh not only denied Moses’ request for the people to have 3 days to worship God, but actually *increased* the Hebrew people’s work load back home!

Of course the people of Israel became disheartened. God had promised deliverance, and vowed to Moses that He would bring the people out of Egypt, into the land of Canaan. Now all they had was more hard labor to do.

Moses and Aaron were then told to go back to Pharaoh and tell him to let the people of Israel go out of his land.

***Pearl: Again, when speaking with Moses, the LORD emphasizes His personal name of YHVH, and reminded Moses of His Covenant that He made with His people, promising to bring them out of Egypt to fulfill His promises.***

***“I am the LORD.***

***I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them.***

***I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners.***

***Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant.”***

***(Exodus 6:2-5)***

The LORD then told Moses to reassure the people of Israel by telling them,

***“I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.***

***I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.***

***I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, I will give it to you for a possession.***

***I am the LORD.”***

***(Exodus 6: 6-9)***

Even as Pharaoh saw the miracles that Moses was able to do because of the power of God, Pharaoh still did not listen.

God encouraged Moses by saying that He will bring the people out of Egypt by great acts of His judgment,

***“Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I will lay my hand on Egypt and bring my people the children of Israel out of the land by great acts of judgment. The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them.”***

***(Exodus 7:4,5)***

***Pearl: Pharaoh proclaims ‘Who is God? Why should I obey Him? I do not know Him!’***

***Of interest is that Pharaoh asked the ultimate question, which is still asked by many modern people of today struggling with this very same question, being ‘who is this God, and why should I obey Him’? Why should I know Him? (Exodus 5:2)***

“Who is God, and why should I know and obey Him” is *the most important question one could ask*. The answer we give determines our eternal destination, and also how we live our life.

Pharaoh essentially acted much like a ‘*modern man*,’ in that he believed he was *a god*. He had never heard of the LORD, and in his obstinance Pharaoh did not try to even know God or know who He is! In response, God is going to reveal his power and the necessity of obeying him through His judgments of the plagues. God will show, through His intercessions, the plagues on Egypt, just who exactly He is.

First, God will demonstrate His power. God is the all-powerful, the almighty, the Creator of the universe and all within its realms.

Secondly, God will demonstrate that He should be obeyed through evidence of His power through the physical effects of the plagues. .

*God will bring Judgement on the Egyptians, and bring salvation to the Israelites ~ it will set them free.*

***Parallels to Revelation:*** *Of significance is that we will see this same pattern of behavior demonstrated by non-believers throughout time which is manifested in the Book of Revelation. God’s judgments on unrepentant humanity will finally come to fruition in the End Times during the Great Tribulation, the Second Coming of Christ and on Judgment Day in the Book of Revelation.*

## **Act 2: God Intercedes in Egypt – God Passes Judgment on Idolatry and the Enemy**

***Exodus 7 – 10 – Parallels to the Book of Revelation ~ Seals of the Scroll***

***Related Scripture: Psalm 78, Psalm 79, Psalm 105, Psalm 106, Psalm 97, and The Book of Revelation ~ 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Seals, Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, Revelation 13, 2 Thessalonians 2, Nahum 1:5-7, Joel 2:30-31, Isaiah 13:10, 34:4, Amos 8:9, Ezekiel 38, Malachi 3, Jeremiah 46, Job 26***

***Playlist “The Greatness of Our God” by the Newsboys, “These Days” by Jeremy Camp, “Praise You in the Storm” by Casting Crowns and “Rattle” by Elevation Worship***

### **Scene 1: The first intercession by God: The Plagues** **Ca. 1446 BC**

*The 10 plagues on Pharaoh and the people of Egypt ~* Something to note is that each plague becomes more severe than the previous. The first of the plagues specifically affect the Egyptians, but do not affect the Israelites.

**Pearl:** Each plague is designed by God as a direct attack on the specific deity that the Egyptians worship. In other words, God's purpose is to mock the god/goddess ruling the event that corresponds to His plague, on which He passes judgement.

In each plague, God is showing His Divine power over a specific Egyptian deity, which ultimately ends with His attack on Pharaoh, who thought he was god himself.

To put the plagues into context it is helpful to understand that the Egyptian culture was fraught with idolatry and belief in man-created deities. The practice of magic was also prevalent in Egypt and many magicians had the ability to work spells at a basic level.

But not at the level that our Creator can achieve!

**God drives home His point of His sovereignty, power, and that indeed that He is LORD of all.**

He is the creator of all heaven and earth and all within the realms, and therefore can also destroy His creation.

God mocked the man-made false gods that the Egyptians believed in, and also Pharaoh, who he, himself believed was the ultimate god.

**The Plagues in chronological order were as follows:**

- a. **1<sup>st</sup> plague:** Water turned to blood ~ Moses dipped his staff in the Nile and it became blood. The Nile was the life blood of Egypt, and even had with its own god, **Hapi**, the god of the Nile. This plague was a definite blow to Egyptian culture, which centered around the Nile River. The first plague only lasted for 7 days. Being short-lived, Pharaoh was not impressed.
- b. **2<sup>nd</sup> plague:** Frogs ~ frogs multiplied greatly and as a result were everywhere! Frogs were sacred in Egypt, and because of their religious system of worshipping deities such as **Heket**, which looked like a frog, they couldn't kill the frogs, even though the frogs tormented them. This plague was aimed against Heket, the Egyptian goddess of fertility.
- c. **3<sup>rd</sup> plague:** Gnats ~ the dust of the Earth became gnats. These gnats were very obnoxious as they bit and stung, causing non-stop irritation to the Egyptian people. **Geb** was the god of dust. God showed the Egyptians that He controlled even the dust as He turned it into biting gnats!

**Pearl:** At this point, Pharaoh's magicians said that the plagues were due to the finger of Elohim! The magicians recognized that this was God's doing, and that they as magicians, could not keep up with God's power. The Egyptian culture was steeped in magic and many magicians worked for Pharaoh. They had 'magic books' with

*knowledge of the magic arts, such as the command of snakes. Pharaoh's advisors could duplicate the blood of the Nile, and the abundance of frogs.*

*Of note is that Satan is a counterfeiter! He is a created being, but not the creator. The Devil can however fool people. Of interest is that in doing the work of the Devil, the magicians could not duplicate the gnats! The Devil could only mimic God's power by doing the first two plagues only.*

*In spite of the magicians saying the plagues were due to the power of God, Pharaoh still did not let the people go, as God had hardened his heart.*

- d. **4<sup>th</sup> plague:** Flies ~ swarms of flies came into the land. **Khepri** is a bug-headed god and corresponds to this plague. At this point, Pharaoh tried to negotiate to stop the plagues.
- e. **5<sup>th</sup> plague:** Death of all Livestock that belongs to Egyptians ~ The Israelite's livestock went unharmed! God protected the Israelites and all the livestock belonging to them. This plague was a direct blow against **Hathor**, the goddess of protection (this goddess even has the head of a cow). Hathor could not protect the Egyptians, yet God protected His people's livestock. In Goshen, the Israelites' livestock went unscathed.
- f. **6<sup>th</sup> plague:** Boils ~ This plague was aimed against **Isis**, the goddess of medicine. This was the first plague that actually affected the Egyptian people's health directly. The boils were inflamed, painful, eruptions that broke open with pus. All of the Egyptians suffered outbreaks of boils.
- g. **7<sup>th</sup> plague:** Hail ~ huge basketball-sized hail came down from the sky and did severe damage to all of the land. This plague corresponded to **Nut**, the Egyptian goddess of the sky. Nut was powerless to stop the hail! Pharaoh at this point admitted that he and his people had sinned. However, Moses saw that Pharaoh was trying to **deceive him, and was not yet sincerely fearing God.**
- h. **8<sup>th</sup> plague:** Locusts ~ an east wind brought the locusts over the entire country of Egypt and devoured all the vegetation. At this point there is total disruption of life in Egypt, as the fish were tainted, the livestock were dead, and now even the vegetation was gone. As a result of the mayhem, the Egyptians had no food supply. The land was in total chaos! **The Egyptian god of chaos was Seth!** In spite of chaos throughout the land, and danger of his people starving to death, Pharaoh still would not let the Israelites go free.
- i. **9<sup>th</sup> plague:** Darkness ~ God brought total blackness over the land with no light at all. It was dangerous to move around due as the Egyptians could not see, but the darkness only lasted for **3 days**. This plague was a direct aim against **Ra**, the sun god. Ra was a very premier, influential god in Egypt, as he was believed to be the **'creator god' and known for his extreme power.** Yet God silenced Ra! Now all the gods of Egypt have been attacked by God, the God of Israel. In spite of this, Pharaoh still did not let the people go.
- j. **10<sup>th</sup> plague:** Death of the firstborn in every house in Egypt ~ (**Exodus 12**)



This plague was God aiming a direct assault at Pharaoh, as Pharaoh being the ruler and the supreme 'god' over Egypt was ultimately responsible for protecting his people.

- The LORD struck down all firstborn in Egypt, including firstborn livestock
- The people of Israel had to faithfully act according to God's instructions for the Angel of death to Pass over them during this tenth, and final plague.
- The Israelites were given specific instructions by God, which led to **Passover** being remembered every year as a celebration.

### ***Why did God bring on the plagues?***

With the bringing of the plagues one can see that actually all of God's doings of His creation as what was stated in **Genesis 1 and 2, were undone.**

The plagues 'undid' everything God had created in the beginning such as light, water, animals, insects, and even life itself.

God took nature back to its pre-creation state of disorganized chaos, without form and covered with darkness (Hebrew: Tohu vavohu) (Genesis 1:2).

The last plague before death was the obliteration of Light, which was God's opening statement of His creation in Genesis "Let there be light" (Genesis 1:3).

***Pearl:*** *God sent an important message to Pharaoh, and all of humanity, being that if He is not at the center of our life, He will cause everything to become undone.*

***Message to Us!*** *God must be the center of our reality, and He must be obeyed. We must pursue God first.*

*If we do not follow His commands, we too will become 'undone'. Why do we need to put God first and foremost in your life? Because we cannot put ourselves at the mercy of fallen creatures such as Satan. We cannot worship anything or anyone other than God – we cannot put anything before God, things such as work, children, spouse, or anything.*

*Drawing a parallel to the New Testament, we can see the foreshadow of how God can restore humanity's fallen state through Jesus Christ.*

*Jesus, who essentially was made 'undone,' by taking on the sin of the world, then crucified and buried, but was brought back to life and then ascended to heaven to sit at God's Right Hand. The act of the resurrection restored order and provided salvation for all humanity.*

Back to Pharaoh's ultimate question. So Pharaoh, did God answer your question of "So who is God, and why should I obey Him?"

**Figure 1: Plague, Corresponding Egyptian Deity, and Effect**

Plague	Name of Plague	Egyptian deity attacked	Effect of plague
1	Water turned to blood	Hapi ~ god of the Nile	Nile water turned to blood, water is undrinkable, fish die
2	Frogs	Heket ~ god of the sacred frogs, renewal, water	Frogs swarmed houses of the Egyptians, and the Nile
3	Gnats	Geb ~ god of the earth	All of the dust in Egypt became gnats, swarming & stinging man and beast
4	Flies	Khepri ~ god of creation, bug headed god	Swarms of flies on Egyptian people/land and the land was ruined
5	Egyptian Livestock Die	Hather ~ goddess of protection	Livestock die, but only the livestock belonging to the Egyptians. God protected the Israelite's livestock
6	Boils	Isis ~ goddess of medicine	Painful boils erupt on the Egyptian people, including the magicians
7	Hail	Nut ~ goddess of the sky	Very large hail struck down all left outside without shelter (man, beast, vegetation)
8	Locusts	Seth ~ god of chaos	Locusts swarm and eat vegetation that had not been struck down by hail ~ obliterates food supply in Egypt resulting in <i>total chaos</i>
9	Darkness	Ra ~ sun god, very powerful deity	Pitch-darkness in Egypt for 3 days (did not affect the Israelites)
10	Death	Pharaoh	Death to all the first born of all Egyptians. Pharaoh freed the Israelites

***Pearl: Ties of the Plagues in Exodus to the Judgments in the Book of Revelation***

Many of the plagues that the LORD brought to Pharaoh and his people of Egypt parallel the judgements of the Scrolls described in the John's Divinely inspired apocalyptic vision written in the Book of Revelation.

The overarching themes behind the reasons for the plagues of Egypt and the judgments in Revelation are similar, being that the LORD God is in conflict with Satan and his evil allies.

Satan, working through the human form of Pharaoh in the book of Exodus, and taking the forms of the Beast and the *Unholy Trinity* in the book of Revelation, tries to become God but fails miserably. Of interest is that in both accounts, the people who follow the Pharaoh and those who follow the Beast continue to stubbornly refuse to repent of their evil ways, despite seeing the LORD God's Almighty power and sovereignty.

***Examination of Scripture taken from Exodus and from the Book of Revelation will be compared side by side so you as the reader can see the parallelism between the two accounts.***

First, let's examine the ***First plague in Exodus***, where the waters of the Nile are turned to blood, as see how it foreshadows the ***Seventh Seal, Second Trumpet in Revelation 8 and the Seven Bowls of Gods Wrath in Revelation 16.***

In ***Exodus 7*** it is written where the LORD sent Moses to admonish Pharaoh when he refused to let His people free. Here, the LORD will bring upon the First plague.

***“By this you shall know that I am the LORD:  
Behold, with the staff that is in my hand I will strike the water that is in the Nile, and it shall turn into blood.  
The fish in the Nile shall die, and the Nile will stink, and the Egyptians will grow weary of drinking water from the Nile.”  
(Exodus 7:17-18)***

This plague echoes the LORD's judgements in ***Revelation 8***, the ***Seventh Seal***, when the second angel blew his trumpet,

***“The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea,  
and a third of the sea became blood.  
A third of the living creatures in the sea died, and a third of the ships were destroyed.”  
(Revelation 8:9)***

The first plague also foreshadows the LORD's judgement in His bowls of Wrath in ***Revelation 16***,

***“The second angel poured out his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of a corpse, and every living thing died that was in the sea.  
The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the springs of water, and they became blood.”  
(Revelation 16:3-4)***

Continuing on, we read were the **Seventh Plague** God brought on to Pharaoh (hail) foreshadows the **Seventh Seal, first trumpet**, of **Revelation**.

***“Then Moses stretched out his staff toward heaven, and the LORD sent thunder and hail, and fire ran down to the earth. And the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt. There was hail and fire flashing continually in the midst of the hail, very heavy hail, such as had never been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation.”***  
***(Exodus 9:23-24)***

***“The first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed hail and fire, mixed with blood, and these were thrown upon the earth.”***  
***(Revelation 8:7)***

We also find parallels concerning hail to the **Seven Bowls of God’s Wrath** in **Revelation 16**,

***“And great hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, fell from heaven on people, and they cursed God for the plague of the hail, because the plague was so severe.”***  
***(Revelation 16: 21)***

Let’s now look at the **Sixth Plague** on Pharaoh (Boils), as compared to the **First Bowl Judgment of Revelation 16**.

***“So they took soot from the kiln and stood before Pharaoh. And Moses threw it in the air, and it became boils breaking out in sores on man and beast. And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils, for the boils came upon the magicians and upon all the Egyptians.”***  
***(Exodus 9:10-11)***

Comparing the **Sixth Plague** on the Egyptians, to the **First Bowl Judgment in the Book of Revelation**,

***“So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth, and harmful and painful sores came upon the people who bore the mark of the beast and worshiped its image.”***  
***(Revelation 16:2)***

Similarities are striking with boils breaking out on people who worship evil, being the Pharaoh in Exodus, who thought he was a god, and the Antichrist in Revelation, who mimicked Christ as part of the **Unholy Trinity**.

The parallels between **Exodus** and **Revelation** don't stop there. Similarities between the Plagues in the book of **Exodus** and the Judgments in **Revelation** continue.

For instance, another parallel is found when God allowed the earth to be plunged into total darkness, as happens both in **Revelation 16:10** and in **Exodus 10 (Plague 9)**.

***“So Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven, and there was pitch darkness in all the land of Egypt three days.  
They did not see one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days but all the people of Israel had light where they lived.”  
(Exodus 10: 22-23)***

***“The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness.  
People gnawed their tongues in anguish and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores.  
They did not repent of their deeds.”  
(Revelation 16:10)***

Of note is that the Egyptian people in **Exodus** and the non-believers in **Revelation** did not repent and turn to the LORD, God.

Parallels also exist between **Plague 8** (locusts) in **Exodus 10**, and the events in the **Book of Revelation** with the **Seventh Seal and the Seven Trumpets**.

The locusts released in **Plague 8** foreshadow the release of locusts in **Revelation 9**.

In the End Times described in the **Book of Revelation**, the fifth angel will blow his trumpet, and the fallen star of the Devil will fall to earth. Given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit, the Devil, upon opening the pit will cause the release of smoke and locusts on the earth.

***“Then from the smoke came locusts on the earth, and they were given power like the power of scorpions of the earth.  
They were told not to harm the grass of the earth or any green plant or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.  
They were allowed to torment them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torment was like death and will not find it.  
They will long to die, but death will flee from them.  
(Revelation 9: 3-6)***

We will see in the end how the final plague, Death, which was sent to ravage Pharaoh and the Egyptians by the LORD will be a foreshadow of events occurring in the End times of the **Book of Revelation**.

We will also make the connections between the first Passover in Exodus and the events of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Messiah, in the Gospels.

Foreshadowing events in the **Book of Revelation**, it will also become clear how Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God, the One who is worthy to open the Scrolls and to sit at the right hand of the LORD God on the Heavenly Throne.

## **Scene 2: The Ultimate Plague (Death) and God's Mercy (the First Passover)** **Exodus 12**

**Introduction:** To fully understand the overall concept of the Passover, which was created by the LORD to save His people from the final plague of death, we need to put the culture of the day into context.

To enhance our understanding of the cultural values of the ancient Israelites we need to embrace the value that was placed on the family, and specifically the firstborn son.

**Pearl The Firstborn Son:** *The well-being and continuation of the family, rather than the individual person, was paramount in ancient Israelite culture.*

*In order to secure the well-being and the continuation of a particular family line, the concept was held that the firstborn male child would become the leader of the family upon the death of the family patriarch.*

*Along with leadership responsibility, the firstborn son also inherited the main proportion of the land belonging to the family, along with wealth, such as livestock. This was done to assure that the land and wealth would stay within the family line, thus guaranteeing the welfare of the family.*

*This inheritance of the firstborn son was termed the "birthright."*

*God commanded that all firstborn males (both human and livestock) be consecrated to Him. (**Genesis 13:1-2; 13:11-16**). The firstborn of sheep and cattle also had to be sacrificed to the LORD God, however firstborn donkeys and humans were redeemed, as a sacrificial lamb was substituted in their place.*

*In other words, the firstborn was made holy by giving him to God.*

*This act of consecration of the firstborn served as a reminder to the Israelites of when the Egyptian firstborns died in the 10<sup>th</sup> plague, but the Israelite firstborns were spared.*

*This shall remind the people that,*

***“by a strong hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt.”  
(Genesis 13:16)***

*The significance of the exodus from Egypt was to be so paramount to the Israelites that the LORD declared the month that the people come out of Egypt shall become the first month of the year of the Hebrew calendar (Exodus 12:2).*

***Pearl: The Significance of the 10<sup>th</sup> plague ~ Death:***

With the 10<sup>th</sup> plague, God threatened death to all firstborn sons in Egypt.

Of significance is that He did not specify just Egyptians, but ***all those living in Egypt***, so this would also include God’s people, being the Israelites being held as slaves by Pharaoh.

God could not turn a blind eye to sin and injustice. To repay the debt, God called that all first-born will be sacrificed, and struck dead on the night of the Passover.

However, there would be an appropriate substitute for the firstborn son, and if the people ***obeyed God’s specific instructions for redemption of the firstborn***, then the firstborn sons of the people would not be struck dead.

The firstborn sons would be “passed over,” and would not be struck dead if God’s instructions for redemption were followed.

***God’s Specific Instructions for the Passover:***

- God’s instructions to the Israelites to avoid the death of the firstborn sons was first, that all households must sacrifice a non-blemished, year-old male lamb.
  - He specified that the lamb be roasted on the fire, and eaten in full with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.
- God also required a blood sacrifice.

Of utmost significance was that the killing of a non-blemished, young, male lamb required obedience and complete trust by the people, as the unblemished animal would be the prime animal that should actually be kept for breeding purposes in the future to produce more fine livestock.

Killing this animal for a meal required the people to trust God that He would provide more unblemished livestock in the future that then could be used for future breeding purposes.

God specified that the Passover meal should be eaten in haste, as the people were going to leave Egypt quickly the following morning.

So in other words, don't keep any leftovers because you won't be around to eat them!

***"It is the LORD's Passover.***

***For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast, and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgements:  
I AM the LORD."  
(Exodus 12:12)***

As mentioned, God's instructions to the people of Israel also required a ***blood sacrifice***.

How was this accomplished?

The blood of the unblemished animal was to be gathered in a bowl, and brushed onto the doorposts and lintel of each household.

This is described in ***Exodus 12:13 and 22-23***,

***"The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are.  
And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt."  
(Exodus 12:13)***

***"Touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin.  
None of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.  
For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you."  
(Exodus 12:22-23)***

***~The Final Plague of Death and the Passover~  
Exodus 11 and 12***

Even after the Ninth Plague of darkness, Pharaoh would not let the people of Israel go serve the LORD. This angered the LORD, as Pharaoh refused to comply with the LORD's wishes to allow the Israelites to worship Him.

Having one final, severe plague in mind in order to make His point with hard-hearted Pharaoh, the LORD then said to Moses,

***"Yet one plague more I will bring upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt.***



***Afterward he will let you go from here.”  
(Exodus 11:1)***

***“It is the LORD’s Passover,  
For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land  
of Egypt, both man and beast, and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments.  
I am the LORD.***

***The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are.  
And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you,  
when I strike the land of Egypt.”  
(Exodus 12:11)***

***“About midnight I will go out in the midst of Egypt, and every firstborn in the land of Egypt  
shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the  
slave girl who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the cattle.”  
(Exodus 11: 4)***

True to His word, at midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt.

The Israelites, ***because they obeyed*** and kept the Lord’s instructions as above in ***Exodus 12: 22-23***, were unscathed.

As a remembrance of their exodus from Egypt, God instructed the Israelites to celebrate Passover every year thereafter with the blood sacrifice and traditional sacred meal, which consisted of bread, wine, and the sacrificial lamb.

### ***Pearl: The Blood Sacrifice***

*The concept of the blood sacrifice and the lamb is weaved intricately throughout the Bible in both the Old and the New Testament.*

*Harkening back to Abraham and Isaac, when Isaac was offered up to God for sacrifice as the firstborn son, God saw Abraham’s extreme trust in Him. Prepared as a lamb for sacrifice on a burnt offering, God then stepped in and provided the substitute sacrifice (a ram), so Abraham’s ‘lamb’, his son Isaac, was redeemed.*

***The first Passover and blood sacrifice foreshadows Jesus Christ as the lamb in the New Testament. The Passover that Jesus celebrated with His disciples the night before His crucifixion is a vivid reminder to Christians about God’s Grace and love to us, as He provided Jesus as our substitute in sacrifice for our redemption.***

*Of significance was that the Passover Jesus hosted with His disciples was celebrated with wine and bread, but there was no lamb.*

*The lack of a lamb prepared at their Passover meal was symbolic and intentional as Jesus would serve as the sacrificial lamb the next day when He was crucified.*

*Jesus was God's unblemished, perfect, first-born Lamb, sacrificed in our place as substitutionary atonement for our sins.*

*God called in the debt, which was paid by Jesus with His death on the cross in our place.*

*As John the Baptist prophesized when seeing Jesus at the beginning of His ministry,*

***"Behold the Lamb of God!"  
(John 1:35)***

*We can also tie the birth of Jesus back to **Genesis 3:15**, when God prophesied that a son borne to a woman would crush the devil, saving humanity from the death of sin with eternal salvation.*

*The Devil and death would be defeated, and through the substitutional sacrificial atonement and propitiation of Jesus for humanity, we, humanity, would be redeemed.*

*We see another reminder of the Passover in the story in our series of **Ancestry. Jesus of Rahab the Prostitute "Scarlet Still Saves,"** and how she and her family were saved by the **scarlet color of blood.***

***Pearl: Ties to the Second Coming of Christ ~ The Lamb in the Book of Revelation***

Importantly, Jesus Christ will appear as the Lamb who has been slain (the Passover Lamb) throughout the apocalyptic vision given to John, written in the **Book of Revelation**.

Serving as a reminder to us as the sacrifice Jesus made to us on the **Cross as the Lamb of God**, Jesus, the Messiah, resonates with the theme of the **Passover Lamb of God** as He symbolically appears to John in his apocalypse as the lamb who has been slain.

***"And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent into all the earth."  
(Revelation 5:6)***

Jesus Christ, the slain lamb of God, who conquered sin is the only One worthy to open the scroll of God in John's Divine inspired vision of the Revelation.

The Lamb's seven horns symbolize the Lamb's great power, and His seven eyes identified with God's seven spirits, showing that the Lamb's knowledge extends throughout all the earth.

When the Lamb had taken the scroll from the right hand of God, who was seated on the throne, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints who had given their lives in order to follow Christ.

And the saints in Heaven sang a new song concerning Jesus Christ, the Lamb,

***“Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals,  
For you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and  
language and people and nation,  
And you have made them a kingdom and priest to our God,  
And they shall reign on the earth.”  
(Revelation 5:9)***

***Pearl ~ Hardness of Heart:*** *The recurring references to the hardness of Pharaoh’s heart signify that the Lord is sovereign over, and governs the events in Exodus as He hardens Pharaoh’s heart in a progressive manner. Going from hardening of heart, to stiffness and eventually to stone against God’s Will, God stepped in and progressively hardened Pharaoh’s heart more and more until his heart was deadened and there was no chance at all for Pharaoh’s repentance and salvation.*

*Pharaoh however is held responsible for his refusal to acknowledge God’s power and sovereignty, even though God sent signs and plagues on Egypt that even the magicians in Pharaoh’s court admitted was “the finger of God” (Exodus 8:18).*

*In defiance and rebellion, Pharaoh hardened his own heart at first as he was stubborn, arrogant and cruel. God then strengthened the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart, reinforcing the stiffness in that direction. Finally, Pharaoh crossed the line, and refused to respond to God’s power even when it came to the ruining of Egypt and the Egyptian people under his rule. Pharaoh’s heart was like stone against God, so God deadened it !*

*God hardened Pharaoh’s heart for many reasons, some of which we will never comprehend. For starters, reasons may be that Pharaoh was arrogant, prideful, unrepentant and ungodly. As he became increasingly more rebellious, Pharaoh further suppressed the Truth and consequently brought more and more of God’s judgment on himself and on Egypt. Another reason God may have chosen to progressively harden Pharaoh’s heart was to demonstrate that His power and His Glory can overcome all evil, and His Name will be known throughout the entire world – God is sovereign over evil! God is also just and He hates sin. He will show mercy on whomever He will, and he hardens whomever He wills – salvation depends on God’s merciful will, not on human effort (Romans 9:17, 18)*

*This reveals to us, the readers, that we are being called to understand the unfolding of events in Exodus, and to keep from hardening our own hearts by not backsliding away from God. If God is not at the center of our lives and in our hearts, we will become undone, just as God undid His creation. The book of Hebrews uses Psalm 95 to call the church to continue in Christ by faith – do not harden your hearts! (Hebrews 3:7-4:13, Psalm 95:8)*

*The reader sees that Pharaoh had his own choice as he hardened his own heart with persistent unbelief, unrepentance, and sinning against the People of God. God's sovereignty coexists with man's responsibility and these events show that Pharaoh was still morally responsible and accountable for his own actions, not only for himself but for the people of Egypt over which he ruled.*

*God's covenant with His people calls for renewed faithfulness and continual repentance through faith and obedience. We do not want to be people like Pharaoh being those who go astray in their hearts, not knowing God and His ways even though we may hear his voice. Christians must confess our sins, and obey God's Word so we won't develop hardened hearts that prevent us from seeing God's Truth. We strive to know God through His Word, trust and obey God to avoid falling away and developing a hardened heart. We strive to enter God's rest – the image portrayed in Hebrews 3 & 4, and in Psalm 95 – being the Promised Land where we can rest and enjoy God's presence forever.*

### **Scene 3: Pillars of Cloud and Fire (Exodus 13:12-22)**

**Ca. 1446 BC**

**Introduction:** *God has delivered His people from bondage, and now the journey out of Egypt begins.*

*The exodus from Egypt is a prelude to the establishment of the nation of Israel in the Land God has promised. The Israelites had lived in Egypt for 430 years, and now at the end of these long years all of the LORD's people have left Egypt in search of the Promised Land.*

*In hurried preparation for their journey out of Egypt, the Israelites did as the LORD instructed and baked loaves of unleavened bread. The dough was without yeast because they did not have time to prepare the dough as they would normally, as they left Egypt in haste.*

*The day after Passover, while the Egyptians were occupied with burying their firstborn sons who had died in the 10<sup>th</sup> Plague (**Exodus 12:37-39, Numbers 33:3-4**), the Israelites left Egypt.*

***“On the day after the Passover,  
the people of Israel went out triumphantly in the sight of all the Egyptians,  
while the Egyptians were burying all their firstborn,  
whom the LORD had struck down among them.  
On their gods also the LORD executed judgements.”  
(Numbers 33:3-4)***

***Pearl:*** *The defeat of Pharaoh, who was regarded by the Egyptians as their most high and divine god, and all of the plagues that God had directed against their deities clearly demonstrated that the God of Israel is more powerful than any and all of the Egyptian gods.*

*As the LORD had set the precedent and demonstrated HIS wrath against all of the Egyptian deities, the Israelites were instructed to do the same in Land of Canaan, the Promised Land. The LORD commanded His people to abolish the worship of all rival deities in their new land.*

After leaving Egypt, God led His people around the land of the Philistines toward the Red Sea.

***“When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines,  
although that was near.  
For God said, Lest the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt.  
But God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea.”  
(Exodus 13:17-18)***

The LORD went before His people, leading the way in a pillar of cloud by day for guidance and protection from the sun, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light. He did not depart from His people.

***“The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the  
people.”  
(Exodus 13:22)***

This is a reminder of how God will always lead His people in adversity and stay with them, exemplified in a verse from the *Psalm of David, Psalm 5:8*;

***“Lead me O LORD, in your righteousness because of my enemies;  
make your way straight before me. “***

The cloud and fire signified the presence of the LORD, and will resurface throughout the people's journey out of Egypt.

#### **Scene 4: The Parting of the Red Sea: (Exodus 14:1-30)**

The LORD knew that Pharaoh would come after the Israelites, even after he had freed them. As part of His Masterplan, God then tricked Pharaoh into pursuing His people to a place of His snare, as He intentionally led them towards the waters of the Red Sea.

The LORD said,

***“I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will pursue them (the people of Israel).  
I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host and the Egyptians shall know that I am the  
LORD.”  
(Exodus 14:4)***

Pharaoh pursued the Israelites with over 600 chariots and his huge army of trained soldiers. They followed the people of Israel with the intention to bring them back to Egypt as slaves.

The Egyptians advanced on the Israelites who then became trapped at the shores of the Red Sea with no escape route. The Israelite people were frantic and hopeless thinking that they were all going to die, and complained to Moses for bringing them out of Egypt. Moses bolstered their hope with,

***“Fear not, stand firm and see the salvation of the LORD.  
For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again.  
The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.”  
(Exodus 14:13-14)***

The LORD then instructed Moses to divide the sea, so that the people could cross on dry ground.

***“Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of  
Israel may go through the sea on dry ground.”  
(Exodus 14:16)***

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and,

***“The LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and  
the waters were divided.  
And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall  
to them on their right hand and on their left.”  
(Exodus 14:21-22)***

The LORD knew that Pharaoh and his army would pursue the Israelites and go into the dry land where it had been sea, thinking that the sea would stay parted for their passage as they had seen for the Israelites.

***“The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all pharaoh’s horses, his chariots and his horsemen. “  
(Exodus 14:23)***

The parting of sea, with waters on each side was an event that demonstrated the LORD’s extreme power over nature, as well as over Pharaoh and his man-made deities.

As Pharaoh and his army came across the sea on the dry land following the Israelites, God commanded the waters on each side to return and cover the chariots and horsemen.

The walls of sea water, held back until just the right moment, suddenly came crashing in and covered Pharaoh and his army as they rode through,

***“The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen: of all the host of Pharaoh that had followed them into the sea, not one of them remained.  
But the people of Israel walked on dry ground through the sea, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.”  
(Exodus 14:28-29)***

The Israelites, however had already made it safely to the other side of the sea.

The Israelites saw the great power that God demonstrated in this event, as well as the previous events of the plagues, and the pillars of clouds and fire, and sang praise to the LORD.

The news of the God of Israel’s victory over Pharaoh’s fierce army of chariots spread throughout the land of Egypt, and was known throughout all of the surrounding nations.  
***(Exodus 15, Song of Moses)***

***“Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods?  
Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?  
You stretched out your right hand, the earth swallowed them. You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed: you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode.  
The peoples have heard, they tremble, pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia.  
Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed, trembling seizes the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.  
(Exodus 15: 11-15)***

***Pearl ~ Tie of the Red Sea Parting to the Miraculous Birth of Jesus: In many ways, the Israelites coming out of Egypt, and especially the people emerging from the waters of the Red Sea, fits well with a prominent theme throughout the bible with God bringing life through miraculous births.***

*This of course ties in to prepare the hearts of people for the birth of the Messiah, the most miraculous act imaginable.*

*In the New Testament this miraculous act is again repeated, as every believer in Jesus Christ experiences a 'rebirth'.*

*Parallels can also be drawn between Moses and Jesus (Hebrew: Yeshua). Just as Moses parted the waters demonstrating the power of the LORD being behind him to the Israelites, Jesus walked on water, revealing His identity as the Messiah to His disciples. By parting the Red Sea, and by Jesus walking on water, the LORD demonstrated His sovereignty over all of creation.*

### ***Pearl ~ Tie to End Times in Revelation With the Defeat of Satan***

*The gathering by God of Pharaoh's armies and then leading them after the Israelites who crossed the Red Sea while it was parted, only to have the sea cave back in a drown the Egyptians parallels God's defeat of Satan and his gathered armies in the End times.*

*Similar to the happenings at the Red Sea, in the End times God will gather Satan and his armies, called Gog and Magog (titles of Israel's pagan oppressors), who will then be destroyed by fire from heaven at the direction of the LORD.*

*The battleground in the End times is known as Megiddo (Mount Megiddo), or Armageddon (Hebrew) which is the global, cosmic combat zone of final conflict between Christ and Satan.*

***"And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle, their number is like the sand of the sea.***

***And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the best and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."***

***(Revelation 20:7-10)***

### ***Scene 5: Travels Across the Wilderness***

After setting out from the Red Sea, the Israelites encountered many hardships, as water and food was scarce in the Wilderness of Sin. The people needed to cross this vast wilderness area to get to Sinai.

Though the people of Israel had just witnessed the awesome power of the LORD, they failed to trust him to protect them and provide for them. The whole congregation grumbled against Moses and Aaron while traveling in the wilderness saying,



***“Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”***

***(Exodus 16:3)***

Hearing His peoples’ cries, the LORD provided them plenty of bread from heaven, and quail for food until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.

Moses told the people,

***“When the LORD gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the LORD has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him – what are we?***

***Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD.”***

***(Exodus 16:8)***

The Israelites continued to be bad-tempered and complain as they moved from the wilderness to camp at Rephidim. The people even threatened to stone Moses along the way when water became scarce.

Hearing Moses’ pleas for help, the LORD provided water from the rock at Horeb for the people to drink.

The LORD said to Moses,

***“Behold I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink.”***

***(Exodus 17:6)***

***Pearl:*** This command was interpreted by ancient rabbis in the Midrash as saying that God was instructing Moses to strike God himself, with the result that God is the source of the life-giving water that flowed from the rock.

*Rabbinic exegesis surmised that the rock followed the Israelites through their wanderings, being ever-present with them to supply their need for water as well as spiritual needs.*

~Relevant **New Testament** verse~ Paul identified the Rock with Christ

*The apostle Paul used rabbinic exegesis to explain that the ‘rock’ was Jesus in **1 Corinthians 10**.*

*Paul’s claim was that the rock following the Israelites was Christ in spiritual form, always being there to provide water. The Greek word originally used was Petra, which means “massive rock.”*

*The “Rock” is a common Old Testament name for God (**Deuteronomy 32:4, 15, 18:30-31**)*

***“For I want you to know brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food and all drank the same spiritual drink.***

***For they drank from the spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ. Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased for they were overthrown in the wilderness.”***

***(1 Corinthians 10:1-5)***

Traveling through the wilderness, the Israelites also faced their first battle when they were attacked by the people of Amalek, who inhabited the northern area of the Sinai peninsula. Here, Moses’ faithful assistant, Joshua led the battle and defeated Amalek.

***“Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the sword.”***  
***(Exodus 17:13)***

### **Act 3: Mount Sinai**

Ca 1445 BC

***“On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai.”***  
***(Exodus 19: 1)***

Introduction:

The time frame now puts the peoples’ arrival at Mount Sinai, about seven weeks after their exodus from Egypt. This coincides with the *Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)*, which celebrated the giving of the Law (***Leviticus 23:15-21***).

Here at Mount Sinai, a Covenant was revealed by God to His people, through Moses. In agreeing to this Covenant, the people pledged their faith to their Creator God, and promised to obey His laws.

It has been 635 years since God promised Abraham that he would make a great nation from his descendants, and bring blessings to that nation and to His people.

Instructions are given by the LORD to Moses, being the *Ten Commandments*, and specifics for the construction of the tabernacle, it’s service, and the Ark of the Covenant.

The LORD called out to Moses on Mount Sinai as he climbed up the mountain, while the people of Israel encamped at the base.

The LORD said,

***“Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel:  
You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings  
and brought you to myself.***

***Now, therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my  
treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a  
kingdom of priests and a holy nation.***

***These are the words you shall speak to the people of Israel.”  
(Exodus 19:3-6)***

### ***Scene 1: The Foot of the Mountain***

On the third day after Moses had gone to the people, they stood at the foot of the mountain waiting to meet with God as Moses had been instructed.

Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, as God had descended upon it in fire. The earth trembled, and God spoke to Moses in thunder.

God proceeded to speak the words to deliver to the people of Israel the Ten Commandments.

During this time, The LORD promised the conquest of Canaan, the Promised Land.

The LORD promised to send His angel before the people to guard them as they entered the Promised land and as they encountered the local inhabitants of Canaan. The Israelites were instructed to drive the local inhabitants out from the land and destroy their places of worship. The LORD warned the Israelites to make no covenant with the Canaanites, commanding His people to be faithful and serve Him, the One God of Israel, alone.

The LORD spoke to the people,

***“Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased and possess the  
land.***

***I will set your border from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to  
the Euphrates, for I will give the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive  
them out before you.***

***You shall make no covenant with them and their gods.  
They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against me:  
for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.”  
(Exodus 23: 30-39)***

Moses stood at the foot of Mount Sinai and confirmed the Covenant with the LORD. Building an altar of twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel, and offering burnt and peace offerings to the LORD, Moses took the sacrificial blood and threw it on the people saying,

***“Behold the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.”  
(Exodus 24:8)***

To fulfill the Lord’s Covenant, the Israelites must eventually leave the region of Mount Sinai for the *Promised Land of Canaan*. But first the Covenant needed to be further confirmed by the LORD.

The LORD said to Moses,

***“Come up to me on the mountain and wait there that I may give you the tablets of stone with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction.”  
(Exodus 24:12)***

Moses and his assistant, Joshua started up the mountain of God. Going further, Moses ascended as the cloud (presence of God) covered the mountain. The cloud covered it for six days. On the seventh day the LORD called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud.

***“Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel.  
Moses entered the cloud and went up on the mountain.  
And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.”  
(Exodus 24:15-18)***

During this time the LORD gave to Moses instructions for building the tabernacle and it’s service and the ark of the Covenant. At the end of the forty days and nights, the LORD said,

***“I have given to all able men ability that they may make all that I have commanded you, the tent of meeting and the ark of the testimony, and the mercy seat that is on it, and all the furnishings of the tent, the table and its utensils, and the pure lampstand with all its utensils, and the altar of incense, and the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the basin and its stand, and the finely worked garments, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, for their service as priests, and the anointing oil and the fragrant incense for the Holy Place.  
According to all that I have commanded you they shall do.”  
(Exodus 31:9-11)***

The LORD also gave very specific instructions concerning the Sabbath,

***“Above all you shall keep my Sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the LORD sanctify you.”  
(Exodus 31: 12-13)***

***“It is a sign forever between me and people of Israel that in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.  
And he gave to Moses when he had finished speaking with him on mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.”  
(Exodus 31: 17-18)***

While Moses was on the mountain, the people below became restless and corrupted themselves by making a golden calf to worship. The LORD was angered, and threatened wrath against them. Moses reminded God of the Covenant He had made with Abraham about the Promised Land, and the LORD relented from the disaster that he had spoken of against His people.

However, when Moses came down from the mountain, he too became burning with anger when he saw the golden calf the Israelites had built and were worshipping. Livid with the Israelites, Moses dropped the holy tablets on which the LORD’s commandments were written from his hands. Shattered, the tablets lay in pieces at the foot of Mount Sinai.

Moses commanded that many of the people be killed for their sin, and that day three thousand fell.

### ***Scene 2: Atonement for Sin***

The next day Moses appeared before the LORD to make atonement for the people’s sin.

The LORD descended from the cloud and stood with Moses and proclaimed about who He was in a central passage of the Hebrew Bible,

***“The LORD, the LORD, a god merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children to the third and the fourth generation.”  
(Exodus 34:4-7)***

The LORD then renewed His covenant with Israel, explicitly saying to drive out the native Canaanites from the Promised Land, and above all, not to worship any other Gods – only the One, true God of Israel.

The LORD also specified that the Israelites should keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the month of Abib, the month the people came out of Egypt. The Israelites were also instructed to keep the Sabbath, and to dedicate the best of the firstfruits of the ground to the house of the LORD.

When Moses descended from the mountain with the two new tablets, the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God.

The Israelites then proceeded to construct the tabernacle and all that was instructed by the LORD.

### ***Scene 3: The Tabernacle ~ The Glory of the LORD***

The Tabernacle represented the very presence of the LORD to the Israelites.

Following very specific instructions for its construction, the tabernacle represents to the people of Israel that this is where the LORD is present with all of His Divine glory.

When the Israelites came into the tabernacle for worship, (also known as the tent of the meeting of the congregation), the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

***“Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.”  
(Exodus 40:34)***

The LORD instructed that the tabernacle was to be taken with them wherever the Israelites go,

***“Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out.  
But if the cloud was not taken up then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up.  
For the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys.”  
(Exodus 40:36-38)***

### ***Pearl: Significance of Tabernacle Worship and Sacrifices***

*Temple worship and sacrifices evolved from the origins of the Tabernacle to play a prominent role in Jewish worship. Temple worship from the outset, was important and commanded by the LORD.*

*Sacrifices (Hebrew: **Qorban**) were also commanded by the LORD, and carried the symbolism of “drawing closer” to God. In contrast to the English meaning of sacrifice, which has the connotation of “giving something up,” sacrifice in Jewish worship was meant to draw people near to God and focus on His glory.*

*Out of the 613 commandments given by the LORD to the Jewish people, 100 of these relate to sacrifices.*

*Temple worship had different types of sacrifices with unique purposes which were offered at set times during the day. Two perpetual offerings (Hebrew: **olot tamid**) were always offered in the morning and in the afternoon. (**Numbers 28: 4,8**)*

*According to the **Mishna Berachot**, times of worship through prayer were fixed closely to temple rituals.*

*There were many types of prayer that could be given at certain times during the day and evening. For instance, **Shacharit** is given in the morning until midday. The **Minchan** prayer is said from midday until evening, with **Ma’ariv** said in the evening. **Musaf** can be prayed all day.*

*The Israelites could pray by themselves at any particular location, but certain prayers required a group in a communal setting of the LORD’s choosing, such as the Tabernacle or later, the Temple. Praying in a group was believed to be most desired by God.*

#### **Act 4: The Promised Land**

***Introduction:** The LORD’s promise to Abraham was that his descendants would be given all the land of Canaan. (**Genesis 17:8**)*

*When talking with Abraham, the LORD did not specify the exact borders of the land promised to his descendants, however in **Numbers 34** it is written where God delineates the actual boundaries of Canaan, the Promised Land.*

*Oversimplifying, Canaan consisted of the land between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River, plus modern Lebanon and a portion of modern Syria.*

*In talking about conquering the land of Canaan, the LORD gave warnings to Moses to tell the Israelites to drive out all the inhabitants of the land. He also warned against religious syncretism, or blending of the Israelites beliefs with those of the Canaanites, and cultural assimilations. The LORD stated that if Israel compromised these commandments in any way they would be punished, and would be sent into exile. (**Numbers 33:56**)*

*Moses was instructed by God to take a census to determine the size of all of the tribes of Israel. He was then instructed by the LORD to divide the land among the tribes in proportion to their size and allocate it by lot. (Numbers 33:54)*

*The LORD then commanded the Israelites to leave Mount Sinai and take possession of their land, the Promised Land.*

***“I have set the land before you.  
Go in and take possession of the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give to them and to their offspring after them.”  
(Deuteronomy 1:8)***

After traveling the final leg through the wilderness Moses and the Israelites finally came to the hill country of the Promised Land.

Here, the LORD instructed through Moses,

***“You have come to the hill country of the Amorites, which the LORD our God is giving us.  
See, the LORD your God has set the land before you.  
Go up, take possession, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has told you.  
Do not fear or be dismayed.”  
(Deuteronomy 1: 20-21)***

Moses sent twelve men to scope out the land, but all but Joshua and Caleb brought back a bad report and rebelled against God’s wishes of entering the land.

***“Yet you would not go up, but rebelled against the command of the LORD your God.  
And you murmured in your tents and said,  
Because the LORD hated us he has brought us out of the land of Egypt, to give us into the hand of the Amorites to destroy us. Where are we going up?  
Our brothers have made our hearts melt, saying,  
The people are greater and taller than we.  
The cities are great and fortified up to heaven.  
And besides, we have seen the sons of the Anakim there.’  
(Deuteronomy 1:26-28)***

Trying to convince the Israelites that the LORD will fight for them, just as He did as they went out of Egypt, Moses spoke to the people with encouragement. The people of Israelite rebelled against God’s wishes nonetheless.



The first generation coming out of Egypt never fulfilled the LORD's promise of entering Canaan, secondary to their lack of courage to conquer the inhabitants of the land. Unfortunately, this generation lacked faith in God to overcome their perceived obstacles associated with taking the land.

The Israelites' faith ran thin by not believing God and His promise to protect them as He had done so many times before, and were afraid to enter the Promised Land due to the fierceness and size of the inhabitants and seemingly impenetrable cities. **(Exodus 19-40:38, Numbers 13:28)**

The problem was that the people were evaluating the situation from a human-only perspective, as trust in the LORD would have produced courage to enter the land, no matter the circumstances.

Some Israelites even wanted to return to Egypt, despite Moses' efforts to encourage them to enter Canaan and face the inhabitants that dwelled there.

As the people were rebelling against God, and even talked of stoning Moses, God appeared and said to Moses,

***“How long will this people despise me?  
And how long will they not believe in me in spite of all the signs that I have done among  
them?”  
(Numbers 14:11)***

***Pearl:*** *The LORD was angered by the Israelite's lack of trust and faith. He therefore proclaimed that none of this generation of Israelites would be allowed to enter the Promised land.*

*Unfortunately, even this generation of Israelites whom God led out of Egypt through His mercy and powerful miracles, did not have true faith.*

*This first generation's fear of the unknown, was greater than their faith in the LORD.*

*Consequently, as a result of their lack of faith in the LORD, the first generation of Israelites coming out of Egypt were denied entrance to the land and disciplined. Instead of entering the land of milk and honey, the LORD caused the first generation of Israelites to wander the desert wilderness for forty years without a true home. **(Deuteronomy 3:23-29, Numbers 14:26-35)***

The children of the first generation, or who we refer to as the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation of Israelites, will however, demonstrate the faith and courage necessary, and will fulfill God's promise of entering the Promised Land.

This second generation of Israelites grew up with their parents wandering the wilderness areas outside of Canaan on the Sinai peninsula (Wilderness areas of Zin, Paran, Shur and Sin).

**Pearl: Tie to the New Testament:**

*Apostle Paul uses this experience of the Israelites as an example to the Corinthian people (1: Corinthians 10:1-5). Paul reminded them of the Israelites who wandered in the wilderness, and warned that this is what happens to people who hear God's words and see His works, but do not come to true faith.*

With this background concerning the Israelites entering the Promised Land, we can venture on and put our next paramount story of the Hebrew Bible in the series **Jesus. Ancestry** into appropriate context. In the book, **Rahab and Salmon, "Scarlet Still Saves"** we will continue the story of the ancestors of Jesus.

*In the story of Rahab the Amorite prostitute, once again we will marvel at how God fits together the misshapen, discordant pieces of the chaotic puzzle that humanity has somehow managed to create, into His picture-perfect Master Plan for salvation.*

**Epilogue: Hidden Meanings Behind the "Promised Land" ~ Tie to the End Times in the Book of Revelation**

**Playlist: "There Will Be a Day" by Jeremy Camp  
Revelation 21:9-26**

**Introduction:** *The Promised Land of the Hebrew Bible takes on an eschatological, symbolic meaning when considering the parallels to the New Heaven and New Earth in the Book of Revelation.*

*The ultimate Promised Land, the New Heaven and New Earth, and the city of Jerusalem which will be given to us as believers, goes well beyond what was promised in the Hebrew Bible to the descendants of Abraham.*

*Foreshadowing God's instructions for the construction of the Tabernacle and later, Solomon's Temple, one can see how the city of Jerusalem in the eschatological New Heaven and New Earth is the LORD's Divine gift to us.*

**Scene 1: The Bride of the Lamb ~ "Heaven on Earth" the Ultimate Promised Land**

**As seen through the Eyes of John, the Apostle who was given the Divine Apocalyptic Vision by Jesus Christ, the Messiah.**

**Time Frame:** *The End Times ~ After the Second Coming of Christ and the destruction of Evil and Death forever. The LORD has created the New Heaven the New Earth, complete with the Holy City of New Jerusalem.*

An angel who had carried one of the seven bowls helped John see the bride of the Lamb, the Holy City of New Jerusalem. Seeing the New Jerusalem, John will come to understand how life in Heaven will be for the Lamb's redeemed people.

John felt himself being carried away by the angel in the Spirit. Transported as heavenly cargo, John ascended to the great heights of a magnificent mountaintop.

Recalling how Ezekiel had been transported in his vision to a very high mountain to view God's future temple when glory was restored to Jerusalem, the words of the ancient prophet resounded in John's mind.

Glory has been restored to New Jerusalem, just as Ezekiel had seen in his vision.

***“in visions of God he brought me to the land of Israel, and set me down on a very high mountain, on which was a structure like a city to the south.  
When he brought me there, behold, there was a man whose appearance was like bronze, with a linen cord and a measuring reed in his hand.  
And he was standing in the gateway.”  
(Ezekiel 40:2-4)***

Upon arrival at the top of the mountain the angel showed John,

***“the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.”  
(Revelation 21:10-11)***

Gasping in awe, John saw that the Holy City descending from heaven possessed by the illuminating brilliance of God! There was no need for the light of the sun as the world's light is now eternal from the glory of God.

***Pearl: New Jerusalem will be transparent, with nothing hidden, and for all to behold as is the love of God.***

It was as if John was looking through clear crystal, yet with absolutely no obstruction of light as he could see light beyond imagination. The Holy city intensely radiated its light outward with the brilliant purity of a multifaceted, precious jasper jewel.

Sparkling with rich warm tones of reddish-brown ranging to various shades of green, the Holy city captured the very essence of the light, love, and grace of the LORD.

John took in the sight of the transparent brilliant city and slowly began to absorb more detail.

***“it had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed – on the east three gates, on the north three gates, and on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.”***

***And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”  
(Revelation 21:12-14)***

***Pearl:*** John recognized the names of the twelve tribes, the sons of Israel (Jacob), which were inscribed on the twelve gates of the wall surrounding the Holy City. Noticing the high wall and that the gates were guarded by angels, John sensed the city's invulnerability to attack.

Seeing that the wall's foundations had the names of the twelve apostles of Jesus, John picked-up on the overarching theme intertwined in the symbolism of the structure of the Holy city. Signifying the unity of the ancient Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) with the New Testament (first-century Jewish and Gentile Christians) believers, the city embraced the unified Covenant of the LORD to His people.

Similar to Ezekiel's vision, John also saw an angel with a measuring rod who was sent to measure the city, its gates, and walls. John noticed however, that the angel in his vision had a measuring rod of gold, being much more glorious than the measuring reed in Ezekiel's vision.  
***(Ezekiel 40:3)***

***“And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls.***

***The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width.***

***And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia.***

***Its length and width and height are equal.***

***He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement.”***

***(Revelation 21:15-17)***

*What is an 'angels measurement of a cubit' or an 'angelic' cubit?*

John extended his arm and asked the angel to do the same. John wanted to measure the angel's winged-arm as it aligned along-side with his human arm.

The angel obliged and extended his winged-arm, carefully measuring the length of his forearm. Starting from his elbow and extending out to the tip of his middle finger, the measurement was precisely 18 inches, exactly the same as John's forearm.

John was then satisfied with the measurements to be done in traditional methods of cubits, which was the standard of the day. Moving forward, John and the angel set out to measure the Holy city.

After measuring the city and its walls with the rod of gold the angel found the city-proper to have the symmetrical dimensions of a perfect cube, similar to the **Most Holy Place** (the place of God's presence) in the Hebrew Bible Sanctuary. (**1 Kings 6:20, Ezekiel 41:4**)

The length, width, and height of the city were equal, and measured 12,000 stadia (1,380 miles/2,221 kilometers).

***Pearl: How large is New Jerusalem in square miles?***

*The length, width and height of New Jerusalem each measured 12,000 stadia, which is equivalent to 1,380 miles.*

*A stadia was an ancient Roman measurement. Since John was charged with communicating this information to the world that existed in the first century under the Roman Empire, the stadia was an appropriate measure to use.*

*By current day measurements the Holy city is 1,380 miles long and 1,380 miles wide, which calculates to **two million square miles of space**. Additionally, the city is 1,380 miles tall.*

*The dimensions of the city are incredibly spacious and allows plenty of room for all of the saints to live. Christ had indeed built a mansion for His bride, the faithful church of His believers!*

*Putting the size of New Jerusalem into perspective, consider that the state of Texas is 268,600 square miles. Since the city of New Jerusalem is two-million square miles, that would make it slightly more than seven times larger than the whole state of Texas!*

*The width of the wall surrounding the city of New Jerusalem measured 144 cubits by human and angelic measurement. (**Revelation 21:16-17**)*

*A cubit is an ancient measurement that was the length of a man's forearm (from elbow to the tip of the middle finger) and ranges from 18 (standard cubit) to 21 inches (royal cubit).*

*Of interest is that apparently an angel has the same forearm length as a human, as John specified that the measurement was by "human measurement which is also an angel's measurement." (**Revelation 21:17**)*

*The width of the wall surrounding New Jerusalem measured 144 cubits which would calculate to be 2,592 inches or **216 feet**, if using the standard length of a cubit of 18 inches.*

*Noting the significance of the number twelve in Hebrew, is that the city's measurements were in multiples of twelve, with twelve being the 'perfect' number.*

**~ Multiples of 12 ~**

- *As the width of the wall is 144 cubits, of note is that this is twelve multiplied by twelve.*
- *Additionally, the length, width and height of the city are 12,000 stadia, also a multiple of twelve.*
- *With the measurements concerning the city being multiples of twelve, the perfect number this symbolically illustrates the **perfect life of the people of God who will live in New Jerusalem.***

Not only was the wall surrounding New Jerusalem enormous, but it was exquisitely beautiful!

***"The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, clear as glass."  
(Revelation 21:18)***

The colors and texture of the giant wall surrounding the city were extraordinary. Sparkling facets of warm golden-brown tones caught the light that eternally illuminated the city, projecting the aura of holiness as far as the eye could see.

The city itself had the transparent purity of gold, fitting of the bride's (*the church*) priceless value to the bridegroom (*Jesus Christ*).

Unlike the gold from the old earth, this gold of New Jerusalem was transparent so the radiance of God's glory could glisten throughout the entire city and into the land beyond.

John's eye then turned to the twelve magnificent foundations that supported the giant wall around the city. Towering upwards in splendor for 1,380 miles, they sparkled and radiated the glory of God!

***Pearl: The Apostolic Foundations***

*The twelve foundations of the wall surrounding the Holy City have the names of each of Jesus' disciples inscribed within them, and are therefore referred to as apostolic foundations.*

*The apostolic foundations are adorned with twelve kinds of precious jewels, having colors and textures that overwhelm the senses.*

John took in the beauty of God's creation, knowing that the LORD had not only built the amazing architecture, but had also created every jewel that embellished the walls and the apostolic foundations.

***“The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst.”***

***(Revelation 21:19-20)***

Looking from one apostolic foundation to the next, John’s eyes were filled with the beauty of sparkling, precious gems. The multifaceted jewels adorning the foundations caught and played with the LORD’s radiant light, projecting sparkling color in every dimension imaginable.

***Pearl:*** *Included are the descriptions of the twelve precious jewels adorning each of the twelve apostolic foundations so that the reader can imagine a contextual word picture of the colors and beauty.*

### ***The Jewels of the Twelve Apostolic Foundations***

- 1) ***Jasper:*** a deep-red to warm-brown sparkling quartz that catches the glory and light of the Lord
- 2) ***Sapphire:*** brilliant blue to deep-blue hues that projects feelings of peace and purity
- 3) ***Agate:*** bands of many different colors, ranging from hues of red to green tones that create an interesting contrast
- 4) ***Emerald:*** deep, brilliant, lustrous green that delves into the heart of the soul
- 5) ***Onyx:*** bands of white and black, that distinctively contrast each other to create a bold impression
- 6) ***Carnelian:*** deep, warm brownish-red hues to brilliant, scarlet red, the color of salvation
- 7) ***Chrysolite:*** transparent gold that projects God’s Holy light
- 8) ***Beryl:*** serene hues of aquamarine ranging from deep green to tones of the surf of the sea
- 9) ***Topaz:*** yellow to yellow-green tints that capture light, and radiate it outward
- 10) ***Chrysoprase:*** gold-tinted green, with hues that range to deeper, serene green
- 11) ***Jacinth:*** pure blue to deep, violet-blue tones that calm the soul
- 12) ***Amethyst:*** faint, calm colors of light violet, ranging to an intense, deep purple that sparkles with the vibrancy of the Lord's majesty

Something seemed familiar to John as he marveled at the beauty of the sparkling precious gems in the foundations. Thinking deeply, he then realized what it was.

It occurred to John that there is a striking parallel between the types of jewels that adorn the apostolic foundations and those that embellish the breastplate worn by the Jewish High Priest, known as the ***'breast piece of judgment.'***

From his Jewish background, John recalled that the breast piece of judgment is designed with 12 different stones set in four rows of three. On each stone in the breast piece is set the name of one of the 12 ancient Israeli tribes. The names of the 'sons of Israel' are engraved on the stones, as a jeweler engraves signets.

***Pearl: The 12 jewels in the apostolic foundations correspond with the jewels representing the Israelite tribes on the High Priest's breastplate. (Exodus 28: 17-20)***

*Again, we see parallels and ties between the New Covenant in the New Testament and Mosaic liturgical traditions from the Torah.*

*The arrangement and types of precious gems found on the breast piece of the priestly garments are listed in **Exodus**, the second of the five books of the Torah and is as follows,*

***"You shall set in it four rows of stones.***

***A row of sardius, topaz, and carbuncle shall be the first row; and the second row an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond; and the third row a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; and the fourth row a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper.***

***They shall be set in gold filigree. There shall be twelve stones with their names according to the names of the sons of Israel.***

***They shall be like signets, each engraved with its name, for the twelve tribes.  
(Exodus 28:17-21)***

*Parallels can also be drawn to the stones associated with Eden found in the book written by the sixth-century B.C. prophet, Ezekiel, in the lament over the King of Tyre.*

***"You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created, they were prepared."  
(Ezekiel 28:13-14)***

Taking in the height of the city, being 1,380 miles, John's eyes focused on the gates that formed the entryway. He could hardly believe his eyes as noticed that each gate was made from a single, supernaturally-large pearl!

As John entered through one of the pearly-gates, he marveled at how a single pearl could be so large. He reached out his hand to feel the shape and consistency of the pearl that served as a gate to convince himself that this wasn't a figment of his imagination.



The gates forming the entryway to the Holy City were each indeed formed by one, gigantic pearl!

But after all, why should he doubt anything at this point as God, the Creator had constructed this supernatural city for His children!

Thinking more in-depth about the enormous pearls that formed the gates to the city, it suddenly occurred to John why God had chosen a single pearl to serve in the gateways to New Jerusalem.

***“And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass.”  
(Revelation 21:21)***

*What was John thinking?*

*Why do you think God chose the pearl as the gateway to the New Jerusalem?*

*What is significant about the pearl?*

***Pearl: The answer lies in how a pearl is produced!***

*Remembering that a pearl is produced by an oyster in a healing response to wounds to its flesh, it only seems fitting that God would choose a pearl to adorn the gateways leading into New Jerusalem.*

*Incredibly, something so beautiful and valuable as a pearl could only be produced in response to a wound. Parallels can be drawn to the wounds Jesus endured during his crucifixion, with the value being His atonement for our sin.*

*These supernatural, gigantic pearls will therefore serve as a reminder for eternity to all of the saints about Jesus' sacrifice he made for humanity.*

*As each saint enters New Jerusalem, each will remember the magnitude of Christ's suffering during His crucifixion. Remembering His willingness to endure the horrific suffering out of His love for us will serve to drive home Jesus' sacrifice and the ultimate eternal benefits that were bestowed upon us as believers.*

As John took in the sights of the beautiful architecture of the city and the surrounding wall, he was amazed at its vastness and magnificence. Thinking to himself that he should have known how amazing the city would have been, John recalled Jesus' words to His disciples.

Jesus had promised that there would be room for all in His Father's house (***John 14:1-4***),

***“Let not your hearts be troubled.***

***Believe in God; believe also in me.  
In my Father's house are many rooms.  
If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?"  
(John 14:1-2)***

Thinking about this place Jesus described, John walked along the streets of pure, transparent gold knowing that he literally was walking on precious gems!

Cautiously, and full of wonder and awe John treaded lightly at first, fearing that he might harm the precious gold that made up the street. Then realizing again where he was he threw caution-to-the-wind and fearlessly moved with determination toward the heart of the city.

John wanted to find the temple, which he thought must be situated as the centerpiece of the Holy City, as it had been in the old, earthy city of Jerusalem.

What John was forgetting was that was how it was in the 'old' Jerusalem, but not in the New Jerusalem.

Unlike New Jerusalem's earthly counterpart John soon realized,

***"I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God, the Almighty and the Lamb."  
(Revelation 21:22)***

***Pearl:*** *There is no temple in New Jerusalem, as the entire city is the 'Most Holy Place' and is the place of God's presence. Since everywhere in New Jerusalem is the place of God's presence, a temple is no longer needed to serve this purpose.*

*Jesus himself is the temple in which God lives among His people. Going to heaven will mean entering the eternal and limitless presence of the Lord.*

John thought, of course, there was no temple in New Jerusalem! There will be no temple in the city as Jesus, himself is the temple in which God lives among his people. ***(Revelation 21:22, John 1:14, 2:19-21)***

John had written about Jesus in his Gospel concerning this very same concept ***(John 1:14; 2:19-22)***.

***"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."  
(John 1:14)***

Recalling Jesus' words during the Passover when He cleansed the temple,

***"So the Jews said to him, What sign do you show us for doing these things?"***

***Jesus answered them,  
Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.  
The Jews then said, It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in  
three days?"  
(John 2:19-20)***

John had known the truth of Jesus' words as he explained to the readers of his Gospel,

***"But he was speaking about the temple of his body.  
When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this,  
and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken."  
(John 2:21-22)***

***Pearl: Concerning the word 'Jews,' when used in the Gospel according to John.***

*A Jewish-Christian scholar from Hebrew Bible Institute (Dr. Eli Lizorkin-Eyzenberg, author of The Jewish Gospel of John) points out that the ancient Greek word, pronounced **loudaioi**, was translated as '**Jews**' in the Anglicized versions of the Bible. The loudaioi were not the Jewish people of Israel as a whole, but were a subgroup of the Jewish people. This subgroup consisted of primarily the Judean authorities and also affiliated members of this authority-structure living outside of Judea. This subgroup of Jews came to be translated as loudaioi in Greek in the Septuagint, then eventually to "Jews" in the English versions of the Hebrew Bible. It was not meant by John to mean all Jewish people, only the subgroup of Judean authorities.*

Another startling realization of John's was that there was no sun or moon visible. Also, looking around the city he saw no lanterns to light the streets when darkness would descend upon the land.

Once again, John had the insight to know why there were no sun, moon or lanterns in the New Jerusalem.

***"And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and  
its lamp is the Lamb."  
(Revelation 21:23)***

It became very clear to John that all of God's redeemed people, from every nation and every ethnic group will dwell in Heaven's light of the New Jerusalem.

Importantly, there will be no divisions among the people because of ancestry/lineage, gender, or even their political background.

All people who enter New Jerusalem will be God's people, and will be able to move freely about the city without barriers. There will be no night, and the gates to the city will always remain open.

***“By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day – and there will be no night there.  
They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.”  
(Revelation 21:24-26)***

***Pearl: ‘Nations’ refers to people of all ethnicity, Jews and Gentiles alike.***

*The Lamb, the King of kings has destroyed rebellious kings and nations, and the remaining kings and nations whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life will enter the sanctuary of the Holy City.*

*The inclusion is dependent upon belief and faith in God and in His Son, Jesus Christ, not ethnicity or lineage.*

*This concept especially resonated with John, because when the disciples traveled with Jesus to Jerusalem for the Passover they witnessed first-hand discrimination towards non-Jewish people in the Temple.*

*For instance, Gentile believers (non-Jews), even though they came from far away to celebrate the Passover and to worship God, were not able to enter the Temple in old Jerusalem.*

*Non-Jewish God-fearers were excluded from the temple building proper and only could visit and worship in the area surrounding the temple. They were specifically limited to the ‘Court of the Gentiles.’*

*In contradistinction to the old Jerusalem on the old earth, in New Jerusalem in New Heaven no such barriers will exist. (See ESV Study Bible note for **John 2:14**)*

John then realized that there was no night in New Jerusalem and therefore the gates opening into the great city would always remain open. God’s glory will provide more than enough light.

New Jerusalem will have no darkness, as it is Holy and will be lit with the light of God and the lamp of the Lamb. **(Revelation 21:23, 22:5)**

The concept of living with no darkness, only glorious light was something that neither John, nor any other human being had ever before experienced!

John realized that everything and everyone in New Jerusalem, New Heaven and New Earth will be pure and without sin.

The only people allowed entrance into God's Holy city will be Believers who have their names written in Jesus Christ's Book of Life.

***"Nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life."  
(Revelation 21:27)***

***Pearl:*** *The Lamb had destroyed all rebellious people who refused to believe and follow God and the Son, Jesus Christ. Only the followers of Christ, being those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will be able to enter the Lord's Holy Sanctuary of New Jerusalem.*

*Sin will not exist, as Jesus' sacrifice for our sin is eternal. Thankfully, His sacrifice made on our behalf will never become-out-of-date or expire.*

*The concept that each of our names is written in the book of life drives home the point that Christ not only knows the heart of His believers, but He also knows each of us by name!*

### ***Scene 2: John Tours the Heart of the Holy City***

Feeling led by the very hand of the Lord, John sought more information about this glorious and magnificent Holy City. Continuing his tour with the angel serving as his guide, John followed the city streets of pure, translucent gold.

Hearing the soothing musical sounds of gently cascading water off in the distance, John stopped for a moment to allow his senses to fill with the pleasures he was experiencing.

Breathing deep, John filled his lungs with the pure, clean air of the perfect environment. He noticed the exemplary temperature and climate of the Holy city that enveloped him. His eyes took in the lush vegetation adorning the city that flourished with lavish growth and blooms, filling the air with pleasing aromas and sights.

Everywhere John turned his gaze was another beautiful sight to behold!

Seeing John pause by the side of the shimmering golden street, the angel-guide gracefully flew down to nudge him gently to proceed further along the path to the Holy city. But again, stopping in awe and wonder, John gazed upon the source of the musical sound of running water he had heard earlier.

Before John's eyes unraveled a sparkling, majestic river. He watched as it flowed like an iridescent, aquamarine ribbon within the golden street of the Holy city.

The water in the river was alive with color and movement as it sparkled like crystal, snaking down the middle of the street. The water's brilliant azure hues sharply contrasted against the backdrop of the street's pure translucent gold.

Sparkling like thousands of diamonds, the river reflected the light cast by God's glory, peacefully gliding continuously through the Holy city.

It then became apparent to John that the river originated from the Throne of God and the Lamb,

***“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city.”  
(Revelation 22:1-2)***

***Pearl: What is the significance of the river of the water of life flowing from the throne of God and Jesus Christ?***

*The river would have been very symbolic to John, as there are striking parallels to the ‘water of life’ as written in the Hebrew Bible.*

*The first parallel harkens back to the very beginning in Genesis, with the rivers of the water of life flowing through the Garden of Eden. Very similar to the Garden, New Jerusalem will have the **river of the water of life**, pure and bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb.*

*We, as believers taste this life-giving water in the present time through belief in Jesus Christ, but its fullness of unending blessings awaits us in the New Heaven and Earth.*

*The river of life also has striking parallels to the Temple River of **Ezekiel 47:1-12** where the water flowing from the Temple becomes a powerful, life-giving river. The river in Ezekiel's vision affects the entire world, its people and all parts that are least capable of sustaining life.*

*The river's influence of life-giving, living water flowing out of Jerusalem is also found in **Zechariah 14:8**.*

*The source of the water of the river of life will never run dry as it is eternally charged from the Throne of God and of the Lamb.*

*Running free and pure from the Throne, the river will supply Heaven's inhabitants with the life-giving water needed for eternal life.*

John thought that this majestic river of life was just as Jesus had promised when He was on earth, walking and teaching among His people.

With thoughts drifting back to his time spent as a disciple, John remembered Jesus' words to the woman they had encountered at the well in Samaria,

***“if you knew the gift of God, and who is it that is saying to you give me a drink, you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.”***

***(John 4:10)***

Then remembering Jesus' words at the Festival of Booths (*Tabernacles*) on the last day of the feast when He asked for people to believe in Him wholeheartedly, John thought back to recall Jesus' pronouncement,

***“If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”***

***(John 7:38)***

***Pearl: What is the significance in the Old Testament for 'living water'?***

*The Hebrew word for fresh, running water, such as flows from a spring or a stream (running water) is translated as 'living water' (Hebrew: mayim khayyim).*

*To fully understand the meaning of 'living water' we need to put this into context.*

*Palestine had three sources of water, the best being 'living water,' as it is fresh, pure, and flows freely from a spring or a stream.*

*Another less-desirable source of water was ground water, as might collect in a well.*

*The least-desirable source of water was runoff that would collect in a cistern. This water would collect silt and mosquito larvae which had the potential to be undrinkable, and even carry disease.*

*God spoke of Himself as being the fountain of living waters, which he freely gave to His people when they came to Him in faith.*

*An example of the Israelites trading the best-for-the-worst water was used in the following word picture by Jeremiah. Here the prophet conveyed that the LORD was appalled by Israel's abandoning the 'living water' for their own fleshly desires, which He equates with the least-desirable source of water contained in a cistern.*

*Furthermore, the cistern is broken and cannot even hold water.*

***“for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.”***

***(Jeremiah 2: 13)***

Therefore, the passages above in **John 4:10**, **John 7:38** and in **Jeremiah 2:13** take on deeper and greater meaning as the context of 'living water' is explored.

In **Jeremiah**, it is clear that the concept is that God's people should surrender to Him as the fountain of living water and not their own fleshly desires. The people are fraught with sin and similar to a broken cistern, cannot hold water needed for life. They will therefore continue to be thirsty and want for more.

Jesus reiterates this concept as John wrote in **John 7:38**, and emphasizes that believers can taste this life-giving water in the present age, but its purity and fullness awaits them in heaven.

Building on scripture from the Book of **Proverbs**, Jesus further emphasizes that out of the hearts of believers will flow blessings for others.

***"Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life."  
(Proverbs 4:23)***

This conceptualization of a river of living water is further developed in the word picture of **Revelation** with the ever-flowing river that John sees in New Jerusalem of New Heaven and earth.

In New Jerusalem, the river of living water is an unending eternal stream of abundant blessings and joy that awaits believers as a reward for trusting and having faith in Christ.

John continued to take in the sights of the eternally flowing river and noticed the tree that was once banned from humanity standing with resplendence along its shores.

Right before John's eyes stood the *Tree of Life*.

### ***Pearl: The Tree of Life***

New Jerusalem will have the **Tree of life**, once banned from humanity when Adam and Eve were cast from the Garden of Eden (**Genesis 3:22-24**).

***"Then the LORD God said,  
Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil.  
Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever –  
Therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which  
he was taken."  
(Genesis 3:22-23)***

Adam and Eve had allowed themselves to be deceived and manipulated by the Devil, the ancient serpent, and had eaten from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Due to their



*disobedience of God's instructions they had failed in their priestly duty of guarding and taking care of the Garden. They therefore were cast out of the Garden by God for their disobedience to His will.*

*Interestingly, a concept which is worth exploring is that God's words of **"now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever,"** can be interpreted to imply that man must now, once he is outside of the Garden, **seek the Tree of Life, in order to have eternal life.***

*When man was in the Garden of Eden, he could easily partake of the fruit of the Tree of Life. When sent out of the Garden, humanity must cast off their sinful, fleshly desires and make the effort to **'reach out his hand to the Tree of Life and eat,' in order to live forever.***

***If this concept is looked at in a more profound sense, one can deduce that the Tree of Life is Jesus Christ, and eternal life will only be through embracing Him in our belief and faith.***

*Coming full circle with **Genesis 3**, following the fall of humanity from the paradise of God's presence in the Garden, we see that once again in the new created Heaven and Earth we will be able to live in the presence of God and achieve eternal life.*

*This eternal blessing is only made possible through the sacrifice made by our Savior Jesus Christ and His substitutionary atonement for the sins of humanity.*

*We must therefore come to Christ in our earthly life **"and reach out our hand and take also of the tree of life,"** as Jesus Christ is the **Tree of Life** that guarantees us an eternity of living with the presence of God.*

On either side of the river, the boughs of the Tree of Life gracefully arched over the flowing pools, the leaves forming a protective canopy of emerald green over the azure, crystal water.

Among the foliage were twelve kinds of fruit, punctuating the vast sea of green with an array of brilliant hues ranging from brilliant yellow to deep purple.

***"Also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit yielding its fruit each month.***

***The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."***

***(Revelation 22:2b)***

The tree's fruit, once banned from guilty humanity, will now satisfy the Holy city's residents for an eternity of months and years. Each month the tree will yield a different fruit, continuously producing throughout the year without cessation. There will be no off-season for the blessings from the tree of life in the New Jerusalem, satisfying the city's residents year-round.

**Pearl:** Of interest is that there is a time frame in New Heaven. John specifically says there are twelve kinds of fruit yielding its fruit for EACH month. Therefore we can deduce there are months and seasons in New Heaven and New earth.

The leaves of the tree of life, a symbolic imagery of Jesus Christ who defeated and destroyed death and who will heal the nations.

God is acknowledged throughout all 'nations', His saving power, love, and mercy known to all through His Son, Jesus Christ.

***“May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us,  
That your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations.***

***Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!***

***Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the  
nations upon earth.”  
(Psalm 67:1-4)***

John went on to say that through the destruction of death and sin the nations were healed and,

***“No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in  
it, and his servants will worship him.***

***They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.***

***And night will be no more.***

***They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign  
forever and ever.”***

***(Revelation 22:3-5)***

***Pearl: What did John mean by ‘they will see his face?’***

*John knew that in the Torah man never came face-to-face with God. For instance, in the book of Exodus, even though Moses had encounters with God and received His word, Moses never could be expected to see the face of God and live. (Exodus 33:20-23, 34:29-35)*

*In contradistinction to ancient times, in God's created New Heaven and Earth God will look upon His people and His redeemed believers will 'see His face.'*

*We, as redeemed believers, will be God's protected property with His name sealed on our foreheads. In union with Jesus, we will worship God as priests and reign over the new earth forever.*

***Jesus is Coming***

**Playlist: "These Words" by Third Day**

*Jesus is coming again.*

*We, as Believers know this to be true and importantly, we know our salvation has been assured.*

*John assured us that Jesus said His Words are trustworthy and true, as the Book of Revelation is John's transmission of Jesus' Divine Revelation given to John.*

***"And he said to me,  
These words are trustworthy and true.  
And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants  
what must soon take place."  
(Revelation 22:6)***

*As Jesus said of His Divine authority and His second coming in **Matthew 24:34-35**,*

***"Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.  
Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away."***

*John stressed that the Book of Revelation (his letter written to the seven churches) is a timeless promise for all believers, and writing Jesus' words,*

***"And behold, I am coming soon.  
Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."  
(Revelation 22:7)***

*John also emphasized that God alone must be worshiped, and since the Lamb is rightly worshiped, he is God.*

***"I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things.  
And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed  
them to me, but he said to me,  
You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and  
with those who keep the words of this book.  
Worship God."  
(Revelation 22:8-9)***

*John was told that he must not seal up his prophecy as Daniel did his. The assurance contained in the Book of Revelation is that when Jesus comes he will bring blessing to believers, which will motivate believers to persevere trials and live with faith in Jesus Christ.*

*John said Jesus told him,*

***“Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.  
Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and  
the holy still be holy.”***

*We circle back to the ultimate question of why is Jesus, the Messiah coming a second time to earth?*

*Ask John.*

*The answer lies with the words Jesus gave to John, as He made history’s hidden realities visible.*

***“Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me to repay everyone for what he  
has done.***

***I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”  
(Revelation 22:12-13)***

***“Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life  
and that they may enter the city by the gates.***

***Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters,  
and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.”  
(Revelation 22:14-15)***

***“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches.  
I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.”  
(Revelation 22:16)***

*Jesus will come as the Divine Warrior (Isaiah 62:10-63:6) rewarding His faithful servants and  
punishing evildoers.*

*John ends with a prayer addressed to Jesus,*

***“The Spirit and the Bride say,  
“Come.”***

***And let the one who hears say, “Come.”***

***And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without  
price.”  
(Revelation 22:17)***

*John's final words end in warning about altering the book, a promise that Jesus is coming and final prayer,*

***"I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.***

***He who testifies to these things says,  
Surely I am coming soon. Amen.***

***Come, Lord Jesus!***

***The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all.  
Amen.***

***(Revelation 22:18-21)***

*The fulfillment of the single, greatest promise of history will occur with the return of Christ to defeat the forces of evil and reign in the new creation of New Heaven and New Earth, the ultimate Promised Land.*

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### **Glossary:**

*Midrash: (Hebrew: Investigation). Biblical exegesis by ancient Judaic Rabbis. Includes their commentaries on the Hebrew Bible.*

*Talmud: A collection of discussion on the scripture concerning Jewish civil and ceremonial law.*

*Halachah: The collective body of Jewish religious laws derived from the written and oral Torah. The legal part of the Talmud and supplement to the scriptural law.*

*Rabbinic Law: Written and oral Law of the Torah. Also known as Mishnah.*

*Mitzvot: Commandments of the Torah. There are 613 mitzvot in the Torah.*

*Torah: (Hebrew: “ Mosaic Teachings” or “Mosaic Law”). The first five books of the Old Testament.*

*Ketuvim (Greek: Hagiographa). The Sacred writings, or Holy Writings. The third division of the Hebrew Bible. It consists of the poetic books, the Megillot or Scrolls, and the prophets.*

*Megillot: The Scrolls. These are the Song of Songs/Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther. They are part of the 11 books of Ketuvim in the Hebrew Bible, the Tanakh.*

*Tanakh: The Hebrew Bible. Consists of 24 books in 3 parts. The 5 books of the Torah (Pentateuch), 8 books of the Nevi'im (prophets) and 11 books of the Ketuvim (writings). Tanakh is an acronym consisting of the 3 parts.*

*Pentateuch: The Greek translation of the first five books of the Old Testament (Torah).*

*YHVH: The English transliteration for the Hebrew Tetragrammaton for the name of Israel's God. It is frequently anglicized as Yahweh or Jehovah. In translating YHVH, both Jewish and Christian translators substituted the word LORD. Jewish belief holds that this name is too holy to be pronounced at all, so the word LORD is often substituted. LORD is a translation of another Hebrew name for God, Adonai.*

*Ha Shem: (Hebrew: The Name) The Jewish people traditionally refer to the most holy name of God by using the Hebrew word, Ha Shem, meaning “The Name.” Occasionally the longer Hebrew phrase for God's Covenant name, Ha Kadosh Baruch Chu is used, meaning Holy One, Blessed Be He.*