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from the beginning of creation God's desire was to live with his humanity. God's desire always was and is to live with man..... **find the lost bring them into relationship, teach them how to live.... he refers to the relationship in a number of family terms all very personal...His children, his family, his heirs, beloved, we are brothers and sisters in our relationships to one another, we are citizens of His Kingdom and members of the Royal family. ...we also have roles, we are Priests, servants, ambassadors, soldiers, shepherds, we are the light and salt of the world....However there is one analogy of our relationship to God which stands out more than any other...we are called the bride of Christ... meaning that our relationship individually and corporately is designed to reflect the personal love intimacy and commitment of a marriage...**

Eph 5: 25 For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her 26 to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word.

- he loves us as a husband ought love his wife..demonstrated by his willingness to die to save her...and provide for her as one separate unto only him...he cleans (makes her feel her worth in his eyes, washing her...by his healing and cleansing words.
- her response is to submit to him...not fight against him...

Isaiah speaking of this beautiful relationship...say it this way...

Isaiah 61: 10 I am overwhelmed with joy in the LORD my God! For he has dressed me with the clothing of salvation and draped me in a robe of righteousness, I am like a bridegroom dressed for his wedding or a bride with her jewels.

John the Baptist shares this

John 3:28 You yourselves know how plainly I told you, 'I am not the Messiah. I am only here to prepare the way for him.' 29 It is the bridegroom who marries the bride, and the bridegroom's friend is simply glad to stand with him and hear his vows. Therefore, I am filled with joy at his success.

The Apostle Paul...

2 Corinthians 11:2 For I am jealous for you with the jealousy of God himself. I promised you **as a pure bride to one husband**—Christ.

The apostle John

*Rev 19:*⁶ Then I heard again what sounded like the shout of a vast crowd or the roar of mighty ocean waves or the crash of loud thunder: “Praise the LORD! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.”⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice, and let us give honor to him. **For the time has come for the wedding feast of the Lamb, and his bride has prepared herself.**⁸ She has been given the finest of pure white linen to wear.” For the fine linen represents the good deeds of God’s holy people.

- **John also describes the new heaven and the new earth in the same terminology...a wedding of the two creations of God...**

REV 21:1 **21** Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone.² **And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.**

- and God's relationship with his people...

³ I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “**Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them.**”⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”

- **And this Marriage relationship starts in Exodus...as Jeremiah tells us many years later from God’s perspective of the time in the desert...**

Jeremiah 2:2 “Go and shout this message to Jerusalem. This is what the LORD says: “I remember how eager you were to please **me as young bride long ago, how you loved me and followed me even through the barren wilderness.**”

- However a wedding always has vows...and today we will see the vows first given by God to the Israelites after they were rescued ...like a damsel in distress from the Egyptians...
- So going Back thousands of years we have the wedding vows ...to start it all, given to Moses on Mont Sinai: The decalogue the 10 commandments...which in a very real way is the wedding vows ...between God and his people ...
- First he rescues his people, binging them to himself.....then he propose to them a covenant of obedience and blessing...

Ex 19:4 'You have seen what I did to the Egyptians. You know how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. ⁵ Now if you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my own special treasure from among all the peoples on earth; for all the earth belongs to me. ⁶ And you will be my kingdom of priests, my holy nation.' This is the message you must give to the people of Israel."

- This is the same message we are given...in the NT

*1 Peter 2:9 But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a **holy nation**, God's very own possession....*

Back to *Ex 19: 8 And all the people responded together, "We will do everything the LORD has commanded." So Moses brought the people's answer back to the LORD.*

- It is noteworthy that the Israelites agreed to do all that God commanded in principle, rather than in particular. That is, the Law has not yet been given.
- Moses returned to the top of the mountain to convey the words of the people to God.

Ex 19: 10 Then the LORD told Moses, "Go down and prepare the people for my arrival. Consecrate them today and tomorrow, and have them wash their clothing. ¹¹ Be sure they are ready on the third day, for on that day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai as all the people watch.

This is something like a wedding ceremony. First, there is the engagement, he rescued them...proposed to them.

- Then, before the wedding ceremony, there is a period both of preparation (making plans, perhaps making the wedding dress, showers, etc.) and of anticipation.
- Traditionally, the groom does not see the bride before the ceremony, heightening the sense of expectation. Then, there is the ceremony, a time of beauty and joyous celebration.
- And now, in this final section, we are overwhelmed with the splendor and the majesty of God as He manifests Himself to Israel on the mountain. Here is the grand finale, the manifestation of God in all of His majesty, purity, and power.

EX 19:23 Moses said to the LORD, "The people cannot come up Mount Sinai, because you yourself warned us, 'Put limits around the mountain and set it apart as holy.'

- *they are not yet able to come to him...they have not been purified..they cannot approach God...yet*
- **The people are now ready...as individuals, and a nation...to receive the covenant and promises of this special relationship to God ...and to each other ...and to the world...**
- **The Law in a very real way is the wedding vows... the promises which will be made between God and His People...**
- The Ten Commandments are an introductory summary of the Law, the central core of the more lengthy Law of Moses which will follow in the Pentateuch.
- **The commandments can be outlined in this way: First Israel's Relationship with God (vss. 2-7); Second Israel's relationship with work (vss. 8-11); and Israel's relationship with each other (vss. 12-17).**

Israel's relationship with God (vss. 2-7)

EX 20: Then God gave the people all these instructions² "I am the LORD your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery.

³ “You must not have any other god but me. ⁴ “You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. ⁵ You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me. ⁶ But I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those who love me and obey my commands. ⁷ “You must not misuse the name of the LORD your God. The LORD will not let you go unpunished if you misuse his name.

Israel’s Relationship with work (vss. 8-11)

EX 20: 8 “Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹ You have six days each week for your ordinary work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the LORD your God. On that day no one in your household may do any work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, and any foreigners living among you. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy.

Israel’s Relationship with each other (vss. 12-17).

EX 20: 12 “Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the LORD your God is giving you. ¹³ “You must not murder. ¹⁴ “You must not commit adultery. ¹⁵ “You must not steal. ¹⁶ “You must not testify falsely against your neighbor. ¹⁷ “You must not covet your neighbor’s house. You must not covet your neighbor’s wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor.”

The New Testament sums it up this way...Matthew 22: ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?” ³⁷ Jesus replied, “‘You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’^[a] ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment.

Romans 13:10 Love does no wrong to others, so love fulfills the requirements of God’s law.

These are the Laws the vows... for the individual, and the Nation... They were to live righteously with God and each other...they are the vows of their relationship

- Now they are given formally...but will never be abled to be carried out...
- Except by Jesus God himself coming in the flesh to carry out the vows perfectly...fulfilling the Covenant....He carries out the God part and the human part...

John 1:14 So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son. *17 For the law was given through Moses, but God's unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ.* *18* No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us.

Matthew 5:17 “Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. ***18*** I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God's law will disappear until its purpose is achieved.

John 19:30 When Jesus had tasted it, he said, “It is finished!” Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

He did what we could not do...he kept the vows allowing all who would to enter marriage relationship with God to enter...and he suffered the penalty for all who would because of our sin nature break the vows.....

end

there is a process between lost and found...and there is a process between found and sanctification...God grows in the process just like a real marriage

2CO 3:2 You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everybody. ³ You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

*2CO 3:4 Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. ⁵ Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. ⁶ He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant--not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter **kills**, but the Spirit gives life.*

2CO 3:7 Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, ⁸ will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious?

- The Spirit of God changes lives...by the blood of the sacrifice of Jesus one takes away sin...The Spirit gives life...

end

REV 21:5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

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family in the most intimate bond ...husband and wife...and brothers and sisters to each other

So live the long view in mind.....Paul

2 Cor 6:16 ¹⁶ And what union can there be between God's temple and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God said:

“I will live in them
and walk among them.

I will be their God,
and they will be my people.^[e]

¹⁷ Therefore, come out from among unbelievers,
and separate yourselves from them, says the LORD.

Don't touch their filthy things,
and I will welcome you.^[f]

¹⁸ And I will be your Father,
and you will be my sons and daughters,
says the LORD Almighty.^[g]

^{2CO} **7:1** Because we have these promises, dear friends, let us cleanse ourselves from everything that can defile our body or spirit. And let us work toward complete holiness because we fear God.

going back to the beginning..

Adam and Eve

^{GE 3:8} ⁸ When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man and his wife heard the LORD God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the LORD God among the trees. ⁹ Then the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

- They were found than got lost...it is the opposite for all of us since then...

Moses and the Israelites were rescued then reunited...

EX 13: 20 The Israelites left Succoth and camped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness. 21 **The LORD went ahead of them.** He guided them during the day with a pillar of cloud, and he provided light at night with a pillar of fire. This allowed them to travel by day or by night. 22 And the LORD did not remove the pillar of cloud or pillar of fire from its place in front of the people.

- **The visible glory of God was seen first when the Israelites left Egypt then in the Tabernacle of Moses...**

EX 25:8 *“Have the people of Israel build me a holy sanctuary so **I can live among them.**”* When it was completed....

Ex 40:34 *Then the cloud covered the Tabernacle, and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle. 35 Moses could no longer enter the Tabernacle because the cloud had settled down over it, and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle.*

In the OT for example the temple was located on Mount Zion within the city of Jerusalem. This external temple was the home of the presence of God.

David.

2SA7: 12 For when you die and are buried with your ancestors, I will raise up one of your descendants, your own offspring, and I will make his kingdom strong. 13 He is the one who will build a house—a temple—for my name. And I will secure his royal throne forever.

Solomon^{2CH 6:17} 17 Now, O LORD, God of Israel, fulfill this promise to your servant David. 18 **“But will God really live on earth among people? Why, even the highest heavens cannot contain you. How much less this Temple I have built!** 19 Nevertheless, listen to my prayer and my plea, O LORD my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is making to you. 20 May you watch

over this Temple day and night, this place where you have said you would put your name. May you always hear the prayers I make toward this place.

Then he will be with us in HUMAN FORM...

Isaiah 9:6 For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called:

Wonderful **Counselor**, **Mighty** God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

HE WILL TAKE US TO BE WITH HIM

Jesus

JN 14:1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going."

God's desire is to be with man...The emphasis on the internal experience of God is one of the central distinctions between the OT and the NT.

Romans 8:11 **The Spirit of God**, who raised Jesus from the dead, **lives in you**. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to **your** mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within **you**.

Paul We are the temple

EPH 2:19 ¹⁹ So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. ²⁰ Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. ²¹ We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. ²² **Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.**