### FEAST OF TABERNACLES – DAY 1 – 2005

Fred Coulter – October 18, 2005

And greetings brethren, this is the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles -2005. And we're very happy that you are able to come to the feast and hope and wish that you have a good feast all the way around, that God will bless you and inspire you and help you in every way. And as we know the feasts of God are the most important days for us to keep. Now obviously the weekly Sabbath is because this keeps us in not only contact with God, but we are taught week by week by week so that we can learn of God and learn of His ways, and then God has revealed His plans through His holy days, as we know.

The plan of God has been hidden in the meaning of the holy days. Therefore since the world does not want to keep the holy days, and hates the holy days of God, and hates the Sabbath of God, God is going to take the very things that they hate and He is going to teach His people the truth. Now that's a fantastic thing that only God could do. And people today, it's amazing – you don't have to do anything that the Old Testament says. And so therefore since the Feast of Tabernacles is in the Old Testament, you don't have to do it. But what did Jesus say? Jesus said, "Till heaven and earth shall pass away, My words shall never pass away. And don't think I've come to destroy the law or the prophets" (Mark 13:31; Matt. 5:17, paraphrased). And those are basic things. And I just mention it because every year we hear of people who give up on God, give up on the Sabbath, give up on the holy days and go right back into the world. And brethren, pray for them that God will deal with them, that they can come to repentance, because they are missing out on the greatest and most fantastic thing – that is understanding the plan of God and knowing what God's blessing and reward and eternal life is through the holy days.

Now let's come to Exodus 23. And this is also very interesting from this point of view, because this shows that God intended the holy days to be kept even before He gave the rituals of the sacrifices. And of course, as we have seen, this also goes back to Abraham. And Abraham was a stranger and a sojourner, and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob dwelt in tabernacles, didn't they? So actually the feasts of God go clear back, really to the beginning. But here he defines it for Israel, verse 14: "Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto Me..." Now, it's unto God. And of course we know God owns these and we know that they are not Jewish feasts and so forth. They belong to God. "Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before Me empty:) And the feast of ingathering, *which is* in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field. Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord GOD" (Ex. 23:14-17, *KJV*).

Now we also find this repeated again in Exodus 34. Now it's very important that it was repeated again there because, remember that Aaron made the golden calf and caused the people to worship it and proclaim a feast unto the Lord. Then Moses went back up on the mountain, received the instructions from God again, and in it he also reiterated concerning the Passover, Feast of Unleavened Bread, Feast of Firstfruits or Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles.

Now as we know in Leviticus 23 God has all the holy days listed, and this sets out how God has organized the year: the weekly Sabbath because it starts out with that, then Passover, then Unleavened Bread, then Pentecost, then Trumpets, Atonement, and then the Feast of Tabernacles. And we have to understand this as I brought out with "By Whose Authority": You are either under the authority of God and keep His word and His laws and love Him, or you are under the authority of Satan the devil and you live in the world and you are cut off from God. There is really no middle ground. Though because of the mercy of God He allows people if they slide, to help them come to their senses and repent and come back, but that doesn't mean there is any middle ground. There is absolutely no middle ground. We either love God and keep His commandments, or we are out serving our own selves and our own ways and our own things, which then brings us right back into the world and put ourselves under the authority of Satan the devil.

Now let's come to Leviticus 23 and see the command for the Feast of Tabernacles. And this is, we are going to see, a great and a fantastic feast for us. And so we're going to see that today. Verse 33: "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month [which is today] *shall be* the feast of tabernacles *for* seven days unto the LORD. On the first day *shall be* an holy convocation..." So we are here at the commanded assembly of God. And He's made the appointment and He commands us to come before Him, so we do. And God will bless us. God will bless us with His Spirit, with His understanding, with His righteousness, with His goodness. If we love God and if we love the things that God has given to us then God will open up understanding, God will give us knowledge, God will give us strength and encouragement and hope. And that's what the way of God is all about as revealed in the Sabbath and all the holy days.

And he says here: "On the first day *shall be* an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work *therein*. Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD..." Now those are the ritual sacrifices that they were to give, so not only were there ritual sacrifices but they also had all the other animal sacrifices that different people would bring on different days. And you read in Numbers 29 about all the sacrifices that were given beginning on the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles all the way through to the Last Great Day and there's a tremendous number of sacrifices given. And this is to show that at this time that everyone was to bring to God in response to His bountiful blessings that He brought to them. And today, not only are the blessings measured in physical things, which are secondary, but the blessings are measured in spiritual things: the Spirit of God, the knowledge of God, the truth of God, and the Word of God. And so we need to respond to God back in the same way that He has given to us. And this is a tremendous and wonderful thing that we need to understand.

Then He says here: "...on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you..." and this is what is called the Last Great Day. And we'll talk about that when we

get to the eighth day since we're just beginning today. And then it says: "...and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it *is* a solemn assembly; *and* ye shall do no servile work *therein*. These *are* the feasts of the LORD..." They belong to Him. No one else can claim them. Oh, they can, but really then they're stealing from God, aren't they? And if you steal from God then what happens? Then you're not going to learn anything at all.

"...To offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat [meal] offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day: beside the sabbaths of the LORD..." Now this is important to understand, because He says, "These are the feasts of the LORD," and it says that all of these are Sabbaths. So whenever you read in the Old Testament, "Verily, My Sabbaths you shall keep," it means the weekly Sabbath and all of the annual Sabbaths and feasts of God as well – all inclusive. Besides that: "...and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD" (Lev. 23:33-38, *KJV*).

So we are to bring an offering unto God. And like He says in Deuteronomy 16 that: "None of you shall appear before the Lord empty, and everyone shall give as he is able according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you" (Deut. 16:16-16, *KJV*, paraphrased). So at this time we'll go ahead and stop, take a pause and we'll take up the offering for the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles. And brethren, we hope that you are going to respond to God in the way that He has responded to you.

### (Pause)

Now let's continue on brethren. The Feast of Tabernacles and understanding the plan of God, through all of His holy days and Sabbath, is one of the most fantastic and profound things that we can learn. Plus also as we will see, that in revealing this knowledge to His people through His Word by His Spirit, God is placing a great trust in everyone of us. Maybe you've never thought of it that way. That's why He's given us the grace that He has given us. That's why Paul wrote these things. Let's go to Ephesians 1 now and see what Paul has written concerning the plan of God, and that God has given to us the secret of His plan and of His will that the world has not known, and that the world cannot know and will never know because they don't love God and keep His commandments.

Let's begin here in verse 3. Now we've gone over these Scriptures before but you know something, when we go over these Scriptures again and bring to it everything that we have studied up to this point of going through it again, we learn that much more and we are inspired that much more with it. So verse 3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *things* with Christ..." And that spiritual blessing is not only the Spirit of God, the truth of God, but the truth of His holy days and the knowledge of His plan, and the understanding – at least a greater understanding of the prophecies of God and how things are going to come at the end time. All of those are spiritual blessings: God's protection, God's angels, the knowledge of His truth. All of those things are so fantastic.

Verse 4: "...According as He has personally chosen us for Himself..." Never forget that. If you have a trial, you are down, you are discouraged – never forget God has personally chosen you. And in personally choosing you He is putting trust in you – He is revealing to you things that He's not revealing to the world. And only those who love God and keep His commandments, His Sabbath and His holy days will understand.

"...Before *the* foundation of *the* world in order that we might be holy and blameless before Him in love..." That's the ultimate goal. So that's everything that we are going through, and so that when that goal is finished at the resurrection then God is going to give us responsibility as we see, but we have to first be prepared to rule and reign as kings and priests. As we will see that's the destiny to which God has called us.

"...Having predestinated us for sonship to Himself through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His own will, to *the* praise of *the* glory of His grace, wherein He has made us objects of *His* grace in the Beloved *Son*..." So let's understand something: Grace is more than the forgiveness of sin. That's the beginning of grace. But grace includes the knowledge of God, grace includes the Spirit of God, grace includes understanding the Word of God, grace includes the keeping of the commandments of God <u>spiritually</u> so that we can derive from it what God desires. And likewise with the holy days.

"...In Whom we have redemption through His blood, *even* the remission of sins, according to the riches of His grace, which He has made to abound toward us in all wisdom and intelligence..." Now what is that? Obviously not the wisdom of the world. Obviously not the intelligence of the world, because those who are wise and intelligent in the world proclaiming themselves to be such have made themselves fools. And all you have to do is just watch television and you will understand that that is true.

Here's how: "...having made known to us the mystery of His own will..." In other words the secret of His will. And the secret of the Lord is with those who love Him and obey Him. "...According to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself..." So God is trusting you with this knowledge. God is bringing you into His confidence with this knowledge. God is bringing you into His love, into His spiritual blessings, into the wisdom, intelligence and understanding that comes from God. And that is an absolute tremendous blessing. It doesn't matter where you went to school in the world. It doesn't matter what degrees you may have in the world, or what you do not have because if God is teaching you and God is educating you and you understand the Word of God, you have great wisdom and intelligence which comes from God. And that's what's the important thing for us to realize and grasp. And this fits into the Feast of Tabernacles for what God has for us and what God is doing <u>in</u> us to prepare us for the reward of ruling and reigning with Jesus Christ.

Now verse 10: "...that in *the divine* plan for the fulfilling of *the* times...", and we are right in the middle of that. Think on that. That is a great and a marvelous and fantastic thing that God has done. That: "...He might bring all things together in Christ, both the

things in the heavens and the things upon the earth..." So that is a tremendous thing that God is doing. And we are a part of it. And God is doing a great work in us, as we will see, to prepare us to rule and reign with Jesus Christ.

Now continuing on: "...yes, in Him, in Whom we also have obtained an inheritance, having been predestinated according to His purpose, Who is working out all things according to the counsel of His own will; that we might be to *the* praise of His glory, who first trusted in the Christ; in Whom you also trusted after hearing the Word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation; in Whom also, after believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is *the* earnest of our inheritance..." And what we are talking about today is the fulfillment of the rest of that inheritance and how we are going to be in the Kingdom of God.

Now, Pentecost pictures the resurrection; Trumpets pictures coming back to the earth; Atonement pictures bringing the sacrifice of Christ to the world; and the Feast of Tabernacles pictures us reigning and ruling with Christ. And that's all a part of the plan of God but He has to prepare us first. And our inheritance begins with the earnest of the Spirit. Now notice: "...until *the* redemption of the purchased possession, to *the* praise of His glory" (Eph. 1:3-14, *FV*). So brethren, we have been bought and paid for by the sacrifice of Christ through the power of His Holy Spirit, through the knowledge of His Word. Now Christ is not going to have us go through anything that He did not go through. Let's come back here and see what Christ did to prepare the way.

John 1 is a fantastic and marvelous, and absolutely fundamental in it's knowledge and understanding about who Christ was, the Father, and so forth. And absolutely, beyond any shadow of doubt, shows that Christ, before He became a human being, was God. Now let's just read the first few verses here at the beginning and then we will see what Christ has done.

"In *the* beginning was the Word [and that can actually mean "before the beginning" as we know the beginning of time], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in *the* beginning with God." Now there can't be anything more plain than that and it means exactly what it says, and yet people like to come along and say, "Well, you know, Jesus didn't exist until He was impregnated in the womb of the Virgin Mary." How much of the Scriptures do they have to throw away? Well, they have to throw this away, don't they?

Now notice: "All things came into being through Him [so He was the Creator God of the Old Testament], and not even one *thing* that was created came into being without Him. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." Now this is saying very clearly here that we cannot know the way of God unless He opens our minds and gives us the light and enlightens us.

Now let's come here to verse 9: "The true light was that which enlightens everyone who comes into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, but the world did not know Him." Now notice: "He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him..." But they rejected Him, didn't they? All except those that He called. An amazing phenomena, isn't it? "...But as many as received Him [which we do when we repent and are baptized], to them He gave authority to become *the* children of God..." Now we're going to focus in on that and what God is doing in us and for us. "...*Even* to those who believe in His name..." When it says "believe in His name" that means believe who He was, what He was, who He is, everything He taught, everything about His life, everything about the plan that He did. It's not just saying, "Oh I believe in the name of Christ. Oh there it is – Jesus Christ. I believe in that", and then you go do anything you want. No such thing.

Now notice: "...who were not begotten..." And this is a very important thing, because the earnest of the inheritance is the begettal of the Spirit of God the Father, which declares then that you have the seed of the Father and you are a son or daughter of God. "...Who were not begotten by bloodlines, nor by *the* will of *the* flesh, nor by *the* will of man, but *by the will* of God." It was God's will. So you having the Spirit of God is the will of God.

Now notice, Christ had to come and show the way. So what He did here, verse 14: "And the Word became flesh [and all that that means], and tabernacled among us…" And this is part of the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles – that Christ, temporarily as a human being lived among His creation, fulfilled many prophecies in doing that. "...(and we ourselves beheld His glory, *the* glory as of *the* only begotten with *the* Father), full of grace and truth" (John 1:1-4, 9-14, *FV*). And so this is a tremendous and wonderful thing that God has done. So Jesus came and lived in the flesh to set us an example, to show us how to live, and also to reveal, as we have seen, His will.

Now let's come here to II Corinthians 6:16, and let's understand something that God desires to do. Very profound, very important. And this is why it is so vital that we love God, keep His commandments and His Sabbath and holy days. Now let's pick it up here in verse 14: "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and lawlessness *have* in common?" So you see, there's no middle ground. Now Satan likes to come along and say, "Oh there is middle ground, let's discuss this." Like I told one man who said, "Well, let's have a dialogue." I said, "There will be no dialogue." You either believe what the Word of God says or you don't, and there can be no discussion about some frivolous little belief out here that is not in the Scriptures.

"And what fellowship *does* light *have* with darkness? And what union *does* Christ *have* with Belial? Or what part *does* a believer *have* with an unbeliever? And what agreement *is there between* a temple of God and idols?" Well that's a key statement. Who is the temple of God? Now notice here – this is what's important: Christ came and tabernacled in the flesh as a human being, and then to give His life as a perfect sacrifice for all mankind for the forgiveness of sin. Now then, God is doing something that is profound. Verse 16: "For you are a temple of *the* living God..." Have you ever thought of that? For the Spirit of God now, you are a dwelling place, or a tabernacle that Christ and God the Father are dwelling in through the earnest of the Holy Spirit. Now just think on that. What I want you to do during this Feast of Tabernacles and in your prayer and in

your study – think on that. Think how profound and marvelous and wonderful that that is. And think how much God loves you to do that. Now notice: "...exactly as God said: 'I will dwell in them and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.' " Now not only was this for Jews, but Corinthians were what – this is a Gentile church, isn't it? So He's telling this to all of those that He calls. That's why God has to call. It's an amazing thing, isn't it, that God desires to dwell in you. You are a temple of the living God. That is a profound meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles. And God wants us to understand that, and God wants us to not only understand it but believe it and live it and respond back to Him spiritually because of this great and fantastic blessing.

"'I will dwell in them and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Therefore, come out from the midst of them and be separate,' says *the* Lord, 'and touch not *the* unclean, and I will receive you; and I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,' says *the* Lord Almighty" (II Cor. 6:14-18, *FV*). Now that's a tremendous thing. Brethren, that's how much trust God has put in you to love you, to reveal His way, to give you the understanding. Now then, how are we to respond to God? This is to give us the strength and the spiritual capacity and the energy and the ability to become what God wants us to be. But God expects us to respond to Him. God expects us to do the things the way that He wants them done.

Now let's come here to I Corinthians 3 and let's see what he talks about here concerning the same thing. Now we have to build on the foundation of Christ gold, silver, precious stone. And some build wood, hay, and stubble as we find there in verses 11-13. Now we want to build with gold, silver, and precious stone. And all of those take a lot of work and take a lot of effort. But you see the finished product is what God is looking for. And that's what's important for us.

Now let's pick it up in verse 16: "Don't you understand that <u>you</u> are God's temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in <u>you</u>?" Then he gives a warning because this is a great responsibility, this is a great gift, this is a great grace – part of being blessed with every spiritual blessing in the spiritual things, in the heavenly things. That's absolutely amazing. So he gives a warning: "If anyone defiles the temple of God, God shall destroy him because the temple of God is holy, which temple you are" (I Cor. 3:16-17, FV). So that is an amazing and a wonderful thing, isn't it?

Now let's see what God wants us to do with it, and why we continually keep the commandments of God, grow in grace and knowledge, overcome self, overcome sin, overcome Satan, and are going toward the perfection that God wants to have in us, and He works it in us, and He performs it in us.

Now let's come to II Corinthians 4 and let's see how this is applied, and let's see that Satan is there. The first part of II Corinthians 4 it talks about the gospel is hidden from those who are following the god of this world, Satan the devil. And he's blinded their minds. And Satan is there, wants to blind the minds, but notice what's important. Here is the measurement that Paul gave for all ministers and teachers and elders and pastors, verse 5: "For we do not preach our own selves, but Christ Jesus *the* Lord, and

ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake because *it is* God Who commanded *the* light to shine out of darkness..." All we do is preach the word like Paul said, and God has to send His Spirit, and God has to give the understanding. "...Who shined into our hearts *the* light of the knowledge of the glory of God in *the* face of Jesus Christ [to know and understand this great and fantastic plan that God has]. Now we have this treasure [that is the Spirit of God, the knowledge of God, the wisdom of God, which is a treasure – gold, silver, precious stone] in earthen vessels in order that the supremacy of the power may be of God, and not from us" – so that we yield to God so that God is doing His work in us while God is temporarily living and dwelling in us as His dwelling place, as part of the temple of God that we yield to God, let God do His work, let God lead us with His Spirit, let God inspire us with His thoughts, let God help us to overcome and change through the power of the Spirit of God, and prepare for that great and fantastic privilege and blessing of ruling and reigning with Christ.

Now then how is this going to be? How do we look at the world out there that is so against us and all the things that are against us? Listen brethren, what we need to do is this: With the power and Spirit of God we need to be fortified internally, strengthened mentally, strengthened spiritually knowing that God is in us and with us so that the things that happen out here in the world are not going to affect us, are not going to take us away from God. Notice what Paul says here, verse 8: "On every *side we are* hard pressed, but not crushed [that's because God is always there to help]; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in *our* bodies the dying of the Lord Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies", by the character, by the spiritual growth, by the fruits of the Spirit, you see. "For those of us who are living are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake [that's going to happen], that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our mortal flesh." And to show that Christ and God the Father are tabernacling in us. Now that's a tremendous thing for us to realize, see. Great and precious is the Word of God.

"So then, on the one hand, death is working in us [because of the things that they were going through]; and on the other hand, life *is working* in you. And having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, 'I believed, therefore I have spoken,' we also believe; therefore we also speak..." And that's how the Word of God is to be preached. "...Knowing [here's the promise] that He Who raised the Lord Jesus *from the dead* shall also raise us through Jesus, and shall present *us* with you." There again confirming that we are all going to be in the first resurrection.

So what is the purpose of the teaching of the ministry and the keeping of the Sabbath and the holy days? Verse 15: "For all things *are* for your sakes, so that the abounding grace may cause the thanksgiving of many to overflow unto the glory of God." So that at the resurrection and on the sea of glass Jesus can say to the Father, "Behold the children, the brethren that You have given Me." And that's to the glory of God. "For this reason, we do not lose heart; but if our outward man is being brought to decay [and it is, we are all getting older and we are all coming closer to the finish line and there are going to be many of us who are going to enter into our rest in the grave before the terrible tribulation comes, and you'll be raised in glory], yet the inward *man...*" It

doesn't matter what's happening physically here. Now we do need to take care of our bodies and take care of our health, that is true. But what is the most important is the inward man: "...is being renewed day by day", because Christ and God the Father are dwelling in us and it's renewed day by day. And we go forward day by day. And we grow and change day by day. And we let all the experiences, all the difficulties be a catalyst to give us the spiritual growth through the power of God to become what God wants us to be because He's tabernacling in us.

Now verse 16: "For this reason, we do not lose heart..." Never lose heart. Never give up. "...But if our outward man is being brought to decay, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For the momentary lightness of our tribulation [affliction]..." Now, what I want you to do is take a special study: How did Paul look at all of the things that he went through? "For the momentary lightness of our tribulation is working out for us an immeasurably greater and everlasting fullness of glory..." Now we're going to see that we have a promise that if we suffer with Him we'll reign with Him. So whatever the circumstances are in our lives it matters not. Let God use it to His advantage. Let God use it to His glory. Let God inspire you to use it as a means of changing and growing and overcoming. "... The momentary lightness of our tribulation is working out for us an immeasurably greater and everlasting fullness of glory. While we consider not the things that are seen, but the things that are not seen [always keeping your mind on the goal and the purpose]. For the things that are seen are temporary; but the things that are not seen are eternal" (II Cor. 4:5-18, FV). So it all has to do with God's eternal plan – what He's doing for you, what He's doing for me, what He is doing for all the brethren. That's why brethren, everyday all of us need to pray for all the brethren everywhere that God would strengthen them and lead them and bless them and guide them.

Now let's continue on here in Chapter 5: "For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle is destroyed..." This is how we can all face growing old and coming to the time of being in the grave. If it be destroyed, our earthly house of this tabernacle: "...we have a building from God, a house not made with *human* hands, eternal in the heavens." God is going to give us a new body, a new mind, and a new place to live. Now that's tremendous. "For in this we truly are groaning, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven..." That's something – our dwelling from heaven. Not only is it going to be a body, but a place to live. Remember, Jesus said, "If I go, I will come again, and I go to prepare a place for you so that when I come I will receive you unto Myself so that where I am you may be also" (John 14:2-3, paraphrased).

"If indeed *that* being clothed, we may not be found naked. For we who are in *this* tabernacle [this physical flesh] truly do groan, being burdened [overcoming human nature, overcoming the trials and difficulties and so forth]; not that we wish to be unclothed...", because Satan is there saying, " Oh take it easy. Come over here. Why should you go through this? Let me give you a good *joyful* experience." No, we don't wish to be unclothed and do that. "...But to be clothed upon so that the mortal *flesh* may be swallowed up by life. Now He Who is working out this very thing for us *is* God [God is doing it], Who has also given us the earnest of the Spirit" (II Corinthians 5:1-5, *FV*). So

that's a tremendous thing for us to know and understand, isn't it brethren? How great that is. Nothing could be better than that.

Now, not only just those few of us that are gathered together, but what God is doing with all the brethren everywhere in the world.

## (Turn Tape)

...than we even know about. And God does not view his church, in the way of a business corporation. God views His church, as we have seen, according to the way that He has listed it out of the seven churches in Revelation 2 and 3.

Now Ephesians 2:14, referring to Jesus: "For He is our peace, Who has made both one [that is Jew and Gentile], and has broken down the middle wall of partition, having annulled in His flesh the enmity, the law of commandments contained in the decrees of men, so that in Himself He might create both into one new man [the body of Christ, which is His church], making peace; and that He might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross, having slain the enmity by it. Now when He came, He preached the gospel—peace to you who were far off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have *direct* access by one Spirit to the Father. So then, you are no longer aliens and foreigners; but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of the household of God." Now God likens it to a temple: "You are being built up on the foundation of the apostles and prophets..." Now this doesn't necessarily mean Old Testament prophets because it doesn't say the Law and the Prophets, it says apostles and prophets, so these are the New Testament prophets, or preachers, the ones who are telling forth the Word of God. "...Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone...", which we have seen that there is no other foundation that anyone can lay than that which has been laid, which is Christ Jesus. And that's upon which we are to build gold, silver, and precious stone.

Now notice: "...In Whom all the building, being conjointly fitted together..." So God is doing the work, and God is doing the molding, and God is taking His dwelling within us and bringing that together piece by piece, block by block, brick by brick, as it were referring to us, and is building His family, and is building those who are going to rule and reign with Him. Now notice: "...is increasing into a holy temple in *the* Lord; in Whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in *the* Spirit" (Eph. 2:14-22, *FV*). That's quite a thing, isn't it?

Now let's notice how Paul said this to the Colossians, because this is the whole hope of it, and yes we need to go back and look at these Scriptures and know and understand them, though we've heard them before, to understand with a greater and more profound meaning through God's Spirit of what this means because Christ is dwelling in us.

Now Colossians 1:26. Again the mystery of God is the secret of God, which is the plan of God, which God has revealed to you as we have seen: "...even the mystery that has been hidden from ages and from generations..." Now stop and think about it. All of

the great philosophers of the world – Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, all of the other great writers and philosophers and readers who sat around and said, "I wonder why we're here? What is man all about? Is there any purpose in life? Does anybody know?" And as one man when it was proposed there was a purpose of life, he said, "Well if there's a purpose of life, no one knows it." Yes, we know it. God knows it. God has revealed it to us and so therefore that is a greater knowledge and understanding and intelligence than all of the great and intellectuals of the world. Do you understand that brethren? Do you grasp that, what God has done? Hidden from the ages and from generations. "...But has now been revealed to His saints [it is the revealed knowledge of God]; to whom God did will..." What you know is by the will of God. What you understand is by the will of God. What you believe is by the will of God. And that's why God wants us to prepare for the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles that we rule and reign with Christ.

"...Did will to make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery [it's going to be indescribable] among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory..." (Col. 1:26-27, *FV*). Christ dwelling in you, the Father dwelling in you, because remember the promise that Jesus gave that "If you love Me and keep My commandments, and the one who loves Me and is keeping My commandments him will My Father love and <u>We</u> will come and make Our abode with him" (John 14:23, paraphrased). God and Christ tabernacling in you through the power of the Holy Spirit. God delights that He made you a habitation for His Spirit. That's why we are to yield to Him, to love Him, to serve Him, and to let everything in this world just fall off of us, as it were, like so much water off of a ducks back.

Now let's come to II Timothy 2, and here is another promise. Now many times we talk about the trials, talk about the difficulties that we go through and so forth, but let's understand something that is also important to realize which is this: I guarantee you that especially here in the United States of America, in that which we would call the societies of the western world (Europe, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and other places in the world) we do no even comprehend what suffering is. So the trials and the difficulties that we go through, let's look at them in perspective and realize that these are all opportunities for growth and growing and overcoming.

Now, II Timothy 2:7. Now he's writing to Timothy. Paul knows he's going to die. He knows that he's come to the end of the race. He says, "I've run the race, I've finished the course and now there lays up for me a crown of life that God is going to give to me and all of those who love Him." So he's writing to Timothy and he's giving him the final instructions here on how to conduct his ministry after he's gone.

Verse 7: "Give careful consideration to the things *that* I am telling you, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things." And that's what it has to be. All understanding must come from God. "Remember *that* Jesus Christ, of *the* seed of David, *was* raised from among *the* dead according to my gospel; for which I am suffering hardship, *even* to the point of being imprisoned like a criminal; but the Word of God has not been chained. Because of this, I endure all things for the sake of the elect in order that they may obtain *the* salvation that *is* in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." That's the whole purpose of it, see. "This is a faithful saying: If we have died together with *Him* [that's through baptism and also coming to the end of our physical life], we shall also live together with *Him*; if we endure, we shall also reign together with *Him* [tremendous promise, isn't it?]; if we deny *Him*, He will also deny us; if we are unfaithful, He remains faithful—He cannot deny Himself" (II Tim 2:7-13, *FV*).

Now let's come to Psalm 15. Let's see a tremendous promise. Let's ask the question: Who is going to make it? Who is going to be there? Well, this was asked back here in Psalm 15. Who's going to dwell in the tabernacle of God? And it gives us some parameters here. And this also shows us that it has to be spiritual. Now notice verse 1, part of the meaning of the Feast of Tabernacles: "LORD, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?" Now notice: "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart." Now that's conversion, isn't it? Now think of this: God is a true God, right, and He cannot lie? Yes. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. Isn't that true? Yes. The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Truth, isn't it? Yes. And between the power of the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ and God the Father dwelling in us, then our hearts are changed. Yes, we overcome and bring every thought into the captivity to Christ, but then we speak truth in our hearts. And because out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks then what we speak is true.

Verse 3: "*He that* backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned [that means you don't agree with vile people]; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. *He that* sweareth to *his own* hurt, and changeth not. *He that* putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these *things* shall never be moved" (Psa. 15:1-5, *KJV*). And brethren, guess what? Every one of these things is New Testament doctrine and amplified and expanded in the New Testament.

Now let's come to Galatians 5 and let's see the character that we need to have, because we're going to learn that we must now develop the character so that we can be in the Kingdom of God. That's why we're here. That's why Christ is in us - to bring us the character of God because in order to rule and reign with Christ you must have the character of God, and you must be God as God is through the power of the resurrection.

Now here, Galatians 5:22, this is what we are to build, which verifies and backs up everything that we have just read in Psalm 15. Notice verse 22: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love..." And that's the whole goal: Love God with all your heart, and mind, and soul, and being; love your neighbor as yourself; and love the brethren as Christ has loved us. And that's the whole purpose that we have at the Feast of Tabernacles – to love one another, to help one another, to fellowship with one another, to be with one another, to share meals with one another, to share our lives and our experiences with one another, to draw closer to God through this time of the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day that we can be filled with the Spirit of God, we can be uplifted and inspired and taught of God that we can develop the love of God. And the love of God transcends everything, you see. "...Joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23, *FV*). So that's quite an amazing thing. Those are the character traits that God wants us to build.

Now then, let's see when it comes time for the resurrection what it's going to be like and what we are going to do. So let's begin. Let's understand this. Let's come to Revelation 2. Now we're going to look at some things in the book of Revelation. Now here's part of the reward for those who overcome. Now let's pick it up here in verse 25. This is part of the message to the church at Thyatira: "But hold fast what you have until I come.' "Now "holding fast" doesn't mean just taking it and wrapping it up in a napkin and going and burying it. "Holding fast" means to hold fast to it, but obviously the implication is to also grow and overcome, as we will see in the next couple of verses here.

Verse 26: "'And to the one who overcomes, and keeps My works unto *the* end, I will give authority over the nations...'" That's why we have to have the mind of Christ. That's why we have to have the growth in character and the building of the character qualities of God because He's going to give us authority over the nations. Think about it. You watch world news. You see all these things that are going on and you see everything that is wrong. Well understand this: They are never going to solve it in the world, but God is preparing you to help solve it. Isn't that amazing?

Now notice verse 27: "'...And he [the one who has authority over the nations which is under the authority of Christ] shall shepherd them with an iron rod...'" You're going to have power. But without the character qualities of God you're not going to use power in the right way. "'...He shall shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces [we're going to have to do some correcting, too, and we'll see that]; as I have also received from My Father; and I will give him the morning star.'" That is the glory to shine as the stars of heaven. Now notice verse 29: "'The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches'" (Rev. 2:25-29, *FV*). So it's to all of the churches.

Now over here in Revelation 5:9. Now here's the song that the twenty-four elders sang, but this is a song relating to our destiny. This is a song showing that God has a plan for us through Christ. Verse 9: "And they sang a new song, saying, 'Worthy are You to take the book, and to open its seals because You were slain, and did redeem us to God by Your own blood, out of every tribe and language and people and nation, and did make us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth.' " (Rev. 5:9-10, *FV*). And that's where we are going to reign. It's not going to be in heaven. No one's in heaven, and no one's going to heaven. Heaven in fact, as we will see by the Last Great Day, is coming to the earth. Let's understand that. That's important for us to realize.

No let's see when that's going to take place. We are going to reign as kings and priests. When will that take place? You see, God is not going to give us that authority <u>until</u> the resurrection when our bodies have been changed from flesh to Spirit, when we will have glory and power and authority that Christ gives us.

Now here, Revelation 11:15 is when it takes place. That's when the last trumpet is blown and the resurrection occurs on Pentecost: "Then the seventh angel sounded *his* Trumpet [which is the last trump]; and *there* were great voices in heaven, saying, 'The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign into the ages of eternity.' "Well, we are going to reign under Christ as kings and priests. Now notice: "And the twenty-four elders, who sit before God on their thrones, fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, 'We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Who is, and Who was, and Who *is* to come; for You have taken *to Yourself* Your great power, and have reigned.' "Remember the promise? We will reign with Him. " 'For the nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, and the time for the dead to be judged, and to give reward to Your servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to *all* those who fear Your name, the small and the great; and to destroy those who destroy the earth' " (Rev. 11:15-18, *FV*). That's when we receive the blessing from the resurrection, our reward, our assignment, and what we are going to do. And it's going to be a tremendous and absolute marvelous thing that's going to happen.

Now Zechariah prophesied of this. Now all the things that take place on the sea of glass: receiving our new names, the marriage of the Lamb, the marriage supper of the Lamb, our assignments and which cities we're going to rule over and etc., all of that is going to be all settled on the sea of glass before we come back to the earth on Trumpets. But when we come back to the earth it is going to establish and set-up the Kingdom of God. And we are going to usher in, under Jesus Christ as kings and priests, the Kingdom of God, the government of God, the truth of God, the worship of God for the whole world. And it will be the only kingdom to stand for a thousand years.

Zechariah 14 – this is a tremendous thing to look forward to. Now verse 4: "And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which *is* before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, *and there shall be* a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south." God is going to totally change the surface of the earth, and we have to go out and help rebuild it. And those human beings who survive through it, which there will be some who will, we're going to have to show them how to live God's way. We'll see that in just a little bit.

Now the last sentence in verse 5: "...and the LORD my God shall come..." And who is the "LORD my God"? Jesus Christ. "...And all the saints with Thee." That's us – resurrected. Now not only prepared but also equipped to rule and reign with Christ. Now verse 9: "And the LORD shall be king over all the earth...", because that's why Christ came. And He's going to bring peace to the whole world. "...In that day shall there be one LORD, and His name one." They're going to teach them God's way. And one of the things that they are going to do is keep the Feast of Tabernacles. Right here, verse 16: "And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem..." Now they came up to fight against Jerusalem. Now what's going to have to come back to Jerusalem, only in a different way. Those people are going to come to Jerusalem to worship God. Now notice: "...shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to

keep the feast of tabernacles." There it is right there. You know the old saying: If they kept it back here in the Old Testament, if they kept it in the New Testament, which they did because we see in John 7 that Christ kept the Feast of Tabernacles. And we see also in the book of Acts that Paul kept the Feast of Tabernacles. And if they're going to keep the Feast of Tabernacles in the Millennium, then guess what – they need to keep it today regardless of all the arguments that people bring up, you see. Now how important is it? Now you think about how important it is to keep the Feast of Tabernacles today when you understand how important it is for them to keep the Feast of Tabernacles when the Millennium begins.

"And it shall be, *that* whoso <u>will not</u> come up of *all* the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain." Now that's a serious matter, isn't it? That's how important it is. Let's ask the question: Does God mean business? Absolutely, without a doubt. And the Egyptians are going to have a nice little surprise for them because you know they live in a desert where there is no rain. "And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that *have* no *rain...*" Now think about this for a minute. Think of the hatred that is between the Jews and the Egyptians and all the Arabs today. Just think how their hearts are going to have to be changed, and God is going to have to force the choice, isn't He, in the beginning? Yes, indeed. But just think what a change that is going to be for Egyptians, and Arabians, and Palestinians, and Iraqi's, and Iranians, and all of the Arab nations as well as all of the nations of the earth that come up and send their representatives to keep the Feast of Tabernacles at Jerusalem. That's a fantastic thing that's going to happen.

Now if they don't go up, come not up: "...that *have* no *rain*; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles." That's the second time it's mentioned here, isn't it? "This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations [that God means business, doesn't He? Yes.] that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles" (Zech. 14:4-5, 9, 16-19, *KJV*). That's quite a thing.

Now, the Feast of Tabernacles pictures what? It pictures our ruling and reigning with Christ. Now let's come back to the book of Revelation again. Now let's see something which has confused some people, and some have thought, "Well, there are different aspects of the different timing of the first resurrection. The first resurrection doesn't take place all at once." Well, that is not true. But let's come here to Revelation 15 and let's see something. After we're resurrected we come to the sea of glass and we meet Christ. We covered that during Pentecost. But I want to cover one thing because this ties in with Revelation 20 where we're going next.

Verse 2: "And I saw a sea of glass mingled with fire, [now notice] and those who had gotten the victory over the beast..." Now this beast, as you read in Revelation 12, was the great dragon – seven heads and ten horns, which comes from the very beginning, doesn't it? So this just doesn't mean those who overcome the mark of the beast. This means from the time of the beginning of the world on down to now because everyone has to overcome the beast, don't they? You have to have victory over the beast, over Satan.

"...And over his image [and he's the one who brings idolatry], and over his mark [that's coming at the end time], *and* over the number of his name..." See because those who have the number of his name say they belong to the beast. But we have the Spirit of God and the name of God upon us. Now they were: "...standing on the sea of glass, having *the* harps of God. And they were singing the song of Moses, *the* servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, 'Great and awesome *are* Your works, Lord God Almighty; righteous and true *are* Your ways, King of the saints' " (Rev. 15:2-3, FV).

Now then let's come to Revelation 20. This is when they're resurrected – Revelation 15. Now over in Revelation 20 is when we enter in to our assignments and our reward. That's the difference. It's not a different part of the first resurrection, and that the first resurrection didn't occur at the seventh trump, because I Corinthians 15 and I Thessalonians 4 show that it does, at Christ's return.

Now after Satan is bound, as we saw on the Day of Atonement, now then the next thing that happens, Revelation 20:4: "And I saw thrones [so here are the thrones – we'll talk about the thrones a little bit here in a minute because we are all going to receive some kind of throne because that's a seat of authority]; and they that sat upon them, and judgment was given to them [so this is when we're given our responsibility when we are given our jobs]; and *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and those who did not worship the beast, or his image...", because you go back and you read *The Two Babylon's* and they were worshipping the beast, who is Satan the devil, clear back there. And of course that goes back before the flood because Satan was right there in the Garden of Eden and misled Adam and Eve, didn't he? And also, he is the one who inspired and caused all the world before the flood to become corrupt and evil. So this includes everyone beginning with Abel and all of the righteous patriarchs before the flood, then Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all of the righteous kings and prophets that are going to be in the Kingdom of God – they all had to overcome the beast of the world, which is Satan the devil.

"...And did not receive the mark in their foreheads or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Now that's just a start, because we're going to live into the ages of eternity. But there's going to be the thousand year rule and reign of Christ which is pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles. Now it is alluded to in the weekly Sabbath, but the weekly Sabbath does not have the same force and power of picturing the Millennium as the Feast of Tabernacles does.

Now notice: "...(But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were completed.)" Now that's a parenthetical statement because the question always comes up: "Well, if these are in the first resurrection and they are raised when Christ comes back, what about all the other people who have died?" So that's why this parenthetical statement is here. Notice: "This *is* the first resurrection", referring back to those who receive their rewards, not the time of the resurrection. This is only saying about those who are <u>in</u> the first resurrection, not <u>when</u> the resurrection occurs because that is told to us in Revelation 11, Revelation 14, and Revelation 15.

Now notice verse 6: "Blessed and holy is the one who has part in the first resurrection..." Blessed and holy – names of God. Attributes from God to us that now we are blessed of God and we are holy because we are now the spirit sons and daughters of God. "...Over these the second death has no power. But they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and [they] shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4-6, FV). That's a tremendous thing to look forward to.

Now let's look at some other prophecies of this. Let's come back to the book of Daniel and see how this was prophesied back then talking about this very time. And let's see also how the Bible agrees when you properly put it together. There are no contradictions in the Bible. There are some apparent contradictions when first read, or hard to understand because we don't understand the Scriptures. But in reality and in truth there are no contradictions simply because of this: If the Word of God is true, which it is, if the Word of God cannot tell a lie, which it doesn't, then it must all agree because it's given by the God of truth, inspired by His Spirit of Truth, given to His servants who are dedicated to the truth, which has been recorded as the God-breathed Word of God. So it all agrees.

Now let's begin in Daniel 7:9: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down..." That means "placed down" and we saw that in Revelation 20, didn't we? Yes. "...And the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and* His wheels *as* burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened." Now this is talking about the whole process of the Millennium and on into the White Throne Judgment of the Last Great Day.

Now notice verse 13: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him: His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed." Tremendous, isn't it? What a fantastic portrayal of this. What a prophecy of Revelation 20. And then we put this all together with the other Scriptures, as we will see during the Feast of Tabernacles.

Now let's come to verse 26 and let's understand that God is going to share this fantastic thing that we just saw – the glory of the prophecy of it: "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion [that is the dominion of the beast and the kings of the earth], to consume and to destroy *it* unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness [it's talking about the Kingdom of God] of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High..." Now stop and think about that. Here is a parallel: In the beginning what did God do? He created the heavens and the earth, and He made man in His image – male and female, and He gave them dominion over all of the earth, didn't He? Yes. Now then, we are born into His family, through the power of the resurrection, we receive our reward, we receive our

assignments, we are given our responsibilities, and God gives us the rule of the Kingdom under Christ. Now that's a marvelous thing, isn't it? I mean think about that. What is the old saying as Christ told the disciples one time? "Let these things sink deep into your ears." In other words let it register in your brain and heart of hearts.

Notice, repeat that again: "And the kingdom and dominion [that means the rulership], and the greatness of the kingdom [and all that that is going to produce] under the whole heaven [all during the Millennium], shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him' (Dan. 7:9-10, 13-14, 26-27, *KJV*). Just like we saw in Zechariah 14 – if they don't keep the Feast of Tabernacles they are soon going to be encouraged, aren't they? Yes indeed, they will keep it.

Let's look at this again. Come over here to Psalm 122, speaking about thrones and what's going to happen. Begin in verse 1: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD." We're going to be there, and we're going to live there, and we're going to have access to God. So regardless of whatever our assignments are on the earth and we go tend to those the way that we need to, time to time we're going to come back to Jerusalem. We're going to go up to the house of the Lord. "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." Not only, though I want you to understand this in relationship to Jerusalem, but I also want you to also understand this in relationship to the New Jerusalem, what it's going to be like that we go on up to New Jerusalem and our feet stand within the gates of New Jerusalem.

Verse 3: "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD..." Read about New Jerusalem. What does it say? What are the foundation – the apostles and the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, right? Yes. "...Unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the LORD. For there are set thrones of judgment [that's what we just read, isn't it: Revelation 20; Daniel 7 – thrones of judgment], the thrones of the house of David" (Psa. 122:1-5, *KJV*). Those include the twelve thrones given to the twelve apostles to rule over the house of Israel during the Millennium. I tell you there is so much in the Bible about this, it's an amazing and fantastic and wonderful thing, brethren. The Feast of Tabernacles pictures the coming of the greatest civilization that this world has ever seen.

Let's come to Micah 4 and we'll finish here. And we are going to have opportunities and rule and serving and helping to bring about the happiness, the joy, the blessing, the fulfillment that all mankind yearns to have but cannot achieve in this world because this is not God's world. <u>Then</u> in the Millennium it will be God's world and we will be the sons and daughters of God and we will rule and reign, and we will bring the peace, the happiness, the joy, the understanding, the true worship of God to the whole world. There can be no greater calling, there could be no greater reward.

Now verse 1: "But in the last days it shall come to pass, *that* the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and

say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD [Let's go to Jerusalem], and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways [and that's what we are going to do], and we will walk in His paths: for the law..." The time when Christ is ruling on the earth – guess what is going to be the guide for the people? The laws and commandments of God. Guess what days are listed in the laws and commandments of God? The Sabbath, the Passover, Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles, the Last Great Day. And it's all pictured right here. "...And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off..." He's going to have to do that to bring them in line at first like we saw there in Zechariah 14. "...And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Micah 4:1-3, KJV). Beginning with the toys of the children – no more war. That is something. The peace of God through Jesus Christ and the saints will rule on this earth. That's what God has called you to.

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