

“In My Father’s House”

**The Theme of TEMPLE from Genesis to Revelation -
What the Bible is All About From Start to Finish**

www.sermonaudio.com

www.unholycharade.com

www.lightfordarktimes.com

Title: Make Me a Sanctuary that I May Dwell in Their Midst

Text: Exodus 25:1-9

Reading: Hebrews 9

Christ Reformation Church

February 20, 2011

Introduction

“A pastor once confessed to me, ‘Whenever I think about Heaven, it makes me depressed. I’d rather just cease to exist when I die.’ ‘Why,’ I asked. ‘I can’t stand the thought of that endless tedium. To float around in the clouds with nothing to do but strum a harp...it’s all so terribly boring. Heaven doesn’t sound much better than Hell. I’d rather be annihilated than spend eternity in a place like that.’” [Heaven, Randy Alcorn]

“When an English vicar was asked by a colleague what he expected after death, he replied, ‘Well, if it comes to that, I suppose I shall enter into eternal bliss, but I really wish you wouldn’t bring up such depressing subjects.’” [Heaven]

Be honest. Can you identify with these thoughts about heaven? Where does this kind of thinking come from? It certainly does NOT come from God’s Word. The Bible is absolutely opposed to such non-corporeal

notions about Heaven. Paul tells us that a non-body, non-physical existence is UN-natural to man –

2Co 5:1-5 For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. (2) For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, (3) if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. (4) For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened--not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. (5) He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

2Co 5:1-5 Porque sabemos que si la tienda terrenal que es nuestra morada, es destruida, tenemos de Dios un edificio, una casa no hecha por manos, eterna en los cielos. (2) Pues, en verdad, en esta *morada* gemimos, anhelando ser vestidos con nuestra habitación celestial; (3) y una vez vestidos, no seremos hallados desnudos. (4) Porque asimismo, los que estamos en esta tienda, gemimos agobiados, pues no queremos ser desvestidos, sino vestidos, para que lo mortal sea absorbido por la vida. (5) Y el que nos preparó para esto mismo es Dios, quien nos dio el Espíritu como garantía.

The building eternal, not made with hands, is the house with foundations whose maker is God. In contrast to this earthly, temporal “tent” (body) in which we now dwell, when we have our resurrection bodies, we will be truly clothed. *Our desire is not that we be unclothed – that is – not that we be absent from our body and only spirit – but that we would be truly clothed with our body that cannot die. God HAS PREPARED US for this very thing!* YOU WERE NOT CREATED BY GOD TO LIVE AS A DISEMBODIED SPIRIT IN A VAPORY, NON-PHYSICAL “HEAVEN.” So let’s be done with any idea that heaven is some boring cloud.

Now, listen to these observations made by Alcorn. They should really startle you –

“John Calvin...never wrote a commentary on Revelation and never dealt with the eternal state at any length...His theology of Heaven seems strikingly weak compared to his theology of God, Christ, Salvation, Scripture, and the Church.”

“Theologian Reinhold Niebuhr wrote an in-depth two-volume set titled The nature and Destiny of Man. Remarkably, he had nothing to say about Heaven.”

“William Shedd’s three-volume Dogmatic Theology contains 87 pages on eternal punishment, but only two on Heaven.”

“In his 900 page theology, Great Doctrines of the Bible, Martyn Lloyd-Jones devotes less than two pages to the eternal state and the New Earth.”

“Louis Berkhof’s classic Systematic Theology devotes 38 pages to creation, forty pages to baptism and communion, and fifteen pages to the intermediate state. Yet it contains only two pages on Hell and one page on the eternal state.”

Does Scripture really have so little to say? Are there so few theological implications to this subject? The biblical answer, I believe, is an emphatic no!...until recently the doctrine of Heaven was enormously important to the church. Belief in Heaven was not just a nice auxiliary sentiment. It was a central, life-sustaining conviction. Sadly, even for countless Christians, that is no longer true.” [Alcorn, Heaven]

Alcorn goes on to discuss how our ignorance of our eternal home is like being NASA astronauts preparing for a 5-year mission to Mars, but never taking any time to learn about Mars itself. “I guess we will find out when we get there,” they remark.

We need to correct this ignorance in ourselves. This church needs to be a place where we breathe the air and smell the smells and see the sights of the New Heavens and New Earth more and more and more with each

passing year. Our young people need to be launched out into life yearning to go “through the wardrobe” and into a REAL and eternal Narnia. After all, Someone has come through the “wardrobe” from the other side and told us all about that Land. We can know.

Review

This series of messages is, ultimately, about Heaven. About the New Earth and the New Heavens. About our eternal *home* created by Christ. It is about this subject because we are tracing, from Genesis to Revelation, God’s great purpose of *dwelling among His people, being their God, and they being His people*. DWELLING, living, among us. Face to face. The Bible is about God bringing us back to Eden, redeeming us and all of creation from the separating effects of sin. This is what He has done and is doing in Christ.

And now we have come to the M in TEMPLE – to the history of God’s calling out a people for Himself in Abraham and in the days of Moses and the earthly nation of Israel.

T - Trinity (John 17:5, 24)

E - Eden & Eviction– (Genesis 1-3)

M - Moses (*the history of Israel*)

- ***Abraham (Genesis 12-15)***

- ***Moses, Israel, and the Tabernacle (Exodus)***

P - Poetry & Prophets

L - Lamb

E - Eden Excelled

Last time we considered God’s calling of Abraham as the beginning of His creation of a people and nation for Himself. We learned that the descendants of Abraham, the true Israel, are not merely the physical descendants, but are children of Abraham *by faith*. We saw this as we looked at what Paul says in Romans 4 and in many other passages in the New Testament. We said that it is vital for us that we *let the New*

Testament teach us what the elements of the Abrahamic Covenant really are – the Blessing to all nations, the Land, the innumerable nation that would descend from Abraham. The blessing is The Seed – Christ. The Land is the New Heavens and Earth. The nation without number is the Church. It is in Christ that men from all nations are brought back to Eden. For all of this, Abraham was looking. He rejoiced to see Christ’s day and was glad.

NOTE: For even more evidence that the true Jews, the true Israel – is in fact the church – men from every nation who call on the Lord in faith – you might want to consider these Scriptures –

- John 8:39-58 These Jews claimed to be children of Abraham, but Jesus told them they were of their father the devil.
- Luke 13:16 & 19:9 Jesus uses the term “daughter of Abraham” and “son of Abraham” for a woman and a man who believed
- Matthew 3:9 Jesus warns the Jews not to just presume “Abraham in our father” because He is able to create children of Abraham from the rocks!
- Matthew 8:10-12 Jesus warns the Jews that even though they are “sons of the kingdom” (ie, the earthly kingdom of Israel), many Gentiles will enter God’s kingdom while the “sons” such as they will be cast out into outer darkness.
- Matthew 1:1-2 The genealogy, showing that Jesus is the seed/son of Abraham. Also see Luke 1:54-55, 73-75
- Romans 11:1ff teaches the doctrine of the true remnant. Not all Israel is Israel.
- Galatians 3:5-16 The meaning of the Seed of Abraham, who is Christ, and how we become Abraham’s children by faith

In the Days of Moses

Now, how do all of God’s dealings with the earthly nation of Israel fit into all of this? Abraham is called out of Ur. Ultimately, his descendant – Jacob – travels down to Egypt with His sons. There, the Israelites become

a nation. You know the story as it ends in Genesis and opens in Exodus with a hostile king of Egypt who enslaves the Jews. Moses is called by God and the Lord effects a great humbling of the Egyptians and the redemption of Israel from slavery.

The record of the history of the nation Israel continues then from Exodus down through the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. Joshua, Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, the subsequent kings of the divided kingdom, God's casting His people out of the Land into captivity in Babylon and their subsequent return, rebuilding Jerusalem and the Temple. And all the while, God's prophets are being sent with His Word – Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and so on down to Malachi – until all goes silent for 400 years. God does not speak, until the voice of John the Baptist is heard “crying in the wilderness” calling for Israel to repent and prepare themselves for the arrival of the Messiah.

And so it is in this historical era of the nation Israel – an era we are calling “Moses” – that we now want to trace our theme – TEMPLE. Let me show you that it is “alive and active” in that era [we will look at the Prophets and Poetry under the P in TEMPLE] –

Exo 13:21-22 And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. (22) The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.

Exo 13:21-22 El SEÑOR iba delante de ellos, de día en una columna de nube para guiarlos por el camino, y de noche en una columna de fuego para alumbrarlos, a fin de que anduvieran de día y de noche. (22) No quitó de delante del pueblo la columna de nube durante el día, ni la columna de fuego durante la noche.

Exo 33:7-11 Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of

meeting, which was outside the camp. (8) Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would rise up, and each would stand at his tent door, and watch Moses until he had gone into the tent. (9) When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the LORD would speak with Moses. (10) And when all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise up and worship, each at his tent door. (11) Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses turned again into the camp, his assistant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.

Exo 33:7-11 Moisés acostumbraba tomar la tienda, y la levantaba fuera del campamento a buena distancia de éste, y la llamó la tienda de reunión. Y sucedía que todo el que buscaba al SEÑOR salía a la tienda de reunión, que estaba fuera del campamento. (8) Cuando Moisés salía a la tienda, todo el pueblo se levantaba y permanecía de pie, cada uno a la entrada de su tienda, y seguía con la vista a Moisés hasta que él entraba en la tienda. (9) También cuando Moisés entraba en la tienda, la columna de nube descendía y permanecía a la entrada de la tienda, y *el SEÑOR* hablaba con Moisés. (10) Cuando todo el pueblo veía la columna de nube situada a la entrada de la tienda de reunión todos se levantaban y adoraban, cada cual a la entrada de su tienda. (11) Y el SEÑOR acostumbraba hablar con Moisés cara a cara, como habla un hombre con su amigo. Cuando *Moisés* regresaba al campamento, su joven ayudante Josué, hijo de Nun, no se apartaba de la tienda.

Face to face, you see. As a man speaks to a friend. And yet – still not as it was in Eden before the Fall.

Neh 9:12-13 By a pillar of cloud you led them in the day, and by a pillar of fire in the night to light for them the way in which they should go. (13) You came down on Mount Sinai and spoke with them from heaven and gave them right rules and true laws, good statutes and commandments,

Neh 9:12-13 Con columna de nube los guiaste de día, Y con columna de fuego de noche, Para alumbrarles el camino En que debían andar. (13) Luego bajaste sobre el Monte Sinaí, Y desde el cielo hablaste con ellos; Les diste ordenanzas justas y leyes verdaderas, Estatutos y mandamientos buenos.

And then there was this whole matter of *the tabernacle* –

Exo 25:1-8 The LORD said to Moses, (2) "Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him you shall receive the contribution for me. (3) And this is the contribution that you shall receive from them: gold, silver, and bronze, (4) blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, goats' hair, (5) tanned rams' skins, goatskins, acacia wood, (6) oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, (7) onyx stones, and stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breastpiece. (8) And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst.

Exo 25:1-8 El SEÑOR habló a Moisés y le dijo: (2) "Dile a los Israelitas que tomen una ofrenda para Mí. De todo aquél cuyo corazón le mueva *a hacerlo*, ustedes tomarán Mi ofrenda. (3) "Y ésta es la ofrenda que tomarán de ellos: oro, plata y bronce; (4) tela azul, púrpura y escarlata, lino fino y *pelo de* cabra; (5) pieles de carnero teñidas de rojo, pieles de marsopa y madera de acacia; (6) aceite para el alumbrado, especias para el aceite de la unción y para el incienso aromático; (7) piedras de ónice y piedras de engaste para el efod y para el pectoral. (8) "Que Me hagan un santuario, para que Yo habite entre ellos.

And what of the *priesthood* –

Exo 29:44-46 I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar. Aaron also and his sons I will consecrate to serve me as priests. (45) I will dwell among the people of Israel and will be their God. (46)

And they shall know that I am the LORD their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt that I might dwell among them. I am the LORD their God.

Exo 29:44-46 "Santificaré la tienda de reunión y el altar. También santificaré a Aarón y a sus hijos para que Me sirvan como sacerdotes. (45) "Habitaré entre los Israelitas, y seré su Dios. (46) "Y conocerán que Yo soy el SEÑOR su Dios, que los saqué de la tierra de Egipto para morar Yo en medio de ellos. Yo soy el SEÑOR su Dios.

And so the theme of TEMPLE continues right on down through this historical era –

Num 35:34 You shall not defile the land in which you live, in the midst of which I dwell, for I the LORD dwell in the midst of the people of Israel."

Num 35:34 'Y no contaminarán la tierra en que ustedes viven, en medio de la cual Yo habito, pues Yo, el SEÑOR, habito en medio de los Israelitas.'"

1Ki 8:1-13 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' houses of the people of Israel, before King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion. (2) And all the men of Israel assembled to King Solomon at the feast in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month. (3) And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark. (4) And they brought up the ark of the LORD, the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the tent; the priests and the Levites brought them up. (5) And King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered. (6) Then the priests brought the ark of the covenant of the LORD to its place in the inner sanctuary of the house, in the Most Holy Place, underneath the wings of the

cherubim. (7) For the cherubim spread out their wings over the place of the ark, so that the cherubim overshadowed the ark and its poles. (8) And the poles were so long that the ends of the poles were seen from the Holy Place before the inner sanctuary; but they could not be seen from outside. And they are there to this day. (9) There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone that Moses put there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the people of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt. (10) And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, a cloud filled the house of the LORD, (11) so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD. (12) Then Solomon said, "The LORD has said that he would dwell in thick darkness. (13) I have indeed built you an exalted house, a place for you to dwell in forever."

1Ki 8:1-13 Entonces Salomón reunió a los ancianos de Israel, a todos los jefes de las tribus *y* a los principales de las casas paternas de los Israelitas ante él en Jerusalén, para hacer subir el arca del pacto del SEÑOR de la ciudad de David, la cual es Sion. (2) Todos los hombres de Israel se reunieron ante el rey Salomón en la fiesta, en el mes de Etanim, que es el mes séptimo. (3) Cuando llegaron todos los ancianos de Israel, los sacerdotes alzaron el arca. (4) Subieron el arca del SEÑOR, la tienda de reunión y todos los utensilios sagrados que *estaban* en la tienda; los sacerdotes y los Levitas los subieron. (5) El rey Salomón y toda la congregación de Israel que estaba reunida ante él, *estaban* con él delante del arca, sacrificando tantas ovejas y bueyes que no se podían contar ni numerar. (6) Entonces los sacerdotes trajeron el arca del pacto del SEÑOR a su lugar, al santuario interior de la casa, al Lugar Santísimo, bajo las alas de los querubines. (7) Porque los querubines extendían las alas sobre el lugar del arca, y los querubines cubrían el arca y sus barras por encima. (8) Pero las barras eran tan largas que los extremos de las barras se podían ver desde el lugar santo, *que estaba* delante del santuario interior, pero no se podían ver *desde* afuera; y allí están hasta hoy. (9) En el arca no había más que las dos tablas de piedra que Moisés puso allí en

Horeb, donde el SEÑOR hizo *pacto* con los Israelitas cuando salieron de la tierra de Egipto. (10) Y sucedió que cuando los sacerdotes salieron del lugar santo, la nube llenó la casa del SEÑOR, (11) así que los sacerdotes no pudieron quedarse a ministrar por causa de la nube, porque la gloria del SEÑOR llenaba la casa del SEÑOR. (12) Entonces Salomón dijo: "El SEÑOR ha dicho que El moraría en la densa nube. (13) Ciertamente yo te he edificado una casa majestuosa, Un lugar para Tu morada para siempre."

And then, as we have already seen – this TEMPLE theme marches unstopably right on through the very end of the Bible – and on into Eternity –

2Co 6:16 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

2Co 6:16 ¿O qué acuerdo tiene el templo de Dios con los ídolos? Porque nosotros somos el templo del Dios vivo, como Dios dijo: "HABITARE EN ELLOS, Y ANDARE ENTRE ELLOS; Y SERE SU DIOS, Y ELLOS SERAN MI PUEBLO.

Rev 21:3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "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.

Rev 21:3 Entonces oí una gran voz que decía desde el trono: "El tabernáculo de Dios está entre los hombres, y El habitará entre ellos y ellos serán Su pueblo, y Dios mismo estará entre ellos.

So, What is Earthly Israel All About?

After the Apostle Paul presents the gospel of God's grace by faith alone in Christ alone in the first 8 chapters of Romans, he anticipates this very

question – *what was all this Old Testament history about? Why did God establish a physical, earthly nation of Israel if the true Israel is those who are of faith, circumcised in the heart by the Spirit, from whatever nation?* And here is his answer –

Romans 9:1-5 ESV

- (1) I am speaking the truth in Christ--I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit--
- (2) that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.
- (3) For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh.
- (4) They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises.
- (5) To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

Romans 9:1-5 NBLH

- (1) Digo la verdad en Cristo, no miento, dándome testimonio mi conciencia en el Espíritu Santo,
- (2) de que tengo gran tristeza y continuo dolor en mi corazón.
- (3) Porque desearía yo mismo ser anatema (maldito), separado de Cristo por amor a mis hermanos, mis parientes (los de mi raza) según la carne.
- (4) Porque son Israelitas, a quienes pertenece la adopción como hijos, y la gloria, los pactos, la promulgación de la ley, el culto y las promesas,
- (5) de quienes son los patriarcas, y de quienes, según la carne, procede el Cristo (el Mesías), el cual está sobre todas las cosas, Dios bendito por los siglos. Amén.

In other words, it was through the physical, earthly nation of Israel that God brought about His great purpose in Christ. His promise was made to Abraham and to Abraham's Seed. Christ Himself was born as a Jew. The Law of God was given through the Jews. *Through the nation Israel, God revealed Himself and His salvation to man.* The Old Testament nation and

tabernacle and priesthood and worship ordinances and Laws, the earthly Land of Israel, the enemies dwelling in the Land, the manna from heaven and the temptations in the wilderness, the exodus from Egypt, the sacrifices and more – all of these things are God’s great “picture book” of Himself and of His redemption of His people in Christ.

That this is indeed the case is plainly seen in the book of Hebrews, particularly in chapters 8-10. Here is an example –

Hebrews 8:5-6 ESV

(5) They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain."

(6) But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.

Hebrews 8:5-6 NBLH

(5) los cuales sirven a lo que es copia y sombra de las cosas celestiales, tal como Moisés fue advertido por Dios cuando estaba a punto de erigir el tabernáculo. Pues, dice El: "Haz todas las cosas CONFORME AL MODELO QUE TE FUE MOSTRADO EN EL MONTE."

(6) Pero ahora Jesús ha obtenido un ministerio tanto mejor, por cuanto El es también el mediador de un mejor pacto, establecido sobre mejores promesas.

Hebrews 9:6-10 ESV

(6) These preparations having thus been made, the priests go regularly into the first section, performing their ritual duties,

(7) but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but once a year, and not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people.

(8) By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing

(9) (which is symbolic for the present age). According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper,

(10) but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.

Hebrews 9:6-10 NBLH

(6) Así preparadas estas cosas, los sacerdotes entran continuamente al primer tabernáculo para officiar en el culto.

(7) Pero en el segundo, sólo entra el sumo sacerdote una vez al año, no sin llevar sangre, la cual ofrece por sí mismo y por los pecados del pueblo cometidos en ignorancia.

(8) Queriendo el Espíritu Santo dar a entender esto: que el camino al Lugar Santísimo aún no había sido revelado en tanto que el primer tabernáculo permaneciera en pie.

(9) Esto es un símbolo para el tiempo presente, según el cual se presentan ofrendas y sacrificios que no pueden hacer perfecto en su conciencia al que practica ese culto,

(10) ya que tienen que ver sólo con comidas y bebidas, y diversos lavamientos, ordenanzas para el cuerpo impuestas hasta el tiempo de reformar las cosas .

Hebrews 10:1 ESV

(1) For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.

Hebrews 10:1 NBLH

(1) Pues ya que la Ley sólo tiene la sombra de los bienes futuros y no la forma (imagen) misma de las cosas, nunca puede, por los mismos sacrificios que ellos ofrecen continuamente año tras año, hacer perfectos a los que se acercan.

The nation Israel then, is an earthly picture of many things, including the New Heavens and New Earth. The earthly Land, [see Deu 30:20] is the

place of God's blessing and presence. Under Old Covenant, as in Eden, man could be expelled from the Land. It shall not be so in Eden restored.

Conclusion -

We have talked about *shame* as one of the terrible effects of sin. Adam and Eve in true shame after the Fall – alienated and hiding from God and even from one another. This shame did not end when Israel crossed the Jordan into the earthly Canaan. Like Adam and Eve, they too ended being evicted from that place of blessing and from the presence of God. Shame remained.

“David was 18 years old when he killed himself. He was never physically beaten or molested by anyone, yet David was the victim of abuse. At the time no one put that name on it. His death was tragic, certainly, but no one ever stopped to think about his life. David died as a result of life-long emotional abuse – continual, pervasive, easily denied and overlooked emotional abuse. David's father had been a football player all through school. He had the same dream for his son. There was just one problem. He never stopped long enough in his pursuit of athletic excellence for his son to ask David if he wanted to be a football player. He just assumed David would want to excel in sports as he had.

As expected, David played football growing up. In fact, he did excel at it, being physically large and strong for his age. It was even fun at first –the roar of the crowd, the overwhelming attention lavished on him by his family, the obvious pride others took in his athletic ability. But the pressure to succeed, to live up to his father's expectations, was tremendous. As time went on, no matter how well David did, there was always another level to reach, more he still had to do. No longer was David competing against another team or against other children, instead, he was competing against his father's expectations of how much he himself had accomplished (or thought he had) at the same age.

Eventually, the pressure got so intense David could no longer cope. When he was 15, he tried to kill himself. The attempt failed, but the injuries he

suffered because of the attempt left him unable to compete in sports. David had ingested a common poison that settled into his joints, weakening them so that sports were now totally out of the question. Even though he was still alive, David thought he was off the hook. Maybe now his father would stop trying to force him to be a football player and would listen to what David really wanted to be – an artist.

The pressure to compete in sports did indeed stop, but so did everything else. David became the invisible person in the family. No longer the focus of his father's sports ambition, David found there was no other place for him in the family. David's sister, Janice, became the athlete of the family. Built strong, like David, she excelled in two sports – track and field and gymnastics. She lettered in both sports in high school and competed at the state level. David's role diminished steadily, outshined by the light of his sister's athletic accomplishments. Completely convinced of his own worthlessness, David gradually lost all hope of ever recapturing his father's attention. His exceptional artistic ability and vision were not valued in his family. Because of David's lack of performance, his birthright had been passed to his younger sister.

One spring day, during one of Janice's high school track meets, David escaped to his room. Determined to be successful this time, he put a bullet through his brain. When news of his death became known, everyone agreed it was a terrible tragedy. But then they all remembered, shaking their heads, that he had tried it once before. He always had been a messed-up kid. David's inability to cope with life was attributed to some tragic defect in his personality. No one ever stopped to consider that David had been abused all his life. He had never been beaten or molested, but David died of abuse – emotional abuse. Leaving no marks, it still left him dead.” [Healing the Scars of Emotional Abuse, Gregory L. Jantz]

The horrible effects, you see, of sin and shame in a world expelled from Eden. How might David's story have ended if only he had come to understand the very theme we are studying – how God, in Christ, is bringing fallen, shamed sinners back into the Father's House, and more – just what that House is going to be like.